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SGB parent members' and other parents' attitudes towards inclusion and exclusion in primary schools

A PhD including publications

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2022

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at another university.

Signed: _____

Anwynne Kern

Date: 15 March 2022

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As this academic journey comes to a conclusion, I reflect on the people who have supported and encouraged me. The people who made it possible for me to reach this milestone.

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Abstract

In South Africa the changes in education, emerging from several government documents, resulted in the implementation of inclusive education through the Education White Paper 6. Since then, research into the role of stakeholders in the implementation of inclusion in South Africa has largely focused on teachers. However, parents are also instrumental in the successful implementation of inclusion, particularly in their role as members of School governing bodies. Consequently, the aim of this study was to explore parents' perception of inclusion and exclusion from a Capability perspective in the context of South African primary schools. In addition, given the governance roles of parents assigned to them through the South African Schools Act, an understanding of the perception of parent governors, as well as those not part of school governing bodies was sought.

The study employed a two-phase sequential explanatory mixed method design. Quantitative data were generated from a sample of 901 parents of primary school aged children, drawn from seven primary schools in the Gauteng Province, using a self-developed survey. The qualitative data were generated through semi-structured interviews with 22 parents. The survey data were analysed employing descriptive statistics using frequency analysis. The interview transcripts and survey open-ended questions were analysed using thematic analysis.

The analysis indicates parents have an understanding of inclusion centred on person characteristics. Parents considered the factors of disability, language, socio-economic status, behaviour and learning ability in expressing their understanding of inclusion and exclusion. Parents also demonstrated an understanding of formal and epistemological access regarding enrolment and what happens to children once they are enrolled at school. Parents' consideration of epistemological access also resulted in an expression of the perceived positive and negative impact of inclusion and exclusion.

The findings indicate despite parents' support of the idea of inclusion they have concerns regarding its implementation and its impact on the quality of education their child would receive. An analysis of the results using the Capability approach and the Bio-ecological theory demonstrated gaps in its usage. These gaps were addressed through a conceptual framework integrating concepts drawn from the Bio-Ecological theory and Capability approach. In the conceptual framework I argue that understanding what functioning is valued, and how individuals come to value that specific functioning, through the integration of concepts drawn from both the Capability approach and the Bio-Ecological framework, is important in understanding parents support for inclusion.

Keywords:

Inclusion, inclusive education, exclusion, parents, school governing body, Capability Approach

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Chapter 1: Overview

1.1 Introduction

Inclusion and exclusion in education is brought into the spotlight annually, both at the beginning and end of each academic year in South Africa, with many children excluded from school systems or parts of the school system for various reasons. These occurrences are reported in the mainstream media with reasons for exclusion identified as relating to fees, uniforms, and the replacement of lost textbooks (Maako, 2019; Mamacos, 2019; Shuma, 2021).

In November 2020, an incident relating to a private matric function (the equivalent of a prom in America) occurred in the northern suburb of Brackenfell, which is located in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. This incident highlighted the racial divide that existed at Brackenfell High School where it was reported that matriculants who were not white were not invited to a dance organised by parents of white matriculants. This matter brought to the fore the role that parents can play in fostering inclusion or exclusion in schools. It highlighted not only the role that parents play, but it also indicated that inclusion could occur on multiple levels, or “arenas” (GEMR, 2018, p. 5). These arenas refer to different communities, informal groups, schools, classrooms, and community centres. Parents are found within all arenas/levels and, dependent on the interpretation of inclusion, the manner in which inclusion is implemented will be affected. However, inclusion has not always been a priority in South Africa but emerged as a national imperative, post 1994.

Inclusion in education is not a new concept and can be seen as far back as 1948 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNESCO, 2005). The exclusion of learners experiencing barriers to learning from mainstream education has been questioned by

researchers, programme developers and educators from as early as 1962 (Potgieter-Groot et al., 2012). In South Africa, inclusion emerged as a national imperative since 1994. This occurred as a result of the country's move to democracy, with numerous stakeholders identified as critical to the success of inclusion, including district officials, principals, teachers and parents. However, research into the role of stakeholders, particularly in South Africa, has, to a large extent, focused on teachers and the implementation of policy (Engelbrecht, 2020; Seedat, 2018), overlooking the parent component within inclusion even though parents have been identified as key to the successful implementation of inclusion in policy documents as well as research in South Africa and Africa (Department of Education [DoE], 2001; Swart et al., 2004) as well as internationally (De Boer et al., 2010; Lui et al., 2015; Stevens, & Wurf, 2020). In addition, the research into inclusion is more often than not from an Ecosystemic framework (Engelbrecht, 2020). Research (Amponteng et al., 2019) has however identified limitations of the Ecosystemic theory with regards to inclusion (Engelbrecht, 2020). It is therefore the purpose of this research to investigate perspectives of inclusion and exclusion held by parents of primary school children within the framework of the Capability Approach. Some of these parents are members of the school governance structures, referred to as School Governing Bodies (SGB) in South Africa. This will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters together with an assessment of the relevance of the Capability Approach and the Bio-Ecological Framework with regards to inclusion, ultimately proposing an integration of the frameworks to address the challenges facing inclusion.

1.2 Background

South Africa is a diverse country with a unique context and inclusion needs to be

considered within this context. This section provides the backdrop to the study, setting the scene for inclusion internationally and nationally, while outlining its relevance, along with the importance of parents in inclusion. Finally, the specific theoretical orientation of the study is discussed.

1.2.1 Setting the scene of inclusion

Inclusion emerged internationally in the 1960s and 1970s but the move towards inclusion worldwide was accelerated by the Salamanca Declaration of 1994 that aimed to combat discrimination against children with barriers to learning and development, and promote open and welcoming communities (UNESCO, 1994). South Africa, a signatory to the Salamanca Declaration, viewed inclusion as one of the tools that would play a central role in transforming discriminatory attitudes and structures inherited from the apartheid legacy (DoE, 2001; Engelbrecht, 2020). The belief that inclusion would combat discrimination may stem from the fact that education was used by the apartheid government to entrench discriminatory attitudes and beliefs but, in a democratic society, education can be used to promote inclusion, tolerance, and acceptance.

The National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Service in 1996 signalled the post-apartheid policy development of inclusion in South Africa and culminated with the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001). The Education White Paper 6 outlines government's commitment to providing basic quality education for all children, especially those with barriers to learning, and creating an inclusive and tolerant society (Naicker, 2006; Polat, 2011) which accommodates and respects diversity. Such a society would be inclusive and tolerant of diversity in terms of race, gender, and educational ability. While the policy documents

regarding inclusion are clear, its implementation on the ground is fraught with various challenges (Engelbrecht, 2020). These challenges can be said to stem, in part, from the disparity between policy intention and policy practice (Donohue & Bornman, 2014).

1.2.2 Significance of inclusion and exclusion research

South Africa is ranked by SCOPUS, as one of the top ten countries publishing work on inclusive education (Engelbrecht, 2020). The research on inclusion, which focuses on the implementation of inclusion, falls into two broad themes, namely, "implementation of inclusive education based on the directives of Education White Paper 6 and the development of inclusive school communities, with an emphasis on the role of teachers" (Engelbrecht, 2020, p. 4). This finding is also noted by Seedat (2018) in her thematic review of inclusive education research in South Africa where the majority of the research reviewed focuses on exploring teachers' experiences, attitudes and perceptions of inclusion.

1.2.3 Parents in inclusion research

Although research has focused on the role of teachers, a number of stakeholders have been identified in policy documents and literature as playing a key role in the success of inclusion. These include districts, principals, school-based support teams and parents. However, parents are rarely the focus of studies with Seedat (2018) only identifying two studies focused on parents in her thematic review of inclusive education research in South Africa. Internationally Albuquerque et al. (2019) found that, in addition to the empirical studies identified in a literature review conducted by De Boer et al. (2010), only two studies focused on the parents of children with and without special education needs. However, parents, as members of the school community and part of the governing structures of the

school, hold attitudes and perceptions that influence the manner in which they approach inclusion, thereby impacting its implementation. In addition, given that the attitudes children hold towards inclusion are, in part, informed by the attitudes held by parents (De Boer et al., 2010; Leyser & Kirk, 2011; Sosu & Rydzewska, 2017), it is important to evaluate what parents understand by the term inclusion and their attitudes towards inclusion.

1.2.4 Theoretical introduction

The implementation of inclusion is dependent on the context and interpretation of the policy documents (GEMR, 2018). In South Africa, inclusion is a national priority defined as "a process of addressing the diverse needs of all learners by reducing barriers to, and within the learning environment" (DoE, 2020, para. 2). This focus on contextual factors and its impact on teaching and learning is confirmed by Ntombela and Raymond (2013), who argue that inclusive education is influenced by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, with its recognition that individuals interact with a variety of systems. It is therefore not surprising that inclusive education in South Africa has been investigated using this framework (Du Plessis, 2013; Engelbrecht, 2020; Potgieter-Groot et al., 2012; Swart & Pettipher, 2016). However, the theory does not account for the manner in which the individual factors affect a person's ability and willingness to support and implement inclusion. This limitation is addressed in part by the Bio-Ecological Theory and the Capability Approach.

The mature version of Bronfenbrenner's Ecosystemic theory, the Bio-Ecological Theory, was developed in 2007. This theory was expanded to include not only the context dimension of development but person, process and time dimensions as well (Anderson et

al., 2014; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). Within this theory, individuals are not only impacted by the environment, but they also impact the environment through their interactions. By acknowledging that the interaction between the environment and the individual is bi-directional, this theory allows an investigation of the context which affects an individual's ability to implement inclusion. This includes the nature of the interactions, the personal characteristics and the impact of time on their willingness to support and implement inclusion. However, what this theory does not offer is insight into the motivation to employ or not employ particular personal characteristics, which may support an individual's ability to implement inclusion. In addition, issues around power and identity are not adequately explored within this theoretical approach (Engelbrecht, 2020; Phasha et al., 2017). Thus, the role of agency and freedom in the implementation of inclusion is not addressed.

The aforementioned criticisms of the Bio-Ecological theory could be addressed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum's Capability Approach, a normative framework used to assess individuals' well-being and social arrangements. This is done by recognising that social and environmental factors affect an individual's ability to use resources to transform capabilities into functionings. However, this is influenced by an individual's value of a particular functioning and capability, as well as their personal characteristics.

The next section defines the concepts which underpin this study.

1.3 Definitional understanding of terms

Given the discriminatory past of South Africa, the issues of inclusion and exclusion are contentious therefore definitions of these terms are varied and complex depending on

the context of their use. Consequently, what follows is an attempt to explore the meaning of these terms and how they are understood for this particular project.

1.3.1 Exclusion

Exclusion in South Africa stems from "economic, social and political power structures" (Walton, 2016, p. 95). Lewin (2007, 2009) refers to six zones of exclusion that describe the possible patterns of exclusion that occur within schools. According to Lewin (2007, 2009), some children are denied access to schools while other children are excluded from both the primary and high schools after having gained entry. Reasons for this may be a failure to be selected or an inability to pay costs associated with schooling. After having gained entry, children may exit primary school due to repetition, low achievement, poor attendance, late enrolment, poverty, health, nutrition, being overage, and difficulties with finances (Lewin, 2009).

Lewin's understanding of exclusion provides insight into the notion that exclusion occurs not just across levels, i.e., from school and within the school, but that particular characteristics place a child at risk for exclusion. Slee (2019) refers to these characteristics as "markers of separation, markers of not belonging" (p. 910) or "identity groups" (Slee, 2011, p. 64). Some of the markers of separation or social differentiation refer to poverty, low achievement, nomadic groups and health. Exclusion based on these characteristics is contingent on society's view of difference, thereby determining the treatment of difference (Slee, 2011). Thus, exclusion of individuals occurs, not because they are different, but because of the decisions that are taken around their difference. Societies thinking may result in the breakdown of the bond between society and the individual, resulting in

exclusion. Issues such as race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, migrants and poverty cause the exclusion of these groups of individuals from particular contexts and societies.

Gillies and Robinson (2012) view exclusion as a way of bypassing the need to deal with difficult diversity. Young (2007) found that poverty was one such difficulty because "the poor are seen to be inadequate, dependent, have the wrong personal skills and attitudes as if in a social vacuum and in extreme cases poverty is simply rationalised as a product of biology or culture" (p. 47). Given the social divide that exists in South Africa, this understanding of exclusion implies that a large portion of the population are at risk of being excluded given that 49.2% of people over the age of 18 live in the upper bound poverty line (Statistics South Africa [StatsSA], 2019). More than 60% of children are considered multi-dimensionally poor indicating that they experience multiple deprivations, with black African children experiencing the highest rates of multidimensional poverty. StatsSA (2019) indicates that children between the ages of five and 17 years in South Africa experience the highest deprivation in terms of education, housing, and health. Thus, these children are excluded from education because they are poor. This correlates with news reports that the Department of Education has been inundated with complaints from parents regarding schools' demands for registration fees or donations, or withholding report cards for failure to pay school fees despite these practices being unlawful (Bolwana, 2021; Shuma, 2021).

Equality refers to the equal treatment of individuals however, in a society characterised by large gaps between the "haves" and the "have nots", equal treatment will only result in further inequality and subsequent exclusion. This is because equal treatment implies that everyone will receive the same, meaning that those who have, will have more, and those who did not have to begin with, will have still have less. What is required is

equity which refers to providing differentiated treatment/support based on the needs of the individual. This means that the vulnerable and marginalised in society are provided with more resources/support so that their standard of living is comparable to those who are not considered marginalised and vulnerable. However, those being treated equitably may be further excluded as they are perceived as unfairly receiving more resources than their peers.

The next section provides an understanding of inclusion.

1.3.2 Inclusion

Much like exclusion, inclusion is a contested, multifaceted concept, which is frequently used in the literature, yet not easily defined. Inclusion, as a concept may also be applied to various fields. What follows is an understanding of the term, in this study, defined in relation to the field of education.

The Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Edition defines inclusive education as related to disability and special needs, while simultaneously expressing concerns regarding all barriers to learning (DoE, 2001). Inclusive education can be understood as inclusion occurring within the educational setting, with a focus on equity rather than access. With the understanding of inclusive education relating to disability, special needs and barriers to learning, along with inclusion occurring in the education setting the terms inclusion and inclusive education will be used interchangeably.

In South Africa, inclusion in education developed alongside changes in the political, social, and cultural landscape. Consequently, inclusion is aligned with the Constitution and aims to advance human rights, freedom, equality, and dignity (Andrews et al., 2019; Engelbrecht, 2020). The principles of equality and equity are emphasised in policy

documents such as the South African Schools Act (SASA) (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996a) and Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001). Based on these principles, resources have been distributed based on the characteristics of sameness and non-discrimination (Sayed & Motala, 2012a). However, inclusion is also a social justice issue linked to the principle of equity which is "the quality of being equal and fair" (Unterhalter, 2009, p. 416) even though it may require the inequitable distribution of resources to see meaningful change (Wrigley et al., 2012). The equitable distribution of resources is captured in South Africa's quintile system with a greater percentage of funds allocated to poorer schools as compared to the richer, more developed schools.

The difficulty with defining inclusion lies in the fact that it is not a destination or place, nor is it merely a set of practices but is a philosophy (Graham, 2020). The multifaceted nature of inclusion is captured in the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' (CRPD) definition of inclusion which states that "inclusion is a process of reform reflecting changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures, and strategies in education to overcome barriers" (UNESCO, 2016, p. 3). The political nature of inclusion is captured in the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report on Inclusion (GEMR, 2018). Policy documents in South Africa state that inclusion is a process of attending to the difficulties of the diverse needs of learners through the reduction in barriers to and within learning (DoE, 2020). These definitions all allude to the fact that inclusion is more than just the individual being included but constitutes reforms that need to occur beyond the individual to the academic and community space.

With this in mind, education that is considered inclusive, would consist of three elements,

> active and meaningful participation in a mainstream classroom, a sense of belonging in both the classroom and school community, and shared ownership and responsibility among teachers, administrators, parents and learners for nurturing the development of learners. (Engelbrecht et al., 2005, p. 462)

The notion of belonging is further articulated by Slee (2019, p. 917) who states that "at the heart of inclusion lies the principle and practices of belonging". In addition, barriers to learning can emerge from the community, thereby creating the need to understand various stakeholders' support for inclusion.

Inclusion is more than where a child is placed but it also includes the manner in which that child is treated in the academic space. This links to Morrow's notion of formal and epistemological access (Morrow, 2007). Formal access refers to the placement of the child within academic institutions, while epistemological access refers to what the child is exposed to, and included in, once they are in the institution. Education policy documents affirm the child's right to formal access, that is, the right to be educated at a learning institution (DoE, 2001; RSA, 1996b). However, while the Education White Paper 6 refers to how the child should be included, consideration regarding epistemological access goes largely unacknowledged.

1.3.3 Barriers to learning

According to Grech (2015), disability was understood and constructed even prior to the colonial period. Livingston (2006) states that some impairments, such as blindness, were not even considered a disability in the past even though the conception of disability, as understood today, was influenced by the colonial period.

Grech (2009) argues that, during colonialism, the coloniser, apart from damaging colonised bodies through poverty and violent work practices, among other things, also affected bodies through the transmission of previously unknown diseases, thereby decimating large portions of the colonised population. The severity of the violence inflicted on colonised bodies, under the guise of discipline, often resulted in disfigurement. Through this disfigurement, notions of racial and other categories were cemented, at which point the body of the disfigured slave became the disabled body. Thus, disability came to be a representation of the outcome of wrongdoings, as well as a discipline measure, reminding the colonised of the potential outcome of transgressions. The disabled body was now viewed as representing those who did not follow rules, who disobeyed, or presented as being difficult. Given that the disabled body was worth less and the disability impacted on the ability to work, hierarchies in terms of impairments emerged.

In the 1960s, the concept of disability was dominated by the medical model, with the deficit resulting from the disability being located within the individual. According to this model, those with disabilities were classified as abnormal and in need of special attention (Green & Engelbrecht, 2007). Children with disabilities[1] were assessed by professionals and their identified special needs determined their education opportunities in special settings separate from the mainstream education environment. This view of disability and its association with inclusion still exists today, resulting in research exploring the inclusion of children with disabilities (Amponteng et al., 2019; Torgbenu et al., 2021; Yssel et al., 2007). McKenzie and Loebenstein (2011), report on the continued use of the medical model in

[1] While the use of Person-First-Language has been contested, it has been adopted for this study as it allows for the differentiation between the individual and the disability and is in line with local conventions.

education, with a detrimental effect on the implementation of inclusion.

A discussion around children with and without special needs emerged in the past 30 years (Howell, 2007). In the 1980s, a move towards a broader focus on special educational needs resulted in an understanding of learning and behavioural problems arising from the interplay between the child's predisposition and the environment around him/her. This interplay is identified by Donald (1993, p. 139) as "intrinsically and extrinsically generated", where intrinsic refers to a deficit or disability within the child, and extrinsic refers to systemic and structural factors inherited from the apartheid system.

1.3.4 Parents

In South Africa, much of the caregiving responsibilities and decision-making regarding children are made by individuals who are not the child's biological parents and are referred to as "caregivers". An increase in caregiving provided by extended family members was influenced by apartheid as biological parents had to leave home in search of economic opportunities. Caregiving of children thus fell to extended family or community members (McKenzie & Loebenstein, 2011; Mkhwanazi et al., 2018).

Caregiving and the decisions regarding children are based on "geography, availability of kinship networks, education and employment opportunities" (Mkhwanazi et al., 2018, p. 71). A significant caregiver role is thus played by extended family with whom kinship care is negotiated. In line with this, the South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996a) states that parents are:

a) "The biological or adoptive parent or legal guardian of a learner;

b) The person legally entitled to custody of a learner; or

c) The person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) towards the learner's education at school" (RSA, 1996a, p. 4).

This study therefore adopts the understanding of parent as outlined in the SASA.

1.3.5 School Governing Body (SGB)

School Governing Bodies were mandated by the South African Government through the South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996a). The implementation of SGBs was, in part, intended to promote democracy and tolerance (Heystek, 2011; Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018). The governing body comprises three groups of individuals: elected members, the principal, and members co-opted, elected or appointed to oversee the governance of the school (Bush & Heystek, 2003; RSA, 1996c). Law requires that parents are in the majority on the SGB with the aim to give parents both power and a voice (Mncube & Mafora, 2013), where they previously had none (Heystek, 2011).

SASA stipulates that "the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body" (RSA, 1996a, p. 14). The roles and responsibilities of school governors are extensive and include, among other things, managing finances, managing and maintaining educational and school resources and developing policies. A more detailed discussion of the governance roles and responsibilities of the school governors is given in Chapter 2.

1.3.6 The school classification system in South Africa

The quintile system of classifying schools in South Africa was introduced as part of the National Norms and Standards in 1998 (Corruption Watch, 2013). This system was

aimed at introducing equity within the education system while simultaneously addressing the fear that the white middle-class would move to the private education system. This was done by providing the middle class with a claim in the education system (Sayed & Motala, 2012a).

The quintile system categorises schools into five different quintiles based on the following:

- "weighted household data on the income dependency ratio, better known as the 'unemployment rate'; and
- level of education of the specific community, referred to as the 'literacy rate.'" (Mestry & Bisschoff, 2009:47)

Thus, the quintile of a school is influenced by the level of income, unemployment and literacy levels in the community, with quintile 1 being lowest income and quintile 5 being the highest (Collingridge, 2013). The National Norms and Standards for School Funding were implemented in 1998 (DoE, 1998) but, while every province made strides towards spending an equitable amount on each child, this amount still varied between provinces. In addition, difficulties with the implementation of the fee exemption policy emerged with schools using fees as a means of excluding children. Consequently, amendments were made to the National Norms and Standards for School Funding resulting in the no-fee policy.

In 2007, the no-fee policy was introduced to ensure that certain schools could not charge school, administration, or registration fees. At first, only the most impoverished schools were designated as no-fee paying schools, that is, quintile 1 and 2 schools. However,

this changed in 2011, with quintile 3 schools, included in the no-fee designation (Collingridge, 2013; Dass & Rinquest, 2017; White & Dyk, 2019). Quintile 4 and 5 schools were thus fee-paying schools. Despite quintile 4 and 5 schools being able to charge fees, children cannot be denied access to these schools based on affordability. Instead, a policy of fee exemption exists which allows parents to apply for fee reduction or exemption at fee paying schools.

The rationale behind no-fee paying schools was to allow the state to address inequity in previously disadvantaged communities (Sayed & Motala, 2012a). This implied that "public spending on schools must be specifically targeted to the needs of the poorest" (DoE, 2006, p. 13). The no-fee policy has however served to further entrench inequity despite being aimed at addressing the inequity between schools. The fee and no-fee paying schools resulted in what Sayed and Motala (2012a) refer to as a "two-tier system of schooling" (p. 673) in which the middle and upper class continue to have access to superior education, while the poor continue to receive a poor education in an under-resourced environment. The system has therefore served to widen the gap between fee and no-fee paying schools.

The next section discusses the rationale for the study.

1.4 Problem statement and rationale

The social and political changes that emerged with the election of the democratic government in South Africa in 1994 included changes to the education system, with the formation of a singular education system and the development of inclusive education policies in line with the new dispensation goals for democracy and human rights. The

Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996b) asserted the fundamental right of all learners to basic quality education, which addresses the issues of access, equity and redresses the wrongs of the apartheid past (Du Plessis, 2013). Furthermore, the South African Constitution entitles all children to be part of society and supported by their community (DoE, 2003). Children who were previously denied access to education because of disabilities or barriers to learning were now to be included in not only the education system, but also in society. However, these societies were, in part, responsible for their exclusion and marginalisation due to cultural beliefs and attitudes which stemmed from the exo-system and the impact of these beliefs across time (Mulligan et al., 2017; Munyi, 2012).

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996b) maintains that children with and without barriers to learning should be supported by the parents in the community. With regards to the support that parents should offer, the education department identifies specific roles and responsibilities (DoE, 2003) that relate to an awareness of inclusion, parents acting as advocates/activists for their children, setting up support networks, supporting teachers, and raising awareness around issues of inclusion (DoE, 2003). The roles and responsibilities assigned to parents show that the Department of Education relies, in part, on the parent/caregiver community to support the implementation of inclusion. In order to facilitate this, the education department asserts that it will educate society regarding the policies of inclusion (DoE, 2001).

South Africa has developed several documents related to inclusion: SASA (RSA, 1996a), Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) and Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) (DBE, 2014). The SASA is a legislative document and thus outlines standards and principles, i.e., laws that must be followed. The Education White

Paper 6 is a discussion document and presents a broad statement of government intentions, while the SIAS is a policy document outlining what government hopes to achieve (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, 2022). Du Plessis (2013) argues that the success or failure of a policy is dependent on the support that the policy garners from those who are affected by it. In addition, an understanding of the terms of reference of the policy is important to consider when evaluating a policy. Research conducted in Zimbabwe (Chimhenga, 2016) and Nigeria (Afolabi et al., 2015) indicates that parents do not understand what is meant by inclusion. This also applies in South Africa even though parents are required to support the policies of inclusion as laid out by the South African government (Kern, 2020). Furthermore, policy documents state that parents have roles, responsibilities, and obligations in relation to inclusion (DoE, 2003), yet parents' ability to fulfil the role and responsibilities assigned to them has not been ascertained. I argue that parents' capabilities to fulfil these roles cannot be understood using an ecosystemic lens, which ultimately looks at contextual factors that impact development. Instead, what is needed is an approach that looks at the impact of the context, the functioning and capabilities of the individuals, and what informs those functionings and capabilities.

The Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2014) argues that learners are faced with challenges that arise from experiences at school, home, within the community and intrinsically, such as physical disabilities or illness. This highlights the role that the community, specifically the parent community, have in inclusion. Parents are important participants to study because they may hold stereotypes which hinder the unconditional acceptance of children with barriers, which is an aim of the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001). In addition, parents hold a central role

because they can identify barriers to learning and development in their children. To this end, the SIAS (DBE, 2014, p. 41) document states that parents should receive training with regards to inclusion and that this training should include:

- "Conscientising parents and other community stakeholders to the messages of inclusive education;
- Understanding inclusive communities;
- Developing community networks; and
- Parent participation".

Parents' roles in inclusion extend beyond the impact they have on their individual child/children to the impact that they have on the community and the resources available through the development of community networks. Parents' roles in inclusion relate to their decisions regarding the education placement and the development of their children, the influence that they exert in motivating for support services for their children, and their responses to inclusion that are crucial for determining its social validity (Duhaney & Salend, 2000). The role parents play as members of the School Governing Bodies (SGB) means that they have a significant say with regards to decision-making in the school, with these governance structures aimed at advancing the "democratic transformation of society" (RSA, 1996c, p. 1). In their role as SGB members, parents are responsible for the formation and implementation of school policies related to issues such as fees, uniforms and extramurals, to mention a few (RSA, 1996c). This influential group of individuals consequently has a part to play in the inclusion and exclusion of children with regards to access.

While Seedat (2018) identified two studies which focused on parents in her literature review, there are published studies in South Africa on parents' perceptions of inclusion (Belknap et al., 1999; Engelbrecht et al., 2005; Swart et al., 2004; Yssel et al., 2007) as well as studies describing the importance of the role that parents have in inclusion at schools (Engelbrecht et al., 2005; Sosu & Rydzewska, 2017). There is however a dearth of research into the role of parents, as members of the SGB, in the implementation of inclusion of learners at schools, given their roles in the decision-making bodies of the schools. School governing bodies are expected to be a channel for "democracy, equity and equality" (Bush & Heystek, 2003, p. 137). However, a growing body of literature suggests that SGBs are not functioning democratically (Mncube, 2007; Sayed & Soudien, 2005) but as gatekeepers to schools through the development of policies. Their attitudes therefore affect the inclusion and exclusion of learners as they link to issues of both formal and epistemological access.

The gaps identified in the literature and the role of parents in the successful implementation of inclusion, led this study to an investigation into parent members of the SGB and non-member parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion.

1.5 Research aims

Based on the dearth of literature with regards to parents' understanding of the concepts of inclusion and exclusion, the primary aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of parents towards inclusion and exclusion within the context of South African mainstream primary schools. This included the perceptions of both parent members and non-members of the SGB and an understanding of how parents view barriers to learning with particular reference to the intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics parents consider as

barriers to learning. This involves parents' perceptions of the inclusion of children with these characteristics.

1.6 Research questions

The research was based on the following key research questions:

- What are the perceptions of parent members of the SGB towards issues of inclusion and exclusion?
- What are the perceptions of non-SGB parents towards issues of inclusion and exclusion?

In order to further explore the key research questions, the following sub questions were formulated:

1. What do parent members of the SGB and other parents understand by the terms "inclusion" and "exclusion"?
2. What characteristics do parent members of the SGB and other parents use to include and exclude learners from school and/or school activities?

1.7 Positionality of the researcher

Research conducted in the social and educational spheres is not value-free, and this research, traversing both spheres was no different (Holmes, 2020). My experiences as a primary school teacher in the early 2000s, as an educational psychologist, and as a mother influenced the research design, questions and analysis. My initial teaching experience, particularly with children with barriers to learning in my classroom, their families, and my

feelings of inadequacies as a teacher, resulted in my area of research interest, i.e., inclusion and inclusive education. Conversations with family members and friends regarding the difficulties their children faced at school, further spurred my interest in the research area. Questions regarding how children with barriers to learning could be meaningfully included in mainstream schools emerged, along with what needed to change for this to occur. As I grappled with these questions, conversations with various groups of people highlighted how individuals, as teachers, parents and psychologists, had a role to play in inclusion.

Becoming a mother in the formal academic space during the completion of this research further influenced my role as a researcher particularly as I grappled with issues of inclusion and epistemological access for my own children. The experience as a parent caused me to question the concept of inclusion, and whether this was in the best interest of children and their parents. Tensions regarding my belief in the concept and ideal of inclusion as a professional, and my disillusionment as a parent were navigated and resolved.

Being a non-white female, who grew up in the context of some of the participating schools, i.e., coloured townships, as well as a parent to children within the education system, positioned me as an insider, who "is someone whose personal biography (gender, race, skin-color, class, sexual orientation and so on) gives them a lived familiarity with and a priori knowledge of the group being researched" (Holmes, 2020, p. 6). I therefore have an understanding of the context that some of the participants in the study are exposed to and live with. However, I am also an outsider given that I have not lived in those contexts for several years and my children do not attend those schools. I am also an outsider to many of the participants not being black or attending black township schools. My assumptions regarding the parents and their contexts needed to be acknowledged for this research.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

The following indicates the manner in which the thesis is structured:

Chapter 1: Overview

This chapter provides a brief background to the study. It does so by providing an introduction and background, and overview of the theoretical framework underpinning the study. This is followed by an explication of key terms used in the study, the rationale for the study and the research aims and questions. The chapter concludes with an outline of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter presents a critical review of the relevant literature in the field along with the theoretical perspective adopted for the study.

Chapter 3: Methods

This chapter describes the mixed methods approach used in the current study. It describes the context of the study and the rationale for adopting a mixed method approach. The sample and sampling technique, instrumentation, data collection methods and data analysis technique are portrayed.

Chapter 4: South African parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education in primary schools

This article was published in the *Perspectives in Education* journal in 2020. Its focus was aimed at exploring parents who do not form part of the SGB's understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education. The article argues that parents are not able to support the implementation of inclusion if they do not have an accurate understanding of the term.

Chapter 5: Who is in and who is out: Parents' views on barriers to learning

This paper, published in the *International Journal of Inclusive Education* in 2020, investigated parents who do not form part of the SGB's perceptions of barriers to learning with the aim of understanding how these perceptions support or hinder inclusion. The article further explored parental support for formal and epistemological access by investigating the influence of value, as it is expressed in the Capability Approach.

Chapter 6: SGB's perceptions of inclusion: The parent component

The perceptions of parent members of the SGB towards inclusion were explored in this qualitative paper submitted for review to the *South African Journal of Education* (*SAJE*). Perceptions of the parents' role in the implementation of inclusion in the context of South African mainstream primary schools were also investigated.

Chapter 7: Using a combined Bio-Ecological and Capability perspective to understand inclusive education in South Africa

This paper, accepted by the *Prospects* Journal, unpacks the manner in which Bronfenbrenner's Bio-Ecological model and the Capability Approach could be used to understand the challenges facing the implementation of inclusion in South Africa. Integrated conceptual reasons for the hindrances to inclusion is then presented as an alternative framework.

Chapter 8: Putting things in perspective

This chapter aims to synthesise the preceding chapters and provides an argument for how the four manuscripts together constitute an original contribution to the field of inclusion.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the findings, along with implications for theory and practice. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The section that follows briefly reviews international, African and South African literature on inclusion in South Africa. The section discusses inclusion in relation to parents and gives an overview of the origin of SGBs, their composition and the issues surrounding them. Key words used to identify relevant literature included “inclusion”, “inclusive education”, “parents”, “special needs”, “barriers to learning”, “disability”, “school governing bodies” and “school governance”. The next section gives a brief history of inclusive education in South Africa.

2.1 History of Inclusive Education in South Africa

The promulgation of the Bantu Education Act (1953), the Indian Education Act (1965) and the Coloured Persons’ Education Act (1963) entrenched racial disparities and contributed to huge imbalances in the provision of education, especially in per capita funding (DoE, 1997). Not only was the education system divided according to racial lines, but it was also divided according to disability, with disabled white learners being educated at well-resourced schools specifically for children with disabilities (Walton & Rusznyak, 2014). The education of all “non-white” children was inferior compared to that of their white counterparts. This was reflected in a statement made by Hendrik Verwoerd in the 1950’s, who claimed that

> there is no place for the bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour ... what is the use of teaching the bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? That is quite absurd. Education must train people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to

the sphere in which they live. (MATRIX: The Center for Humane Arts & Letters and Social Sciences Online, 2015)

Consequently, black children's education was aimed at teaching them to become manual labourers and servants. The disparate school infrastructure inherited from the apartheid era, resulting in well-resourced suburban schools and poorly resourced inner city and township schools, is still evident, and has implications for the level of education offered.

One of the spheres poised for transformation when apartheid legislation was repealed was education. In 1994, the general and segregated system of education which had been prevalent under the apartheid regime was amalgamated into one unitary and non-racial system, and a unified national education department was established (RSA, 1996a). After many years of discriminatory practices, there was a drive to investigate and institute new policies and legislation in education, beginning with the Constitution which emphasises the rights of all South African citizens to basic education (RSA, 1996a). This research argues however that, while access to basic education is a basic human right, many individuals' access is impeded, in part by the exclusionary practices of schools.

Government documents, policies and legislation have played a pivotal role in the development of inclusive education in South Africa. The South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996a) and Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) are discussed below.

South African Schools Act

The South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996 (SASA) (RSA, 1996a), a legislative document, emerged from the White Paper on the organisation governance and funding of schools (RSA, 1996a). At the beginning of 1997, the SASA abolished the exclusion of learners

from schools based on their race. Although, historically, school attendance was not compulsory, the Act instituted compulsory school attendance for children stating that

> every parent must cause every learner for whom he or she is responsible to attend a school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first. (RSA, 1996a, p. 6–7)

In addition, the SASA provided a channel for parents to become involved in school governance by mandating that all public schools in South Africa must have a democratically elected school governing body (SGB) (McKenzie & Loebenstein, 2011). Mncube & Mafora, 2013; RSA, 1996c), where public schools refers to those institutions which are governed and funded by government.

One of the aims of the Act was to address past exclusion and facilitate transformation aligned with the Constitution (Mohapi & Netshingani, 2018). Section 5(1) of the Act states: “A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way” (RSA, 1996a, p. 6). The Act adds: “In determining the placement of a learner with special education needs, the Head of Department and principal must take into account the rights and wishes of the parents of such learner” (RSA, 1996a, p. 7). Additionally, while SGBs are tasked with determining the school’s admission policy, according to the Act, the rights and wishes of parents regarding the placement their child with special needs overrides the admission policy of the SGB (Engelbrecht, 2006; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; RSA, 1996c).

SGBs are given autonomy regarding school governance and funding and were also tasked with determining policies in relation to language, religious observances, and school fees. However, in line with non-discrimination, children may not be excluded from schools based on unaffordability, despite fee policies being determined and implemented by the SGBs (RSA, 1996c). Instead based on the SASA (RSA, 1996a), parents may apply to the SGB for a fee reduction or exemption.

Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE, 2001)

The Education White Paper 6 emerged from recommendations made by the 1996 NCSNET and the NCESS (Engelbrecht, 2020). It outlines the progressive transformation of education so that all children are able to access quality education. The transformed education system is focused on addressing and accommodating children experiencing a diversity of barriers to learning (Engelbrecht et al., 2015). The key goals of Education White Paper 6 are twofold: firstly, a move away from segregation according to classes of disabilities; and secondly, the provision of support for learners with disabilities is based on the level of support that they need (DoE, 2001). With the implementation of this policy, the aim of education is to include those members of society who have historically been excluded or marginalised from education. These marginalised groups include, amongst others, individuals with disabilities and the poor (Sayed & Motala, 2012b). Green and Engelbrecht (2007) argue that, with its view of disability as being a facet of human difference, the Education White Paper 6 adopts a social perspective on disability.

The next section discusses parents and their role in the development of inclusive education in South Africa.

2.2 Parents' role in the move to inclusive education in South Africa

In South Africa, prior to 1994, the participation of parents in education was given very little recognition, with their participation usually relegated to fundraising events (Heystek, 2011). The South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996a) and the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) now espouse parents' rights to educational placements of their choice for their children as parents are considered to be "integral partners in developing a more inclusive system, where decision making and the responsibilities for outcomes are shared" (Swart et al., 2004, p. 81).

Before democracy, children with disabilities were being educated in mainstream schools, usually by default due to the lack of special schools, especially for black children. However, in the 1990s, South African parents started advocating for their children with disabilities to be formally enrolled in mainstream education, despite access to special schools. This resulted in children with disabilities being enrolled in mainstream schools. Their advocacy role thus made way for parents to be involved in the school placement decisions and learning support programmes offered to their children (Engelbrecht, 2006). This was also highlighted by Kozelski et al (2008) who note that, unlike in the United States where schools initiated the process of inclusion, parents in South Africa made the decision to have their children enrolled in mainstream schools.

While the White Paper 6, outlining government's ideals towards inclusion was published 20 years ago, Engelbrecht (2020) argues that its implementation is not static but needs to be responsive to social and economic factors within schools. For parents, this may make supporting and implementing inclusion difficult, as they may need to address different

exclusionary pressures and practices, depending on their context. Mansfield-Barry and Stwayi (2017, p. 78) state that "the SGB must decide on and carry out school policies that are suitable for the school." This implies that the SGB therefore requires that its members be knowledgeable regarding policy and its amendments, along with an ability to be flexible in order to implement the amendments. The ability to fulfil a role on the SGB thus relates to its members' personal characteristics.

2.3 Parents' views on inclusion

An international literature review conducted by De Boer et al. (2010) found that the attitudes and behaviours of children without barriers to learning towards their peers with special education needs were found to be reflective of their parents' attitudes. This finding is consistent with Leyser and Kirk (2011) who conducted a study into parental views of inclusive education in the USA. These findings show that the views that parents hold inform their children's level of acceptance and tolerance.

Literature on parents' views towards inclusion includes parents' perceptions and attitudes. While there is a difference between the meaning of perception and attitude, this distinction has not been made in the literature related to parents and inclusion. Consequently, the following section reviews literature, both internationally and in South Africa, on the views that parents hold towards inclusion, as well as the factors that affect their views.

Although literature regarding the attitudes of South African parents towards inclusive education is scant, a collaborative study conducted between three South African universities and one mid-western university in the United States by Yssel et al. (2007) found

no difference between South African and American parents' perceptions towards inclusion despite differences in political, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Given this finding, both South African literature and international literature will be explored, since the perceptions of parents from other countries may be similar to those of South African parents. Furthermore, much of the research conducted on the perception of parents towards inclusion was around a particular category of disability, as opposed to barriers to learning.

Research in Africa and internationally has found that parents' involvement in the education of their children with and without special education needs is significant (De Boer et al., 2010; Harilaos et al., 2020; Opoku et al., 2019; Yssel et al., 2007). The reasons for this relate to the fact that they are influential in "advocating for better support, improved services and increased opportunities for their child" (Stevens & Wurf, 2020, p. 352). Parents are also the decision makers in the educational placements of their children and their knowledge regarding their child's needs and management is crucial for their teachers (Stevens & Wurf, 2020). This finding is mirrored by Kozelski et al. (2008) where the American parent cohort of the study where it was noted that parents felt that they could provide information that would assist the teachers in the development of individual learning plans.

Sosu and Rydzewska (2017) believe that parents have a role in the development and implementation of inclusive policies and the nature of resources that are assigned to them. Parental involvement, in this case, refers both to parents who are members of the SGB and those who are not members. On the contrary, parental knowledge regarding inclusion was

found to be limited or non-existent in the Torgbenu et al. (2021) and Opoku et al. (2019) studies conducted in Nigeria and Ghana. Thus, parents' understanding of what is meant by inclusion is limited. It is for this reason that this study aims to understand parents' knowledge regarding inclusion in South Africa.

Research has confirmed that parents hold positive perceptions and attitudes towards inclusion. In a study of 159 Greek parents, Harilaos et al. (2020) found that parents were positive towards the inclusion of children diagnosed with ASD. Sosu and Rydzewska (2017), who drew data from survey responses in the Growing Up in Scotland Survey, found that 90% of parents held positive attitudes towards inclusion amongst their sample of 2200 Scottish parents. Additionally, the majority of the surveyed Australian parents of children with special needs and those without, in the Stevens and Wurf (2020) study, indicated support for inclusion and identified numerous benefits for children with and without barriers to learning. The findings from these international studies are confirmed by studies conducted in the African countries of Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe (Mudekunye & Ndamba, 2011; Torgbenu et al., 2021; Opoku et al., 2019). However, Stevens and Wurf (2020, p. 353) argue that the positive perception of parents towards inclusion is a reflection of their desire to be "politically correct". Thus, while parents express a positive attitude towards inclusion, they express concerns related to the day-to-day implementation of inclusion.

2.3.1 Factors impacting parents' views on inclusive education

South Africa has adopted the term "barriers to learning" to identify factors that may hinder a child's development with regards to teaching and learning. There is a dearth of

literature referring to parents and barriers to learning, with literature typically referring to the inclusion of children with special needs and/or disabilities. Given that special needs and disabilities are considered to be contributing factors to the development of barriers to learning, literature related to these has been included here. Various factors were found to impact parents' perceptions of inclusion that include socio-economic status, parental education levels, severity of disability, the age of parents, and marital status.

Globally, De Boer et al. (2010) and Harilaos et al. (2020) found that socio-economic status was a determinant of parental perceptions towards inclusion. Specifically, parents with a high to average socio-economic status held significantly more favourable perceptions towards inclusion than parents with a low socio-economic status. This is supported by research conducted on the African continent, with the quantitative study by Afolabi et al. (2015) producing similar findings amongst their sample of 372 parents. However, Sosu and Rydzewska (2017) found that parents from a lower socio-economic background held more positive beliefs towards inclusion, when compared to those from high socio-economic background amongst their sample of 2200 participants in Scotland. This finding is particularly relevant because South Africa as a country is considered to have the "most unequal income distribution in the world" (Peterson, 2017, p. 4), resulting in large discrepancies in the economic status of its citizens (Hundenborn et al., 2018). The economic status of individuals and communities in South Africa also influences the type of schools that parents enrol their children into, ranging from no-fee paying schools to fee-paying schools.

Another influencing factor is that of parental education level. Studies have found that parents with only a high school education are less favourable towards the inclusion of learners with barriers to learning than parents who have continued their education beyond

grade 12 in Nigeria, Greece, United States, and Australia (Afolabi et al., 2015; Harilaos et al., 2020; Leyser & Kirk, 2011; Stevens & Wurf, 2020). In particular, Opoku et al. (2019) found that parents from Ghana and Nigeria, who held a diploma or bachelor qualification, were more positive about inclusion when compared to parents with only a secondary qualification, amongst a sample of 1075 parents. This finding is however contradicted by the cross-sectional study by De Boer et al. (2012) and the De Boer and Munde (2015) study who found no correlation between the education level of parents and their attitude towards inclusion in the Netherlands. As the contradictory finding is only prevalent in one country, i.e., Netherlands, the finding by researchers, that level of education influences parents' perceptions of education is persuasive. Given South Africa's history, the notion that education level may impact a parent's attitude towards inclusion is relevant since many individuals did not have access to quality education during the apartheid era, and many South Africans did not complete their formal schooling.

Additionally, a correlation was found between marital status and beliefs about inclusion with married parents and those with one or two children holding more positive beliefs about inclusion compared to single or divorced parents and those with more children (Afolabi et al., 2015; Leyser & Kirk, 2004). These survey results are consistent with the survey results of Harilaos et al. (2020) in which the results indicated that married parents are more positive towards inclusion. South Africa however has a high percentage of single parents, with 40% of parents being single mothers in 2008 (Duh et al., 2015). This may impact South African parents' attitudes towards inclusion.

The age of parents was also found to be a factor affecting their views towards inclusion with younger parents found to be more receptive to inclusive education than older

parents both in Africa and internationally (Afolabi et al., 2015; De Boer & Munde, 2015; De Boer & Pijl et al., 2012; Harilaos et al., 2020; Lui et al., 2015; Opoku et al., 2019). However, these findings are contradicted by Abu-Hamour and Muhaidat's (2014) study conducted in Jordan, and Sosu and Rydzewska's study (2017) conducted in Scotland, with the findings in the former study indicating no significant statistical difference, while the latter study found that older parents were more positive towards inclusion. All the studies, barring the Sosu and Rydzewska (2017) study, made use of survey instruments to collect their data. Sosu and Rydzewska (2017) conducted interviews with 2200 participants. Given that this finding is specific to a country, while the finding that younger parents are more positive towards inclusion is more prevalent globally, this outcome is likely to be more persuasive. As the average age of first time parents in South Africa is between the ages of 18 and 21 (Johannes, 2020), many parents of school going age children are younger, and may hold more positive views towards inclusion.

With regards to gender, female parents were found to hold more positive views towards inclusive education than males in Nigeria with a study consisting of 79% females and 20% males (n=372 participants) (Afolabi et al., 2015). This however contrasts with the Amponteng et al.'s (2019) study in Ghana where the sample was made up of 49% females and 51% males (n=411), and Lui et al.'s (2015) study in Hong Kong made up of 82% females and 17% males (n=586). In their studies, Amponteng et al. (2019) and Lui et al. (2015) found that males were more knowledgeable about inclusive education than females.

In summary, based on the research reviewed, various factors may impact parents' perceptions and attitudes towards inclusive education that include socio-economic status, level of education, marital status, age, and gender. In South Africa, one of the most unequal

countries in the world, these factors, particularly in relation to socio-economic status and education, are significant for the present study. The reason for this is that some of the research sites are identified as no-fee paying schools situated in areas of low socio-economic status.

2.3.2 Views of parents of children without special education needs

A review of the international literature found that parents of children without special education needs generally hold positive perceptions towards having children with special education needs in mainstream classrooms (De Boer et al., 2010; Duhaney & Salend, 2000; Ferguson, 2008; Harilaos, 2020; Hilbert, 2014; Sosu & Rydzewska, 2017). Parents find that, because of the inclusion of children with special needs, their children without special needs developed increased self-concepts, improved social skills, fostered an acceptance of individual differences, and developed sensitivity towards others.

Internationally, the allocation of teacher time is a concern for parents. The research shows that parents feel that their child without special needs will receive less attention than learners with special needs, and that this will compromise their children's academic development (Afolabi et al., 2015; Magumise & Sefotho, 2018; Narumanchi & Bhargava, 2011; Stevens & Wurf, 2018). In South Africa, the issue of teacher time was raised by the qualitative study by Geldenhuys and Wevers (2013) who argue that children with barriers to learning may not receive the required attention in mainstream classes. This is corroborated by the survey research conducted in the Scottish context where Sosu and Rydzewska (2017) argue that the inclusion of children with special education needs will detract from the time teachers can afford children without special education needs. However, these findings are

contrasted by a study conducted in Greece where parents were not concerned about the attention their child without a special learning need would receive from the teacher (Harilaos et al., 2020). However, the Harilaos et al. (2020) study consisted of only 159 parents who completed surveys, while the Sosu and Rydzewska (2017) study included interviews with 2200 participants. The fact that the implementation of inclusion is context specific may account for parents' experiences of inclusion, and thus their concerns.

The behaviour of children without special needs emerged as a concern for parents in the De Boer et al. (2010) study. Analysis of the data found that parents were concerned that their children would be negatively influenced to behave immaturely or inappropriately as a result of the presence of learners with special education needs in the classroom. However, this finding is contradicted by the Harilaos et al. (2020) study which focused specifically on the inclusion of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This study found that Greek parents did not believe that the inclusion of children with ASD would negatively impact their children. Behaviour was thus not a concern for these parents. While parents in Greece did not demonstrate a concern for the behaviour of their child without ASD, the Hilbert (2014) study, which investigated the perceptions to inclusion of 64 parents of pre-school children through the use of a survey, demonstrates that parents are unlikely to support the inclusion of children with cognitive, emotional, and behavioural disorders. They are however willing to support the inclusion of children with physical disabilities, such as visual impairments, speech impairments and orthopaedic impairments. A possible explanation for the variation in opinion expressed in the two studies could be the fact that the children in the Hilbert study were pre-schoolers, and parents are more protective of this age cohort.

An additional drawback to inclusion for parents was the level of teacher training. Parents felt that teachers, both at pre- and in-service levels, were not adequately trained to teach learners with varying learning needs (Leyser & Kirk, 2004; Stevens & Wurf, 2020). In his study on stakeholders' attitudes towards inclusive education in Zimbabwe, Chimhenga (2016) found that parents believed that including children with barriers may slow the pace of teaching, thus negatively affecting their children. Here, the perceptions of parents in America, Australia, and Zimbabwe are consistent.

2.3.3 Views of parents of children with special education needs

The perspectives of parents to the inclusion of children with special education needs internationally are generally positive and identify several benefits for their children (Afolabi et al., 2015; Brydges & Mkandawire, 2018; Hilbert, 2014; Lui et al., 2015; Narumanchi & Bhargava, 2011; Sosu & Rydzewska, 2017; Stevens & Wurf, 2020; Yssel et al., 2007). These include providing a stimulating environment in which their children are accepted, which prepares them for the world outside of school, and an improvement in the children's self-esteem and social development. Specifically, in South Africa, Engelbrecht (2005) notes that parents want their children to be included and consider social development to be more important than academic development. This is echoed by Australian parents in the Stevens and Wurf (2020) study who state that socialisation is important for parents of children with a disability. This however contrasts with findings from the Netherlands where parents' concerns regarding inclusion outweigh the perceived benefits (De Boer et al., 2010). Specifically, parents in the study believed that inclusion would likely interfere with the emotional development of their children. Siewe (2012) had a similar finding with parents in the South African study expressing concern regarding their children's happiness.

A study conducted by Gibb et al. (2007) in the UK found that parents expressed concerns regarding the appropriateness of the curriculum for the child with special educational needs, along with the availability of support services at the mainstream school placement. This is supported by Stevens and Wurf (2020) who found that parents were concerned about the lack of resources available to their children with disabilities in the mainstream environment. While inclusive education makes use of individualised learning plans for learners with barriers to learning, the development and implementation of these were a concern for parents abroad, along with the availability of individualised and specialised attention that would usually be accessible at a special school (De Boer et al., 2010; Leyser & Kirk, 2004). Despite being physically included in meetings and in the development of learning plans for their children, parents felt excluded because of the terminology that was used by the teachers and other professionals at meetings. Also, parents are invariably outnumbered by school staff at these meetings, which can be intimidating (Yssel et al., 2007). The findings from the American parent cohort in the Kozelski et al. (2008) study mirror these findings.

Parents of children with special education needs also expressed concerns regarding teachers' perceived lack of training to successfully implement inclusion and work with children with barriers to learning (De Boer et al., 2010; Hilbert, 2014; Leyser & Kirk, 2004; Stevens & Wurf, 2020; Yssel et al., 2007). This extended to their ability to adapt classroom programmes and integrate learners with special needs (Leyser & Kirk, 2004). In keeping with the medical model, parents are consequently advised to seek support outside of the school environment in the form of therapists (McKenzie & Loebenstein, 2011). In addition to the training of teachers, parents also identified teacher attitudes as being instrumental in the

success of inclusion (Engelbrecht, 2006). In their literature review, De Boer et al. (2010) also found that teacher attention was a concern for parents. The finding that parents of children with special education are concerned regarding teacher training and teacher attitude is thus consistent globally as well as in South Africa.

Parents of children with a disability in the Hilbert (2014) study were likely to support the inclusion of children with physical disabilities in mainstream education depending on the severity of the disability. They were however not in favour of including children with autism, emotional and behavioural disorders and those identified as having cognitive impairments. This finding is similar to parents of children without special education needs in the same study.

The review of the research presented demonstrates that parental attitudes towards inclusive education are similar in many countries, including countries on the African continent. The reviewed literature indicates that, while parents of children with and without special needs are generally supportive of inclusion, and identify positive outcomes, they harbour concerns. Given the status of education in South Africa, these concerns are based on the support that parents, both those who are members of the SGB and those who are not, display towards inclusion.

Parents of children with and without barriers to learning may affect the governance of schools through their membership in SGBs. The next section gives attention to SGBs in South Africa.

2.4 School Governing Bodies

To truly foster inclusion, SGBs must overcome both external and internal exclusion.

External exclusion refers to the exclusion of learners based on the policies or social practices of the schools (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2004). Internal exclusion refers to the physical inclusion of individuals while simultaneously excluding them from interactions and engagement. These individuals may therefore be pushed to the outskirts, marginalised or ignored (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2004; Slee, 2011; Young, 2007).

2.4.1 History of SGBs

While the policy on SGBs was legislated in South Africa in 1996, in England and Wales, SGBs have been in existence since the 1980s (Mncube & Mafora, 2013). In these countries, the main function of the SGBs was the administration of the schools as a representative of the local education authorities. During the past two decades, many countries have seen a shift to self-governance for schools (Bush & Heystek, 2003; Heystek, 2011). While forms of self-governance differ considerably from country to country, they are underpinned by notions of democracy and school efficacy. The primary aim of governance structures globally are the same – to assist schools in achieving the teaching and learning outcomes (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018).

In South Africa, the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto school uprising and the development of a People's Education Discourse in the 1980s gave rise to the idea of democratic governing bodies (Karlsson, 2002). This, along with other developments, saw the national government move gradually away from its divisive and segregated past towards democracy (Mncube & Mafora, 2013). This led to the path of the decentralisation of power through the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 (RSA, 1996a). The move to decentralisation was fuelled by the belief that a democratic society is built from the

foundations of democratic schools and, in order for this to happen, schools should be given more freedom (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004; Mncube, 2007). The belief grounding decentralisation is that the state needs to share its power with stakeholders closer to the schools, and that this will result in "healthier and stronger relationships between schools and communities" (Van Wyk, 2007, p. 132). The notion of democracy is firmly entrenched in the Education White Paper 2 (RSA, 1996c), in which the core values of school governance are identified as follows:

- "Representation – of all stakeholder groups
- Participation – in active and responsible roles
- Tolerance
- Rational Discussion
- Collective decision-making" (RSA, 1996c, p. 16)

In a post-apartheid South Africa, the challenge is to "ensure that South Africans have the knowledge, values, skills, creativity and critical thinking required to build democracy, development, equity, cultural pride, and social justice" (RSA, 2000, p. 9). This is a challenge to SGB members, who do not necessarily have the skills, knowledge and critical thinking skills, to develop and implement policies that are for the good of all (Mncube, 2007; Van Wyk, 2007).

2.4.2 Composition of the SGB

The SGB comprises three groups of individuals. Firstly, there are elected members

who are made up of parents or guardians of learners, teachers, learners who are in or above grade 8 level, and are elected members of the Representative Council of Learners, and non-teacher members of staff (RSA, 1996a). South Africa is one of the few countries with learner governors. Given that many of the learners in South African high schools are above the age of 18, they have a strong claim to involvement (Bush & Heystek, 2003). The second is the principal, and the third comprises members who have been co-opted into the SGB (RSA, 1996c).

The exact number of members on a SGB is dependent on the number of learners in the school, as is reflected in Table 2.1 (Province of the Eastern Cape Education, 2012). According to the policy document governing SGBs, parents are to hold the majority (51%), regardless of the school's size, since they have the greatest personal investment in the school's development because their children are enrolled at the school (Karlsson, 2002). Given that the term of office is three years and dependent on a child's enrolment at the school, parent participation levels are fluid, while those of the principal and staff remain consistent (Heystek, 2011; Karlsson, 2002).

Table 2.1: Composition of SGB

Type of school	Number of learners enrolled	Principal	Number of teacher members	Number of parent members	Number of non-teacher members	Number of learner members	Total number of members
Primary School	1 – 159	1	1	4	1	0	7
	160 – 719	1	2	5	1	0	9
	720 or	1	3	6	1	0	11

	more						
Secondary School	1 – 629	1	2	7	1	2	13
	630 or more	1	3	9	1	3	17
Combined School	1 – 500	1	2	1	1	2	13
	501 or more	1	3	9	1	3	17

(Adapted from Province of the Eastern Cape Education (2012)

Given that this study only investigates the parent component of the SGB, the next section discusses parents, as members of the SGB.

2.4.3 Governance functions of the SGB

According to the SASA (RSA, 1996a), SGBs have been assigned specific roles and responsibilities. With regards to finances, these functions include: starting and overseeing a school fund; preparing annual budgets; preparing audited financial statements; paying for services; supplementing funds; collecting and managing school fees; overseeing additional fundraising events; and the application for exemption of school fees (Mncube & Mafora, 2013; Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018; RSA, 1996a).

With regards to school resources, SGBs are responsible for: “buying textbooks, educational material or equipment for the school” (Corruption Watch, 2013) and maintaining the school grounds, property and buildings (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018). With regards to human resources, the recommendation for the appointment of teachers should come from the SGB. The development of the language policy of the school is also the

responsibility of the SGB (Mncube & Mafora, 2013). Additional responsibilities that SGB can apply for relate to determining the subjects taught and the extra-mural curriculum (Corruption Watch, 2013).

Given the responsibilities delegated to school governors, a requisite set of skills will be required for the successful execution of their duties. The first of these skills relates to finances. Based on the role regarding finances is it evident that strong financial management skills will assist school governors. In addition, management expertise will be required, along with skills related to participatory decision making (Tsotetsi, van Wyk, & Lemmer, 2008).

2.4.4 Parent members of the SGB

Research has found a number of factors that affect parent members of the SGB's ability to perform their governance functions (Magano et al., 2017). Bayat et al. (2014) and Heystek (2011) report that parents do not have the necessary skills to perform their duties. The skills deficit is further noted by Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018) who indicate that communication and transportation challenges further impact parents' ability to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as members of the SGB. Mncube et al. (2011) also found that cultural expectations and socio-economic status also impacted on parent governors' participation on the SGB.

In order to fulfil their mandate, parent governors need to be abreast of issues of school governance and the legal requirements as outlined in the SASA. Knowledge regarding these issues should be imparted through training meant to be offered by the Department of Education (Heystek, 2011; Xaba, 2011). However, it has been noted that the training on

offer is either non-existent or ineffectual. It is not surprising therefore that Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018), and Mncube and Mafora (2013) found that parents were ill informed regarding these matters. In their study evaluating the views of parent governors on their roles and responsibilities in rural schools in South Africa, Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018) found that parents did not understand the policy document, which impacted their ability to implement the policy.

Parents' role in school governance was identified by Mncube (2007), Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018) and Van Wyk (2007) as being minimal. While parents hold the majority on SGBs, many of them come to rely on the principal for leadership and guidance regarding decision making (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018; Van Wyk, 2007). What also emerges is a power struggle between parent governors and the principal who knows the policies and regulations. Karlsson (2002) and Van Wyk (2007) argue that this is due to parents' limited insight into their role as board members, their skills deficits regarding governance functions, and erratic attendance at meetings, as more recently found by Mncube and Mafora (2013) and Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018).

The education level of parents was further identified as a hindrance in the execution of their functions as some school governors were illiterate (Mncube, 2007; Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018; Modisoatsile, 2012; Van Wyk, 2007). Parents were thus unable to read the SASA policy document (where this was made available to them), as well as minutes of meetings. In South Africa in 2018, 59% of 25–64 year olds had attained an upper secondary education (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019), commonly referred to as a matric qualification. However, scepticism regarding the quality of the matric qualification exists with only a small percentage of matric learners attaining a

university entrance pass. In addition, the marks of many students who attain a matric pass are close to the pass benchmarks (Ramrathan, 2017). This implies that, while parents may have attained a matric certificate, their functional literacy levels are in question with Heystek (2011) arguing that the literacy levels of segments of the South African population may not be sufficiently developed to read and draft policies. This finding is supported by Mohapi and Netshitangani (2013) who conducted a study in rural schools in the KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape Provinces. Mncube and Mafora (2013) also found that the literacy levels of parents impeded their ability to contribute in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces. Despite this limitation, parents may still play a valuable role in school governance as demonstrated by Heystek and Pashiardis (2007), Prew (2009) and Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018). In these studies parents contributed positively to the governance and education standards at the schools. Additional issues affecting parents' ability to enact their roles are "a lack of clear demarcation between the roles of teaching staff and those of the SGB, lack of time, lack of confidence from some parents, poor communication of information, lack of training … [and a] language barrier" (Mncube, 2007). The overlap between responsibilities of the SGB and school management team (SMT) was also highlighted by Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018) and Mncube and Mafora (2014) as a hindrance to SGB performance. Additional barriers to participation for parents on the SGB are social status, income, and race (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018; Naidoo, 2005).

Parents' contributions to the SGB are predicated on training and opportunity, thus linking parents' ability to functionings, capabilities and resources, will be discussed in the theoretical framework section of the dissertation. The training, which is meant to be provided by the provincial heads of departments, is however not always of the highest

quality (Heystek, 2011) thus affecting the acquisition of functionings. The lack of training for parent governors was also found in a study conducted by Mohapi and Netshitangani (2018) where it emerged that parent governors did not receive any training. The ineffectual training received by parent governors is further noted by Mncube and Mafora (2013) who observed that the training they received did not serve its intended purpose of adequately preparing parent governors for their roles on the SGB.

Research into the role of parents on the SGB indicates that, while their participation in decision making has increased, this is usually limited to issues around finances, discipline and building maintenance (Naidoo, 2005). The contribution of parents is typically minimised regarding other matters, due to a belief that they do not have the requisite skill set (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018). In these instances, the role of the parent members on the SGB is linked to their level of education and socio-economic status, with Sibanda (2017) confirming the view that poor and uneducated parents were treated differently to those parents considered to be wealthy and educated.

2.4.5 Critique of SGBs

By protecting certain freedoms, the SASA policy has provided avenues for redefining the manner in which class, gender and race operate within a school environment (Sayed & Soudien, 2005). These issues continue to emerge in the functioning of SGBs with the Brown and Doku (2008) study finding that discrimination continues within schools, albeit under a different guise. This finding is however contradicted by the Mncube and Mafora (2013) study where conflicting views regarding SGB's developing democracy are presented. In that study, some respondents felt that SGBs contributed to democracy, while other respondents

noted that “some SGBs were undemocratic, manipulative and engaging in practices that bordered on preferential treatment and corruption” (p. 18).

While the decentralisation of power to the SGBs was a push towards democracy, this may not necessarily be the case in reality. The equity or inequity that results from the decentralisation of power depends largely on the school’s source of funding. In cases where schools are expected to raise their own funds to supplement the funding obtained from government, inequity is likely to arise since some communities are able to provide for themselves, while others are not (Van Wyk, 2007). Furthermore, parents who are wealthy and more influential are more inclined and have more political will to ensure that they advocate for and receive better access to state resources. Brantlinger (2003) in the USA also found that the information, resources and attitude of advocacy that affluent parents bring to a school setting are both powerful and effective.

In keeping with democratisation, Sayed (2002) argues that the extent to which power and authority is devolved to SGBs is an indication of the importance that they hold in political spheres. The state holds SGBs in high regard, given the roles and responsibilities that have been appointed to them through SASA. However, research has demonstrated the ever-widening gap between policy intention and its practice and implementation (Mncube & Mafora, 2013). While it was envisioned that SGBs would be one of the vehicles through which social justice and democracy would be realised, they often exacerbate apartheid-era inequalities (Mncube, 2007).

Language is a tool used to exclude learners and parents at schools. While children are allowed formal access to the school, they may be prevented from communicating in

their home language with some schools going as far as punishing children for using their home language on school property (Ritchie, 2016). Despite an exemption from school fees for those who meet the requirements, fees form another method of excluding learners, if not from the school then from activities within the school (Sayed, 2002; Sayed & Soudien, 2005).

An additional criticism of the SGB links to the three-year term that parents serve as governors (Heystek, 2011; Mncube & Mafora, 2013). Many parents are only likely to serve one term on the SGB given that they must have a child in the school in order to serve as a governor. Just when parents develop their governance skills, the next SGB is elected and the training of those members begins (Heystek, 2011).

This study is informed by the Capability Approach as it explains the parents' ability to implement and support inclusion. The next section introduces and describes the Capability Approach, discusses its most important tenets, and explains how the theory applies to inclusion and exclusion in education.

2.5 Theoretical orientation

Inclusion in South Africa aims to address the barriers to learning in the education system, as opposed to locating difficulties within the individual. It focuses on the systems impacting access to education, consequently, the Education White Paper 6 is structured within an Ecosystemic framework (Du Plessis, 2013; Engelbrecht, 2020; Swart & Pettipher, 2015) that examines the interactions that occur between the individual and the environment. Additionally, much of the research into inclusion in South Africa is underpinned by Bronfenbrenner's Ecosystemic model (Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013;

Potgieter-Groot et al., 2012). However, a criticism of this approach is that it does not examine issues of power, culture, and equity in local contexts (Engelbrecht, 2020). Given that many children are excluded from education, this project aimed to understand the nature of the exclusionary practices from a Capability Approach. An explanation of the approach is presented in the next section followed by its relevance to the South African context and to this study.

2.5.1 Examination of the core concepts

The Capability Approach comprises various concepts as described below. While the various concepts are discussed individually, they exist in relationship to each other.

Functionings

Functionings are those things that an individual does to maintain his/her well-being, such as sleeping, eating, being educated and having stable employment; they are the individual elements of how a person lives (Gasper, 1997, 2007; Graham & Harwood, 2011; Walker, 2006) and the outcomes that individuals have achieved. Sen (1999, p. 75) refers to functionings as the "beings and doings" that an individual values or has reason to value.

The value of resources, according to this approach, is tied to functionings since the value of the resource is dependent on an individual's ability to convert it into a functioning (Clark, 2005). For example, an individual stranded on a desert island with lots of money is not able to buy water, and therefore suffers from dehydration. Possession of the resource, in this example, money, does not affect the state of the individual. However, what the individual can do with the resource affects their state of being, i.e., functioning.

Capabilities

The term “capabilities” refers to an individual’s ability to pursue and participate in the activities that he/she considers valuable (Claassen, 2014; Deneulin & McGregor, 2010; Terzi, 2005; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Walker, 2012). Sen (1993, p. 60) defines capabilities as “a person’s ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being; it represents the alternative combinations of things a person is able to do or be” (Sen, 1993, p. 60). Capabilities can thus be viewed as an individual’s opportunities to accomplish what it is that they consider valuable, i.e., the opportunity to be well fed or to be educated.

Sen does not outline a definitive, fixed set of capabilities therefore the Capability Approach is flexible (Clark, 2005; Gasper, 2007; Tikly & Barrett, 2011). This is in contrast to Nussbaum whose reliance on Aristotle results in a definitive list of capabilities (Clark, 2005; Gasper, 1997; Norwich, 2014; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Walker, 2006, 2012). This list “isolates those human capabilities that can be convincingly argued to be of central importance in any human life” (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 74). Nussbaum’s ten universal central human capabilities are: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses; imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; other species; play; and control over one’s environment (Nussbaum, 2000).

While functionings and capabilities are similar, and often confused, Walker and Unterhalter (2007, p. 4) state that “the difference between a capability and functioning is one between an opportunity to achieve and the actual achievement, between potential and outcome”. Functionings refers to what an individual has achieved, while capabilities refer to the potential to achieve.

Agency

Agency, in the Capability Approach, refers to an individual's ability to participate in various aspects of society, be they economic, social or political (Alkire, 2005), and can consequently not be divorced from capabilities. An ability to choose the functionings that they value, even if this choice does not correlate with the individual's well-being, refers to agency (Sen, 1992). In this way, agency is linked to freedoms (discussed in the following section), since being agents of their lives requires that individuals are free to exercise particular functionings while simultaneously creating environments in which they are free to express those functionings (Alkire, 2005).

Freedoms

Capability is closely linked to Sen's notion of freedom, which is defined as "the real opportunity that we have to accomplish what we value" (Sen, 1992, p. 31). Freedom moves beyond focusing on what an individual can do to what an individual is able to do given the opportunity and choice (Reindal, 2016). Sen argues that freedom represents a means and an end to the development of capabilities (Reindal, 2016). He makes a distinction between "opportunity freedom" and "process freedom", where opportunity freedom refers to the life opportunities that are attainable for an individual, while an individual's role in the decision making process is referred to as process freedom (Gasper, 2007).

Resources, income and commodities

In the Capability Approach, resources have value because they offer individuals an opportunity to do something with them (Claassen, 2014; Gasper, 1997; Norwich, 2014). Resources may refer to human resources, physical resources, financial resources and

knowledge (Crocker & Robeyns, 2010; Robeyns, 2005). However, certain individuals may need more resources than others to function on the same level as others (Claassen, 2014), suggesting that equal resources do not equate to equal functionings. This implies that the redistribution of resources is not enough to address the inequality that exists (Graham & Harwood, 2011).

Another facet of Sen's Capability Approach is the belief that income and commodities are insufficient to assess quality of life (Sen, 1999). While Sen cites several reasons, two of these are particularly relevant for this study. The first reason makes reference to heterogeneity, which implies that physical and biological differences between individuals means that their requirements to fulfil their needs will be different (Sen, 1999). The second reason states that environmental diversity speaks to the fact that differences in physical environments will result in individuals requiring different combinations of commodities. The two reasons presented by Sen both deal with the issues of difference, the first being the innate difference between individuals while the second deals with environmental differences. These differences mean that an individual's ability to use resources in the acquisition of functionings is not merely dependent on the resource, but on the66ounsellinn and impact of the difference.

Conversion factors

Conversion factors refer to the extent to which an individual can convert resources into functionings (Robeyns, 2005). The relationship between resources and the ability to attain certain beings and doings is influenced by three groups of conversion factors: personal; social; and environmental conversion factors (Crocker & Robeyns, 2010). Personal

conversion factors refer to an individual's innate functions/abilities, for example, gender, metabolism and intellect. Societal factors affecting the acquisition of functionings are social conversion factors. This refers to how policy and social norms affect the person's ability to convert resources into functionings. For example, in an environment where education is not valued for girls, even though policy states that girls should be educated, they will not be able to access the resource. Environmental conversion factors mean that the physical and built environment affects the individual's ability to convert a resource into a functioning. For example, in an environment that is riddled with gang violence, even though there are community centres, the individuals in the community may not make use of the resource because of fear.

Value

While both Sen and Nussbaum refer to value with reference to functionings, their understandings of value differ. In Sen's version of the Capability Approach, an individual makes a judgment about whether something is of value to them or not, while Nussbaum's evaluation is based on an ethical procedure in making an appraisal of value (Claassen, 2014; Gasper, 2007). Sen understands the attribution of value to be personal in nature, while value is attributed by an external party, according to Nussbaum. Personal choice is thus eliminated in Nussbaum's ethical procedure (Claassen, 2014), and an individual's ability to make a decision regarding value is removed.

The relevance of the Capability Approach in the South African context is discussed in the next section.

2.5.2 Relevance of the Capability Approach in the South African context

The Capability Approach, having arisen from the works of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, has been used to investigate "poverty, inequality, well-being, social justice, gender, social inclusion, social exclusion, health, disability, child poverty and identity" (Clark, 2005, p. 11). These areas of investigation are closely aligned to issues of inclusion and exclusion as issues, such as gender, poverty and disability, are linked to barriers to learning. The approach will therefore be useful in understanding inclusion and exclusion in the South African context.

Both Sen and Nussbaum identify education as a capability having inherent worth (Tikly & Barrett, 2011) with a number of researchers having already proven the usefulness of the Capability Approach to examining and understanding inclusion internationally (Norwich, 2014; Polat, 2010; Reindal, 2016; Terzi, 2005; Tikly & Barret, 2010; Walker, 2006; Walker, 2011). Nussbaum's Capability Approach highlights the need to describe access and achievement in education alongside other valuable aspects of education with the complexities that arise out of inequalities along the lines of class, gender, race and ethnicity (Terzi, 2005). Given that South Africa is still struggling to redress the inequalities around resource distribution, race and gender, this approach is applicable to our context. Further, Nussbaum's Capability Approach aims to address issues of disability, equity and social justice (Deneulin & McGregor, 2010) which are congruent with the aims of inclusion.

The intersection between the Capability Approach and South Africa can be found in the list of ten universal central human capabilities because of their strong correlations to South Africa's bill of human rights. Of particular importance to education are the following

capabilities:

- Affiliation;
- Sense, imagination and thought; and
- Practical reason. (Nussbaum, 2000)

The capability of affiliation refers to being able to engage in social interactions with individuals of one's choosing (Nussbaum, 2011). This is a direct correlation with the right to freedom of association enshrined in the South African Bill of Rights. According to Nussbaum (2011, p. 33), sense, imagination and thought involve the ability to use the senses to "imagine, think and reason". The thinking involved is associated with the production of works and is thus linked to the right of freedom of expression. Practical reason speaks to the ability to construct an idea of "the good" and involves the protection of religious observance and "liberty of conscience" (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 34). This protection of religion observance is in parallel to the freedom of belief, religion, and opinion in the Bill of Rights.

Having demonstrated the relevance of the Capability Approach to the South African context, the relevance and application of the Capability Approach to this specific study starting with issues of diversity, disability and barriers to learning are presented.

2.5.3 Diversity, disability and barriers to learning

Sen's notion of human diversity includes an understanding of disability that emerges in the interconnection of "personal, social and circumstantial factors" (Terzi, 2005, p. 451). This is linked to the understanding of inclusion given that barriers to learning are understood to result from environmental/societal and economic factors (DoE, 2001). Within

the Capability Approach, when a capability is restricted, it is understood as a potential disability; when a functioning is restricted, it is understood as an actual disability (Mitra, 2006). Thus the concept of disability, according to this approach, refers to a deficit or limitation in functioning or capability (Mitra, 2006) that is understood in relational terms, as an interaction between an individual and the society (Hedge & MacKenzie, 2012; Norwich, 2014; Terzi, 2005). An impairment is considered a disability when there is an inability to perform a specific function in a specific social setting (Terzi, 2005). For example, while an individual may have the capability of reading (using braille), their individual functioning is impaired in a specific environment due to the lack of braille books, thereby impairing the functioning (the reading) of the individual. The combination/interaction between the impairment and design of the social institution highlights the "relational nature of disabilities" (Terzi, 2005, p. 451).

Within the schooling environment therefore, while individual impairments may exist, disabilities only arise if there is a mismatch between the individual and the manner in which the school system is designed. This understanding of disabilities and impairments highlights the importance of addressing barriers to learning given that they arise from the interaction between the individual and the learning environment. For example, should a child, diagnosed with a specific learning disorder with impairment in written expression (also known as dyslexia), be accommodated in a school through the use of a device to type or have a teaching aid read notes to them, this impairment in reading and writing would not be a disability. However, without these accommodations, the 70ounseent may be considered a disability as it impairs the child's functionings, i.e., doings and beings.

2.5.4 SGBs and the Capability Approach

The opportunity to be included in the day-to-day process of education and school activities is the focus of this study and directly links to the decisions that are taken at an SGB level. The opportunity and process freedom for both parents and children at school level is directly impacted by the functionings, capabilities and level of influence that members of an SGB wield.

Graham and Harwood (2011, p. 542) contend that, for individuals to develop their capabilities, "barriers to participation" must be overcome. While several factors influence a child's participation in education, one of those is the attitude of SGB members towards inclusion as their attitude impacts the development of policies. The attitude and beliefs of these members have an impact on the "notion of access" – a concept described by Burbules, Lord, and Sherman (1982). According to these authors, access can be understood as having two domains: conditions of access and criteria of access. Of relevance here are the conditions of access, which are understood to be the external structures that influence an individual's ability to acquire or access something. For this study, and in light of the Capability Approach, it is important to understand the external structures the SGB members may have put in place to either assist or hinder the process of access. Furthermore, understanding issues of formal and epistemological access addresses what children have access to through the external structures imposed by the SGB members.

Toson et al. (2013) maintain that the Capability Approach can be used as a leadership framework in which leaders consider those individuals whose needs and capabilities are different to their own. This is done through the implicit or explicit

philosophy of leadership that is informed by concepts of dignity and respect (Toson et al., 2013). Parents, as members of the SGB, hold positions of leadership and govern schools through the development and implementation of policies that promote the learning and development of all the learners enrolled at the school. Education therefore becomes an opportunity to develop capabilities and functionings. Given that the SGB members play a role in both the development and implementation of policies, the Capability Approach was used to understand the functionings and capabilities of the SGB members and how these affect the functionings and capabilities of the children in the schooling system in this study. This leads to an understanding of education as the opportunity to develop the children's capability to lead lives they have reason to value (Hart, 2009) which is achieved through the development of programmes and policies that benefit the entire school population, including those who may be excluded and/or marginalised.

The decision-making process that is undertaken in terms of policy development and implementation is influenced by an individual's personal vision, values and the goals they wish to attain (functionings and capabilities). Toson et al. (2013), referring to the Capability Approach, argue that the decision-making process needs to be informed by the differences between individuals, i.e., heterogeneity. They believe that the Capability Approach informs leadership and that these individual differences will guide the decision-making process. That means that the members should consider the heterogeneity in the school population in their decision-making processes.

2.5.5 Equality

The notion of equality concerns access to functionings that are valued, whether by

individuals or by legitimate social processes (Gasper, 1997) that include the policy development and implementation of inclusion and inclusive education. The importance to education is noted in the South African Constitution as well as other government documents, while the importance of inclusion locally and internationally has been identified (Engelbrecht, 2020; Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013; De Boer et al., 2012). Equality is a problematic notion within the current context of South Africa, particularly with regard to education, as the resources available to schools are not equal due to historical inequalities (McLaren, 2017), as well as the fee/no-fee system (see section 1.3.6). According to this system, some schools may charge schools fees, while others may not. Schools in richer areas may therefore charge fees, with some charging in excess in of R61 000 per year (approximately 3 800 USD) (Thompson, 2021), while the government's spending per learner in quintile 1–3 schools was R16 435 for 2017 (approximately 1026 USD.

The Capability Approach, with the argument that equal resources does not equate to equal functioning, implies that the effective distribution of resources does not mean equal distribution. This issue of effective distribution is addressed in the report on the implementation of White Paper 6, which states that

> in order to ensure a more effective distribution of non-personnel non-capital funding within the inclusive education system, a policy aimed at guiding the distribution of these funds to special schools as well as full service[2] and other mainstream schools is currently being developed. (DBE, 2015, p. 45)

[2] Full service schools refer to mainstream schools that provide education to all learners by suppling a full range of learning requirements.

Nussbaum's respect for and focus on diverse individuals connects the Capability Approach to inclusive education. Nussbaum's approach differs from inclusive education in that, while equal protection and respect is highlighted within an educational setting, equal educational outcomes are not (Hedge & MacKenzie, 2012). Educational outcomes should be a product of a differentiated curriculum as learners acquire skills to varying degrees based on the curriculum they are exposed to. In South Africa, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) advocates for differentiation in teaching the curriculum (DBE, 2011). However, the current curriculum regime, with its prescription of timelines of coverage and pacing, tends towards standardisation rather than differentiation (DBE, 2011) that thwarts the idea of differential educational outcomes within mainstream classrooms. Consequently, differentiation is not achieved with the diversity of children and their needs are lost in the push to complete the curriculum.

The notion of "different" schools within the education sphere in South Africa is congruent with Nussbaum's Capability Approach in which she advocates for the inclusion of children in the "least restrictive environment" which will cater to their individual needs (Hedge & MacKenzie, 2012). The principle of equity and not equality is adhered to in this manner since the aim of inclusion is to place children in the education environment, ensuring that they are receiving the support that they need, and not equal support (Nussbaum, 2009).

2.6 Conclusion

Inclusion in South Africa, which was formally introduced in the Education White Paper 6 of 2001, has been implemented across the country to varying degrees of success.

The roles of various sectors of the public in relation to inclusion have been researched with various degrees of veracity. Notably, parents, and specifically parent members of the SGB, have not been the focus of much research in relation to inclusion in South Africa. Studies conducted internationally and on the African continent have focused on attitudes and perceptions to inclusion, with very few assessing what it is that parents understand by the terms inclusion and exclusion. The findings of these studies have been mixed with parents of children with special needs and those without expressing support for the inclusion of children with special needs while simultaneously noting concerns for both groups of children.

The following chapter will outline the manner in which this study aimed to address the gap in the literature.

Chapter 3: Methods

The manuscripts included in the thesis have detailed methods sections. Consequently, a brief outline of the methods used, along with information not included in those manuscripts are discussed below.

3.1 Context

The research was conducted in one education district in the smallest province of South Africa, the Gauteng Province. Gauteng, meaning 'place of gold' in Sesotho, is the financial hub of South Africa. Given that I am a resident of Gauteng, the schools identified were within driving distance and thus accessible to me. During the apartheid era, schools accommodating children of different races were prioritised differently and thus services were not equally provided to the schools. While all of the schools in this study were located within townships, five schools were located in predominantly black African townships, while two schools were in predominantly coloured townships. African is a racial reference which refers to indigenous South Africans while coloured refers to the multiracial or mixed-race ethnic group. Townships are underdeveloped areas adjacent to urban areas developed for non-white South Africans under the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act (Booyens & Rogerson, 2019). These areas are characterised by racial segregation and underdevelopment.

3.2 Research approach and design

A mixed method approach, defined as "the collection, analysis and integration of quantitative and qualitative data in a single study" (Sweetman et al., 2010, p. 441) was used for this study. Mixed methodsallows the researcher multiple avenues for addressing the research problem by obtaining "breadth and depth of understanding" (Johnson et al., 2007,

p. 123).

There is a debate around the relevance of the mixed methods approach to research. According to both qualitative and quantitative purists, the research paradigms, including their respective ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies, cannot be mixed given that they are fundamentally opposed (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Sale et al., 2002). However, the approach has been used across diverse fields in the health sciences and education (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Ponce & Nellie Pagán-Maldonado, 2015). In addition, its efficacy has been demonstrated in numerous single research studies.

The use of mixed methods aims to implement the fundamental principle of mixed research which is to collect multiple data sets employing varying techniques, approaches and methods in such a way that the outcome is "likely to result in complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 18). In this study, the mixed methods approach was used to collect quantitative survey data first, followed by interviews to elaborate on the quantitative survey results. Thus, the qualitative data obtained through the use of semi-structured interviews offered a more nuanced understanding, which is one of the reasons Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) identify for using a mixed method approach. Other reasons include the need to explain initial results, the need to obtain more complete and corroborated results, and the need to develop, implement and evaluate a programme.

This study adopted a fixed mixed method design which implies that the decision to use both quantitative and qualitative methods was "predetermined and planned" at the outset of the research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 54). A two-phase sequential

explanatory design was used, consisting of two distinct phases, i.e., a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. Based on this design, I first collected and analysed the quantitative data collected through surveys. The qualitative data were generated in the second phase through the use of semi-structured interviews and was used to explain the initial quantitative results in more depth (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Both the qualitative and quantitative data sets had equal priority as each carried equivalent prominence in addressing the research problems. The data generated from the qualitative strand built on the generation of data from the quantitative strand. This connection occurred as the results of the quantitative strand shaped the data generation instrument in the second qualitative strand (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Sweetman et al., 2010).

The reason for mixing quantitative and qualitative methods within the study was three-fold. The first reason is that of triangulation as one method was used to "validate and improve the consistency of the other method" (Barnes, 2012, p. 469). This assisted in enhancing the credibility of the findings. Seeking complementarity is the second reason for using mixed methods. This implies that both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to elaborate, enhance and clarify results from one method with another (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Hanson et al., 2005). Lastly, the quantitative results assisted in developing interview questions in the qualitative phase of the study (Barnes, 2012; Hanson et al., 2005).

3.3 Sample and sampling

A non-probability, purposeful sample of convenience was sought for this study. Convenience sampling is a part of non-probability sampling techniques. The selection of participants is based on the fact that they are conveniently accessible to the researcher

(Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2018). The sample of parents was thought to be purposeful since the participants are believed to have experiences that enabled them to provide information relevant to the aims of the study, thus they offer a purposeful "understanding of the research problem" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 158).

While the definition and practice of inclusion and exclusion can vary significantly between cultures and educational systems, it can also vary within cultures and education (Polat, 2011). From this departure point, this study sought a sample of contextually different (fee and non-fee paying) schools. In addition, given that the SGB is meant to represent the general school body as a collective, it is important to ascertain the views of both the parent members of SGB members, as well as the non-SGB parent body (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004). I therefore generated data from both groups of parents.

With the aforementioned in mind, I approached eleven fee-paying and non-fee-paying primary schools over a two-year period. The sample was ultimately drawn from the seven schools whose principals gave consent to participate in the study. Of the seven schools in this study, four schools were classified as non-fee-paying schools, while three schools were classified as fee-paying schools. The limited number of schools has implications for the generalisability of the findings.

Of the 6 541 surveys distributed to parents, 923 were returned, with 22 of returned surveys incomplete, leaving a total of 901 completed surveys. Of the 901 surveys, 40 were returned by parent members of the SGB, while the remaining 861 were returned by non-SGB parents. The return rate was thus 13.77%. This return rate is low in comparison to the 38.5% return rate in the De Boer and Munde (2015) study however it does exceed the

return rate of 11.6% reported in the Stevens and Wurf (2020) study. While the return rate in my study was low, and has implications for the generalisability of the findings, Schilpzand et al. (2015) argue that obtaining high participation rates is difficult amongst the parent population in research conducted within the school environment. The following table indicates the number of completed surveys returned from each school, along with the number of interviews conducted.

Table 2.2: Number of surveys returned from each school

School	No. of surveys distributed	No. of surveys returned	No. of interviews	School Classification
AA1	800	54 (6.75%)	3	Fee Paying
AA2	530	96 (18.11%)	3	Fee Paying
AA3	340	54 (15.88%)	2	Non-fee paying
AA4	1800	168 (9.33%)	6	Non-fee Paying
BB1	1040	115 (11.05%)	4	Fee Paying
CC1	831	158 (19.01%)	4	Non-fee Paying
CC3	1200	256 (21.33%)	0	Non-fee-Paying
Total	6541	901 (13.77%)	22	

A total of 43 participants expressed an interest in participating in the individual interviews. When contacted to arrange the interviews, only 22 participants from six schools formally agreed to the interview, with nine parent members of the SGB being interviewed, and 13 non-SGB parents being interviewed. Creswell and Poth (2018) state that sample size

in qualitative research generally aims to study a few individuals or sites in extensive detail. Hennink et al. (2017) expand on the issue of breadth and depth in data collection by arguing that code saturation (breadth) could be achieved with nine interviews and meaning saturation (depth) at between 16 and 24 interviews. An additional point of consideration when conducting interviews is that of data saturation. In this regard, Guest et al. (2006) found that saturation of themes emerged by the 12th interview. Considering data saturation as well as meaning saturation, I believe that the sample of 22 interviews was sufficient for this study.

Table 2.3 Number of surveys and interviews conducted with SGB members and parents who are not members of the SGB

Participants	Data collection method	Sample Size
SGB Members	Questionnaires	40
	Interviews	9
Parents who are not members of the SGB	Questionnaire	861
	Interviews	13

3.4 Instrumentation

The Capability Approach has an "insistence on referring to a wide range of types of information" (Gasper, 2007, p. 340). This study therefore took this stance to fully understand the subjective views of the participants. Gathering information from multiple sources is fundamental to the Capability Approach, and thus the use of questionnaires and interviews is in line with this approach (Comim, 2005).

A self-developed survey (Appendix 6) was used to elicit the feelings, perceptions, and attitudes of a large group of participants towards inclusion and exclusion (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). These self-administered surveys were used to ascertain the participants' feelings, perceptions and attitudes towards inclusion. The aim of the semi-structured interviews (Appendix 8) however was to obtain an understanding of the reasons behind the responses presented in the survey. The interviews therefore allowed me to answer the "why" question.

The survey was considered the ideal method for data collection as it is the best method available for collecting original data for a large sample group (Jones et al., 2013). The self-developed survey consisted of sections aimed at investigating parents' perceptions of inclusion and exclusion and was developed based on literature. The first section of the survey aimed to garner demographic information about the sample. Elements in the demographics section included age, race, gender, highest level of education, number of children and grade the children are currently completing. These factors were included as they had an impact on parents' perceptions of inclusion (Afolabi et al., 2015; De Boer & Munde, 2014; De Boer, Pijl et al., 2012; Leyser & Kirk, 2011; Stevens & Wurf, 2020).

The next section of the survey consisted of two open-ended questions asking respondents about their understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education. These questions were included as the analysis of previous research highlighted a gap in the literature regarding parents' understanding of these concepts. The subsequent section consisted of a self-developed 61-point scale measuring parents' perceptions towards specific barriers to learning. The scale, addressing barriers to learning, used a 5-point Likert type response format that ranged from 1 = "Strongly Agree" to 5 = "Strongly Disagree".

Barriers to learning were related to socio-economic status, background, discrimination, the child's communicative ability and the type of disability a child experienced. Questions regarding these specific barriers to learning were included based on an understanding of inclusion, barriers to learning, and the government documents related to inclusion (SASA, Education White Paper 6 and SIAS) discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. In this way, the research question relating to the characteristics parents use to include and exclude could be answered. In Appendix 13, the survey questions have been clustered into themes, demonstrating their relevance to the understanding of barriers to learning presented in Chapter 1.

The survey was piloted with 19 parents (five males and 14 females) of primary school children who did not form part of the sample of the study. The outcome of the pilot process resulted in changes to question 5, relating to level of education as the post graduate qualification was expanded to include honours, Master's and doctorate. Question 6 was also structured in a table so that parents could indicate the number of children they had in a specific grade, whether any of the children experience any learning difficulties, as well as the nature of the said difficulties.

The way the mid-point on the questionnaires was used is considered a limitation to the study. While the mid-point was intended to be used to express a neutral view, parents may have used it when items were "unfamiliar, ambiguous or socially undesirable" (Chyung et al., 2017, p. 17). Parents may have had a desire to appear politically correct and thus may have been uncomfortable expressing views that supported the exclusion of children with specific characteristics. In these situations, they may have opted for the "Neither agree or disagree option". It would therefore be useful for future studies to include an option such as

"Not applicable", "I don't know", or "It Depends" (Chyung et al., 2017, p. 18). In this way, parents can use the midway point to express a neutral view and the additional item to express a different viewpoint.

Semi-structured interviews were selected as they allowed for deviation from key questions in order to pursue a response in more depth while maintaining a conversational tone (Gill et al., 2008). Furthermore, information that was important to the participant, and which I may not have thought about, could be explored. The semi-structured interview schedule was developed based on the themes that emerged from the data analysis of the questionnaires, as well as the literature (Appendix 14). The interview schedule consisted of ten questions which allowed parents the opportunity to express a more nuanced understanding of their perceptions of inclusion and exclusion and their experiences of the inclusionary and exclusionary criteria used at their specific schools. Parents were also given the opportunity to express their thoughts on the criteria they used when thinking about children who would interact with their children. The interview schedule was piloted with two parents of primary school going children who formed a part of the sample of the study, in order to assess if any changes to the interview schedule were required. The pilot indicated that the language usage was clear and accessible, the phrasing was suitable and the questions were appropriate. Consequently, no modifications to the interview schedule were required. The face-to-face, semi-structured interview may however represent a limitation to the study as the respondents may have been reluctant to express ideas that they perceived as negative in relation to the exclusion of children with specific characteristics. In this regard, building rapport with the participants was essential to create a safe space in which they could express their ideas freely and openly.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance was granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) (Non-Medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand (H16/08/14) (Appendix 1). Formal permission to conduct the research at the schools was also granted by the Gauteng Department of Education (Appendix 2), as well as by the school principals.

The research applied the five general principles outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2010). These principles are beneficence and non-maleficence; fidelity and responsibility; integrity; justice; respect for peoples' rights and dignity; along with additional specific ethical standards. Criteria relating to informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, storing and reporting data are examples of issues included in the specific ethical standards.

While all the ethical standards and procedures were instituted, an understanding of ethics in relation to the population group is warranted. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that "everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected" (RSA, 1996b, p. 6). Consequently, my intention and the way I viewed participants was important, since participants were not to be regarded as objects or a means to an end, but their value as individuals should be recognised (Herschel & Mioro, 2017). The participants, with their wealth of opinions, experiences and knowledge, held value for me therefore I acknowledged them as individuals with individual opinions and experiences. I am aware that the participants' willingness to share their opinions, experiences and knowledge with me made the research possible. So, while they are not meant to be viewed as a means to an end, the participants ultimately paved the way to the

completion of the research and ultimately the degree, through their time and shared views.

With the mean age of the parents being 33.8 years, I was aware that some participants would have had first-hand experiences of having been either included or excluded from education. Participation in the interviews and completion of the surveys may therefore have elicited negative emotions for some individuals. While this outcome was considered minimal, participants were offered an opportunity to process their experiences via therapy through a public institution. In this way, I aimed to act in a way that would enhance beneficence, which is the commitment to minimising harm and maximising benefits (Anabo et al., 2019). None of the participants required a referral for therapy as a result of the interviews.

Vulnerability is another concept that was considered when conducting the study, particularly in the South African context. In South Africa, vulnerable categories include minors, individuals with mental impairments, disabled people, pregnant woman, and those in dependent relationships (Horn, 2007). Socio-cultural factors of poverty, illness, illiteracy, and language barriers may also place individuals at increased risk thereby placing them in the increased vulnerable category (DoH, 2015). Given the demographic factors of the participants in this study, some of them may be considered vulnerable. However, while it is acknowledged that some participants are at an increased risk of vulnerability, what the researcher is asking the participant to do dictates their level of vulnerability and thus their risk. Risk is further increased in relationships where the power relationships are unbalanced. To mitigate the possible impact of power relations, interviews were held at a time and place convenient to the participants. In this regard, some participants opted to conduct interviews in a private space on school premises or at their place of work, while others chose to have

the Interviews conducted at a coffee shop. Here I am aware that participants, who predominantly come from underprivileged backgrounds, gave their time for the benefit of the study and ultimately my doctoral degree. While I receive maximum benefit from their participation in the form of a degree, the parents receive minimal benefit in the form of recommendations based on the outcome of the study. An additional benefit to the school was the fact that I could offer professional support to the school through the sharing of information regarding entities where they could refer children for emotional support and psycho-educational assessments that included the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand.

While I may be considered an insider to some of the participants, identifying as coloured, and having grown up in the township where some of the schools are situated, I am an outsider as a parent with the ability to provide a different educational experience for my own children. I am situated in a position of privilege despite the similarities I may share with the participants. This awareness was crucial to the study as I could not assume a shared experience with the participants.

3.6 Data generation

Prior to data generation, ethical approval for the study was obtained from the University of the Witwatersrand's Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-medical) (Protocol number: H16/08/14) (Appendix 2), along with permission from the Gauteng Education Department (Appendix 1). Permission was then sought from the individual principals via face-to-face meetings with the researcher, as emails and telephonic communication proved unsuccessful. Principals were also provided with information sheets

(Appendix 3). Parents (both SGB members and non-SGB members) were requested to participate in the study via participant information letters (Appendix 5) which were distributed by the school, along with the questionnaires. Consent to participate was obtained through consent forms and return of completed forms (Appendix 4 and 9). The completed questionnaires were returned to a sealed box in the reception area of the schools.

Participants indicated their willingness to participate in the interview phase of the study by providing me with their contact details. These participants were then contacted telephonically. Efforts were made to contact all the participants who had initially agreed to the interviews. Arrangements were made to meet at a time and place that was convenient for the participants. Prior to conducting the interviews, written permission was obtained from the parents to participate in the interviews (Appendix 9) and to audio-record the interviews (Appendix 9). The semi-structured interviews, which lasted between 40 minutes and an hour, were conducted as per the interview schedule (Appendix 8).

3.7 Data analysis

Questionnaire responses were analysed using both qualitative and quantitative measures. The data from the completed questionnaires were first coded using a code book for analysis in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Once coded, descriptive statistics were employed in analysing the demographic section of the questionnaire as it provided a description of the participants (Greasley, 2008).

The quantitative data were entered, cleaned, and coded in an Excel Spreadsheet and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were analysed

using descriptive statistics, which employed frequency analysis. Based on the analysis, items 13, 14, 18, 28, 52 and 60 added no value to the study and were removed. The remaining items were placed into clusters based on thematic content analysis, and then the frequencies were analysed.

The responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, as well as the interview transcriptions, were analysed using a conventional approach to thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the "method for identifying and analysing patterns of meaning in a dataset" (Neuendorf, 2018, p. 213). The six phases of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) were used. Appendix 12 is an example of the text and the codes and themes generated. During the first phase of analysis, I immersed myself in the data through repeated reading of the transcripts and attempting to identify meanings and patterns. Thereafter, I commenced note taking and identified possible codes that could be used in subsequent phases. Following this, initial codes were generated by highlighting and identifying features in the data that were interesting to me and relevant to the aims of the research. Many potential themes and patterns were coded. The next phase involved searching for themes by thinking about the relationships between the codes, and how they could be reorganised and combined to form themes and/or subthemes. Phase four was the refinement of themes and subthemes that had been identified in phase three. In this phase, the validity, independence, and coherence of the themes were considered in relation to the data and the research questions. At this point, themes were merged, expanded upon or discarded. The aim of the next phase was to clearly define and name both the themes and subthemes. This was accomplished through a process of refinement and definition of themes by identifying which aspect of the data a specific theme captured. During the last

phase, a report was generated reflecting the analysis of the data, conveying both the merit and validity of the analysis. Evidence to support the themes was presented in the various manuscripts. The aim of this particular phase of analysis was to create an "analytical narrative" in relation to the aims and research questions of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93). An example of the manner in which codes and themes were extracted from the data is presented in Appendix 15.

The results of the data analysis were used to develop four manuscripts for submission to various journals. In this dissertation, each article reflects a chapter. A summary of each paper follows.

3.8 Legitimation

In broad terms, legitimation refers to assessing the validity of the study (Onwuegbuzie, Johnson & Collins, 2011). While Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003) view legitimation as an outcome, Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) suggest that legitimation is a process. Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) identified nine types of legitimation in their 2006 paper: sample integration, inside-outside, weakness minimization, sequential, conversion, paradigmatic mixing, commensurability, multiple validities and political. What follows is a discussion of how those types of legitimation which are suited to the sequential exploratory design, were addressed in the current study.

The inside-outside legitimation refers to the extent to which one accurately represents the emic (insider) and etic (researcher) views in understanding, describing, and explaining a specific phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie, Johnson & Collins, 2011). This can be achieved through a peer review process wherein an outsider examines the interpretations

and conceptualisations made (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). In this study, the results were be reviewed by the supervisors, who checked both the interpretations and conceptualisations made, along with the reviewers of the manuscripts. Because there is equal emphasis placed on the qualitative and quantitative approaches in this study, the results were reported from the emic and etic perspectives in the thesis (Onwuegbuzie, Johnson, & Collins, 2011). A more balanced viewpoint was thus presented.

Sequential legitimation applies to mixed method designs that administer the quantitative and qualitative elements of the study in stages (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011). The potential effect of the ordering on the data interpretation should be monitored as this will inform the meta-inferences that are made. In this study, consideration needed to be given to the fact that completion of the surveys may have influenced the responses that were given in subsequent interviews as a result of possible cues present in the survey. In order to mitigate this effect the two sets of data were only integrated during the data interpretation phase. (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2011).

Another type of legitimation which needed to be considered for this study was that of conversion. Conversion refers to the extent to which quality inferences can be made from data which has been transformed (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2011). In this study the themes which emerged from the qualitative data were quantitized, by converting them to numerical codes. In so doing, the data generated could be analysed statistically, with the empirical precision resulting in improved “quality of the meta-inferences that could be made”, (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2011, p. 1262).

Sequential and conversion legitimation served to minimize a threat to validity identified by Creswel and Clark (2018). Specifically, the authors state that “not connecting the initial qualitative results with the qualitative follow-up” could represent a threat to validity. However, given that in this study the data was both quantitized and integrated at the data analysis phase, the threat to validity was minimized.

The final type of legitimation used in this study refers to political legitimation. Onwuegbuzie, et al. (2011, p. 1256) describes political legitimation as “the extent to which the consumers of mixed methods research value the meta-inferences stemming from both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study”. Mixed methods researchers are thus tasked with explaining the value and utility of the study. While I acknowledge that one of the outcomes of the study is a doctoral degree, the value and utility of the findings and outcomes of the study extends to academics, parents, SGB members, and the Department of Education. These are expressed in the four manuscripts developed as well as the discussion and concluding chapters. The historical validity of the study is also acknowledged and addressed through reference to and consideration of the historical context of South Africa (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2011).

Creswell and Clark (2018) identify an additional two threats to validity for mixed methods studies employing an explanatory sequential design. These are not identifying and explaining important quantitative results and failing to explain surprising quantitative results using the qualitative data. Both of threats to validity were minimized through a discussion of the results with reference to both the literature examined and theoretical frameworks adopted for the study. In this way consideration was given to all the potential

explanation of the results. In addition, the semi-structured interview was developed with consideration of the outcomes of the data analysis of the survey.

Chapter 4: South African parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education in primary schools

Given that the largest component data set comprised parents who did not form part of the SGB, the first article focused on their understanding of inclusion and exclusion with Chapter 4 presenting the article titled "**South African parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education in primary schools"** which was published in the Perspectives in Education journal in 2020. A screenshot of the first page of the article is included as Appendix 10. The article reference is as follows:

Kern, A. C. (2020). South African parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education in primary schools. *Perspectives in Education*, *38*(2), 255–271.

Globally, parental involvement was a driving factor in the development of inclusion. In the United States, parents of children with disabilities were credited with the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Duhaney & Salend, 2000). The role of parents in inclusive education was further reinforced in the Individuals with Disability Act of 1990. In South Africa, parents started advocating for the inclusion of children in education in the 1990s with children with disabilities first being placed in mainstream schools in 1994 (Engelbrecht et al., 2005). Despite this, inclusive education only started featuring strongly in the South African educational landscape in 2001 through its incorporation into the Education White Paper 6 policy document.

The role of parents in inclusive education and values of individual rights, equity and freedom of choice in South Africa are articulated in policy documents (SASA, Education White Paper 6). Furthermore, parents of children with and without barriers to learning, as

stakeholders, are identified as key to the successful implementation of inclusion (Amponteng et al., 2019; DeBoer et al., 2010; Lui et al., 2015; Torgbenu et al., 2021). In Zimbabwe, Chimhenga (2016) found that parents did not have a grasp of what was meant by the term “inclusive education”. In South Africa, parents’ understanding of inclusion and exclusion has not been explored while parents’ attitudes towards the inclusion of children with specific characteristics have been explored in South Africa, as well as globally. On the African continent, research was conducted to explore parents’ attitudes towards the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in Zimbabwe (Chimhenga, 2016) while, in Nigeria, research has explored the inclusion of children with disabilities (Torgbenu et al., 2021). This African research is mirrored by Stevens and Wurf (2020) who also explored the inclusion of children with disabilities. Internationally, research in China (Su et al., 2020) and Greece (Harilaos, 2020) explored perspectives in the inclusion of children with ASD. Given the gap in the literature, this paper explores what parents understand by the terms inclusion and exclusion as a first step to understanding their perception of and support for inclusion.

The paper draws on qualitative data obtained from seven primary schools in one district in the Johannesburg area. The data comprised 559 written responses and 13 semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis of the data identified four core themes: inclusion/exclusion criteria; levels of inclusion and exclusion; effects of exclusion and the effects of inclusion. Subthemes of interpersonal and extra-personal characteristics, and formal and epistemological access emerged for the themes of inclusion/exclusion criteria and levels of inclusion/exclusion respectively.

The results indicate that, while parents have an understanding of inclusion, it is

fragmented, and steeped in expectations for formal access. This means that parents are concerned about who should be included and where. However, the absence of a deeper theoretical understanding of inclusion implies that parents omit epistemological access, thereby overlooking what happens to children who are included once they are provided access into the educational spaces. Parents' understanding of inclusion is thus not aligned to the policy documents and literature. This has implications for training and96ounselment for parents, as well as research exploring parents' attitudes and perceptions towards inclusion, given that their understanding is different to that held by researchers and expressed in policy documents.

South African parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education in primary schools

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Abstract

Inclusive education has featured strongly in the South African education landscape since it was first incorporated into policy in 2001. Although parents are key stakeholders in the successful implementation of inclusive education, there has not been much research exploring parents' understanding within this space. Therefore, this study aimed to explore parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education from seven primary schools in the Johannesburg area. This paper is based on the qualitative data drawn from a larger mixed methods study where 559 written responses exploring parents of primary school learners' understanding were analysed and 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the results. Four core themes were identified, namely, inclusion/exclusion criteria, levels of inclusion and exclusion, effects of exclusion and the effects of inclusion. Sub-themes of interpersonal and extra-personal characteristics emerged for the theme of inclusion/exclusion criteria, while further analysis of levels of inclusion/exclusion resulted in the sub-themes of formal and epistemological access. It was clear that parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion was grounded more in the practices of inclusion/exclusion as opposed to a more abstract, theoretical understanding.

These results are discussed within the context of the SASA and Education White Paper 6 policy within South Africa, as well as literature around the types of educational access.

Keywords: parents, inclusion, exclusion, education, South Africa, barriers to learning

4.1 Introduction

Parental participation in the schooling of learners with and without barriers to learning is an important factor in the successful implementation of inclusion (De Boer, Pijl & Minnaert, 2010; Lui et al*.,* 2015). This is recognised locally and internationally, with new legislation calling for the enhancement of parental involvement (Srivastava, De Boer & Pijl, 2015). Involvement empowers parents and provides a sense of autonomy as it allows parents to take responsibility for decisions regarding the educational placement of their children. Additionally, parental attitudes towards inclusion influence attitudes and behaviours of children (De Boer et al*.,* 2010; Leyser & Kirk, 2011). The 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report on Exclusion (GEMR) (2018) also argues that communities, of which parents are a part, can prevent children from accessing education based on their own beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion.

Given the key role that parents have to play in the implementation of inclusion, research has focused on their attitudes towards inclusion (De Boer & Munde, 2015). However, what is not understood is whether parents, in fact, understand what inclusion and exclusion means. An understanding of this is important since attitudes are with reference to "objects of thought" or "referents" (Augoustinos & Walker, 1995: 13). In this instance, the referent is inclusion. Research into parental attitudes towards inclusion overlooks parents' understanding of what inclusion is and thus assesses their attitude towards this referent

under specific conditions. These conditions include the inclusion of children with various disabilities and disorders, such as physical and intellectual disabilities and autism (Bossink, Van der Putten & Vlaskamp, 2017; De Boer & Munde, 2015; Sproston, Sedgewick & Crane, 2017), to name a few. Vlachou, Karadimou and Koutsogeorgou (2016) found that more than 50% of their participants did not know what school inclusion meant. Literature has highlighted that inclusion has numerous interpretations (Brantlinger, 2003), often contextually based, and thus research into the attitudes of parents towards inclusion may yield results of an attitude towards different referents based on the parents' interpretation and understanding. What does emerge in the literature is parents' attitude towards "who" is being included and "what" they are being included in (Arjmandnia, Kakabaraee & Kermanshah, 2011). Not knowing what parents understand by inclusion could result in a misalignment in proposed interventions and support offered. As demonstrated in figure 1 below, this study aims to evaluate what parents understand by inclusion and exclusion with the aim of establishing how this may influence their level of support for, and role in the implementation of inclusion in the South African context. This aim is premised on the knowledge that understanding impacts attitude and attitude determines behaviour.

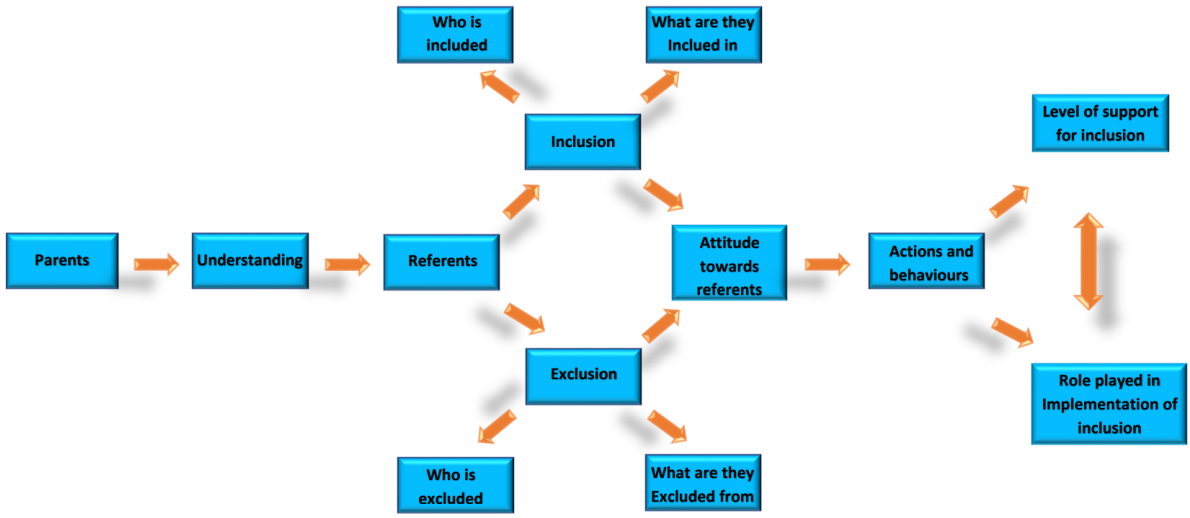

Figure 4.1: Conceptual framework

As outlined in figure 1 above, parents hold an understanding of the referents of inclusion and exclusion. This means that they assign meaning to the terms inclusion and exclusion. This meaning includes their belief of who is to be included/excluded and what they are to be included/excluded from. Parents' understanding of the referents influences their attitude towards inclusion and exclusion. The attitude that is formed then results in specific actions and behaviours (Cross, 2005; Schwarz & Bohner, 2001). Regarding this study, the parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion informs their attitude towards such, which in turn determines the level of support that they give to inclusion and the role that they are willing to take in the implementation thereof. As such, investigating what parents understand by the terms inclusion and exclusion is an important step in facilitating attitude change and support of inclusion.

In South Africa, the move to inclusion was heralded by the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education, Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE, 2001). This document proposed a move away from the notion of "special needs education" and the

adoption of the idea of “barriers to learning”. In this way, recognition and respect for diversity are encouraged. The policy explains that barriers to learning can result from intrinsic medical conditions, such as disability and illness, as well as from extrinsic factors, such as poverty, language, culture, and socio-economic status. In addition, the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) and the Salamanca statement (UNESCO, 1994) note that inclusion is not merely about physical presence in a specific environment, but should focus on access, acceptance, and participation in education (Engelbrecht, Nel, Smit & Van Deventer, 2016).

Given that inclusion is contextually specific, short definitions of exclusion and inclusion are provided followed by a brief overview of formal and epistemological access and an exploration of studies that focus on the understanding of parents’ perceptions of inclusion.

4.2 Definition of exclusion

Exclusion, similar to inclusion, can be understood from different perspectives. One such perspective is that the exclusion of certain individuals emanates from societal biases regarding difference. Slee (2011) argues that the exclusion of individuals emanates from the way society differentiates between people. Children are excluded from education because of the broadly espoused view of their particular barrier to learning. Thus, exclusion results from a distinct set of decisions that are made around their differences (Slee, 2011) such as race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, migrants, and poverty that exclude these groups of individuals from particular contexts and societies.

An alternative perspective of exclusion is presented by Silver (1994) who defines

exclusion within three paradigms: solidarity, specialisation and monopoly. According to these paradigms, exclusion is attributed to different causes and associated with varying philosophies. Within the paradigm of solidarity, exclusion is attributed to the breakdown of the bond between society and the individual (Silver, 1994). Concerning specialisation, exclusion is the consequence of "social differentiation resulting in specialisations within the various spheres of life" (Silver, 1994:542). Within the third paradigm, monopoly, exclusion arises from the interplay between "class, status and political power" (Silver, 1994:543). This last paradigm creates "social closure" in which individuals are kept out of something, and thus promotes inequality (Silver, 1994:543).

4.3 Definition of inclusion

While the concept of inclusion is often used in the educational environment, it is not easily defined and there are many interpretations and definitions on offer. Two distinctions are made between the definitions of inclusion: a narrow definition and a broad one. The distinction between the two definitions refers to "who" needs to be considered for inclusion. In terms of the narrow definition, inclusion only occurs for those individuals whose functioning has been impaired due to cognitive and psychiatric difficulties. However, a broad definition addresses the manner in which all individuals can be included meaningfully in education and addresses such concepts as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, economic status and HIV status, to mention a few (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010), i.e., any identity marker that would render an individual vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion.

According to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD),

> inclusion involves a process of systemic reform embodying changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures, and strategies in education to overcome barriers (CRPD, 2016: 4).

The 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report on Inclusion (GEMR, 2018:4) however notes that inclusive education is a "statement of political aspiration, an essential ingredient to the creation of inclusive societies", while Ainscow, Booth and Dyson's (2006) principled approach to inclusion foregrounds the guiding principles of "equity, participation, community and respect for diversity" (Messiou, 2017:147). In South Africa however the Education White Paper 6 states that it hopes that inclusive education would provide "a cornerstone of an integrated and caring society" (DoE, 2001:10). While these explanations of inclusion vary, they all meet the requisites of a broad definition of inclusion and converge on the element of society with the Education White Paper 6 and the GEMR referring to inclusive education having a positive influence on the society. However, the variety in explanations leaves room for parents to develop their own understanding of inclusion, which may well diverge from the intended use.

The GEMR (2018, 6, 7), goes on to refer to the dimensions of inclusion; physical, social, psychological, and systematic inclusion, while the elements of inclusion refer to

> [n]ational legal frameworks and policies, governance and finance, curricula and learning materials, teachers, school leaders, and education support personnel, schools, and finally communities, parents, and students.

4.4 Formal and epistemological access

Within the education sphere, the first step to inclusion speaks to access to

institutions afforded to individuals. Consequently, an exploration of parents' understanding of inclusion, necessitates a discussion of what is meant by access. The Consortium for Research in Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) refers to access to education as admission, on age progression, attendance and achievement of curricular norms, access to post-primary education and equality in learning opportunities (Lewin, 2007). Morrow however argues that access to education occurs across two levels: formal access to an institution in terms of being admitted or enrolled, while epistemological access refers to "the goods distributed by the institution" (2007:37). The consideration of formal and epistemological access is embodied in the principled approach to inclusion where "presence, participation and achievement" (Messiou, 2017:147) for all children is the ultimate outcome.

In South Africa, formal access to schools is espoused in various policies governing education within schools (DoE, 2001; Republic of South Africa, 1996a, 1996b) however in practice, access to schools is not guaranteed. Learners may be denied formal access to schools based on the language of instruction, proximity to home and ability to pay school fees. Epistemological access is also denied to as many as 50% of South African children (Du Plooy & Zilindile, 2014). Of these children only 45% who enter the system in Grade 1, exit the system in Grade 12 (Roberts, 2019). Furthermore, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (Howie et al., 2017) demonstrated that 78% of Grade 4 learners who participated in the study are functionally illiterate (Howie et al., 2017). This means that, even though children are in school (formal access), they may not be able to access what is "at the heart of basic education", that is, "learning to read and write" (Pendlebury, 2009:25). Thus, while children are included in schools, they are excluded from the teaching

and learning that takes place in these environments.

4.5 Parents' understanding of inclusion

While this study's focus is on parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion, there is a dearth of literature in this regard. Instead, literature presents findings regarding parents' perceptions of inclusion, which has been included here. A review of the literature found that parents generally hold positive perceptions towards having children with special education needs in mainstream classrooms (De Boer et al*.,* 2010; ElZein, 2009; Peck, Staub, Gallucci & Swartz, 2004). Their perceptions are impacted by, firstly, socio-economic status that was found to be a determinant of parental perceptions towards inclusion in South Africa (De Boer et al*.,* 2010). Specifically, parents with high to average socio-economic status held significantly more favourable perceptions towards inclusion than parents with a low socio-economic status. In South Africa, this is particularly relevant because of the large discrepancies in the economic status of its citizens. Secondly, another influencing factor is that of parental education level. Studies have found that parents with only a high school education are less favourable towards the inclusion of learners with barriers to learning than parents who have continued their education beyond Grade 12 (Leyser & Kirk, 2011; Tafa & Manolitsis, 2003). Given South Africa's history, this finding is important as many individuals did not have access to quality education during the apartheid era and did not complete their formal schooling (Lu & Treiman, 2011; Thomas, 1996).

Based on the literature reviewed, parents identify positive outcomes for their children experiencing barriers to learning (ElZein, 2009; Lui et al*.,* 2015; Peck et al*.,* 2004). Parents placed these benefits in three categories, which are "general benefits for

development, social/behavioural benefits for development and cognitive/language benefits" (Seery, Davis & Johnson, 2000:274). Parents find that, as a result of inclusion, children develop increased self-concepts, improved social and emotional development and an acceptance of individual differences (Peck et al*.,* 2004; Duhaney & Salend, 2000).

Despite the predominantly positive outlook on inclusion, parents also harbour concerns. The allocation of teacher time was a concern for some parents who felt that their children without barriers to learning will receive less attention than learners with barriers and that this will compromise their children's academic development (Lui et al*.,* 2015; Narumanchi & Bhargava, 2011).

On the criteria parents use when thinking about inclusion, Peck et al*.* (2004) found that parents were more open to having a child with a physical disability included in the class but were less open to having children with behavioural difficulties in the class.

4.6 Parental participation

Internationally, parental participation in both the decision-making about their children and their education is defined in reform acts and regulations (Leyser & Kirk, 2004). South African legislative policies, such as the South African Schools Act (DoE, 1996b) and the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001), espouse parents' rights to educational placements of their choice for their children as parents are considered to be

> integral partners in developing a more inclusive system, where decision-making and the responsibilities for outcomes are shared (Swart et al*.,* 2004, 81).

From the research outlined above, it is clear that inclusion is a multi-faceted concept

that is the most effective means of “combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all” (UNESCO, 1994, ix). In South Africa, this is particularly pertinent given the country’s history as it is viewed as a means of addressing the inequalities of the past. Even though parents are integral to the success of inclusion, the literature has only focused on their attitude towards inclusion without a clear indication of what parents understand by inclusion. Therefore, the research question guiding this paper is to explore parents’ understanding of inclusion and exclusion with the aim of indicating how this understanding may influence their role in its implementation.

4.7 Methods

4.7.1 Research design

The current paper is part of a larger study that investigated the attitude of SGB members and non-SGB members towards inclusion. The study employed a mixed method explanatory design, as the quantitative data was collected prior to conducting the interviews (Creswell, 2012). The quantitative results were used in conjunction with literature to develop the interview questions in the qualitative phase of the study (Barnes, 2012). The focus of this paper was on parents’ understanding of inclusion and exclusion. To this end, the qualitative data collected from the surveys and the interview data was analysed.

4.7.2 Sample

For the quantitative phase, a non-probability sample of 861 parents of learners from

four non-fee-paying schools and three fee-paying schools in the Johannesburg area completed questionnaires, of which 559 completed the open-ended questions used for analysis in this article. The sample was primarily female (n=436, 78%) and the majority identified as black (n=377, 67.4%). Participants' level of education ranged from some education (n=87, 15.6%) to doctoral degree (n=1, 0.2%), with the highest frequency of parents having obtained a matric certificate (n=167, 29.9%). The age of the parents ranged between 19 years and 77 years with a mean age of 34.1 years (SD=8.84). For the qualitative phase, a non-probability, convenience sample of 12 females and one male agreed to be interviewed. Ten of these participants identified as black, while three identified as coloured. Their education level ranged from some108ounseol education to a bachelor's degree, while their ages ranged from 28 years to 67 years.

Table 4.1: Demographic information

Demographic		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	118	21%
	Female	436	78%
Race	Black	377	67.4%
	Coloured	156	27.9%
	White	4	0.7%
	Indian	2	0.4%

4.7.3 Instruments

Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of a number of sections that assessed parents' perception of inclusion and exclusion. For this paper only the first two sections were pertinent. The first

section was a biographical section (including age, gender, race, highest level of education, number of children and grade that children are currently completing). The second section of the questionnaire comprised open-ended questions that asked respondents about their understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education in general and gave them the opportunity to make any additional comments. The questionnaire was piloted on 19 parents resulting in edits being made to the presentation of the questions and the wording of a few of the questions.

The semi-structured interview schedule comprised 10 questions. These questions allowed parents the opportunity to express their understanding of inclusion and exclusion in more depth as well as discuss the exclusionary and inclusionary criteria used within their child/ren's specific school. Parents also expressed their views on what "types" of children they would prefer to have in a classroom with their child. The interview schedule was piloted on two parents.

4.7.4 Data collection and analysis

Ethics clearance was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand (Protocol no. H16/08/14) and permission to approach the schools was obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education. Of the twelve school principals who were approached, seven gave permission to access the parent sample. The questionnaires were distributed via the school to the parents. Based on the questionnaire responses, parents who indicated a willingness to be interviewed were contacted and arrangements were made to conduct the interview at a time and place convenient for them. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

The responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire and the interview transcriptions were analysed using thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clark (2006). Codes were generated and potential themes identified. Descriptive statistics, particularly frequencies and percentages, were used to analyse the demographic data as well as the occurrence of themes.

4.8 Findings and discussion

Four themes emerged from the thematic analysis of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire and the interview transcripts. These were inclusion/exclusion criteria, levels of inclusion and exclusion, the effects of exclusion and the effects of inclusion. These themes elicited several sub-themes, as is shown in Table 4.2 below. Interviewees are referred to using numerals, e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2, etc. Data from the questionnaire responses is referenced using letters and numbers to indicate the different schools (letters) and the participant (numbers), e.g., AA1:1.

Table 4.2: Themes

Theme	**Sub-Theme**	**Results from questionnaires**	**Results from interviews**
		N	***N***
Inclusion/Exclusion criteria	Interpersonal characteristics	144	10
	Extra-personal characteristics	81	13
Levels of inclusion/exclusion	Formal access	106	12
	Epistemological access	38	9
Effect of exclusion		37	6
Effect of inclusion		22	9

4.8.1 Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

The data gathered and analysed indicated that parents thought about inclusion and exclusion in education in terms of individual characteristics. This implies that parents thought about interpersonal and extra-personal characteristics that would result in children being included and excluded. Interpersonal characteristics refer to characteristics that are innate to the child and include disabilities, learning abilities and those with behavioural difficulties, while extra-personal characteristics refer to characteristics that are external to the child and include home language and socio-economic status. Parents predominantly referenced physical access being granted or withheld, linking to Morrow's (2007) formal access.

Interpersonal characteristics

Parents' responses indicated that they consider interpersonal characteristics when thinking about inclusion and exclusion. Interpersonal characteristics can be understood as those characteristics that are intrinsic to an individual. Inclusion and exclusion, for these parents, is thus aligned to the medical model, where deficits are seen to result from the individual. This understanding contrasts with policy documents that view barriers as emerging from the environment. From the data sources, interpersonal characteristics emerged as the most prominent criterion for inclusion with many parents (interviewee, n=10; questionnaires, n=144). Thus, most parents considered factors that were intrinsic to children, such as disability, learning ability and behavioural difficulties:

> *Ok, firstly we have disability right. This highly determines whether learners can access the school, for example, if a child is in a wheelchair, there is no way he/she can go around in a school with no ramps and elevators to allow him to move around so the school can decide no, that the child should not be admitted*. (Participant 3)

> *We also have so-called slow learners, which we say they are slow in comparison to other learners, which are the majority in the school. These learners require special attention at all times, leading to a time-consuming process … Then in such a case … we need them to be removed from schools that cannot teach them fully for their safety and convenience of other students.* (Participant 3)

With reference to the data above, parental thinking around interpersonal characteristics coincides with Slee's (2011) understanding of exclusion that results, not

necessarily from the individual, but from decisions that are taken around an individual's difference. This means that parents believe that barriers to learning can emanate from the individual (DoE, 2001). If an understanding does not look at how the education system further constrains those with intrinsic barriers, then learners with factors, such as disability, learning ability and behavioural difficulties, will continue to experience stigma and discrimination.

Extra-personal characteristics

Analysis of the data indicates that parents consider extra-personal factors, such as language and socio-economic status (SES), as criteria for inclusion and exclusion (interviewee, n=13; questionnaires, n=81) that are outside of the child's control. Thinking around extra-personal characteristics is strongly related to formal access for children with hints made towards epistemological access. The finding regarding the impact of SES on inclusion is echoed by Meny-Gilbert and Russell (2012) who found that SES impacts formal access. The focus on formal access only captures part of what inclusion means and ignores the learning experiences, participation and environment once formal access is gained (CRPD, 2016; Messiou, 2017).

Participants noted that,

schools around our area are divided into tribes and languages. (Participant 12)

*children's home languages are the reason children are not well integrated in their learning environment*s. (Participant AA4:78)

abilities plays a crucial role too. We have parents who cannot afford to pay fees for their children. (Participant 10)

4.8.2 Spaces of inclusion and exclusion

It emerged that parents identified four "spaces" that children are given access to namely, schools, classrooms, activities and teaching and learning. These "spaces" reflect Morrow's (2007) notion of formal and epistemological access. Thus, while parents reference the different spaces what is communicated is a notion of admission into spaces and being able to engage meaningfully with the curriculum. However, most parents referred to formal access, through school and class admission, in contrast to epistemological access, through activities and teaching and learning. This contrast reflects that parents are more concerned about the physical admission into school and class, compared to what happens when a child is in those spaces. This may lead to children being internally excluded. Distinguishing between these various spaces of inclusion and exclusion was found in 12 interview responses and 136 questionnaire responses.

Formal access

Despite the fact that inclusion is about more than mere placement (Runswick-Cole, 2008), formal access, through enrolment at school and admission into classrooms, was noted by 12 interviewees and reflected in 106 questionnaire responses. Admission to school is noted in the following excerpts:

> *My understanding of exclusion, it means not allowing a child to enter a school.* (Participant 10)

> *When your child is excluded from school when educators can't help them.* (Participant CC3:80)

Not allowing a child to be enrolled in a school. (Participant 11)

These reflect being enrolled in the school as an element of inclusion. Parents identified the type of school that children would have access to by stating:

All students attend … their neighbourhood school. (Participant CC3:156)

Inclusion involves admitting all children into class. (Participant 4)

All learners should be accommodated into mainstream classrooms. (Participant CC3:212)

These excerpts prove that parents differentiate between public/private and mainstream/special schools, along with regular and special classes. The type of access referred to by the parents correlates with the first dimension of inclusion identified in the GEMR (2018), that of physical inclusion. This understanding of inclusion does not include the other dimensions, which imply a shallow understanding of inclusion.

Epistemological access

For some parents, notions of inclusion and exclusion moved beyond mere presence within a school or classroom to include an understanding that inclusion implies that children develop their knowledge and understanding of content within the spaces that they have been allowed to access. This type of access, epistemological access, was noted by nine interviewees and in 38 questionnaire responses:

Inclusion takes into account the classroom activities whereby, as a teacher, you are able to accommodate even the weakest learners in the classroom.

(Participant 4)

Thus, parents are able to identify that a mere presence in the classroom does not automatically result in teaching and learning but that, in fact, children should be "integrated in their learning" (Participant AA4:78) and that exclusion is

> *being deprived from certain learning areas especially if the child is disabled or suffers from some sort of impairments.* (Participant CC3:61)

> *taking everyone into consideration when you teach children. Here we talking about being able to reach all the learners in a meaningful manner that ensures they understand the content [that] you, as a teacher, is delivering to them. So I would say a school that is serious about inclusion … includes all children in the learning process.* (Participant 15)

Given that learning does not only occur within the classroom, parents also considered the aspect of being included in school activities and believed that exclusion is when "children do not take part in any of the activities in school" (Participant CC3: 39). One such activity could be school outings where

> *children are left out of opportunities to learn because they cannot afford the ticket to go to the trip with their peers.* (Participant 13)

The idea of being excluded from learning because of finances is captured in the final dimension of inclusion as per the GEMR (2018), systematic inclusion.

It is clear from the aforementioned that parents think about inclusion not only in terms of physical access but also in terms of gaining an understanding of the content being

taught. However, their understanding does not seem to include the dimension of social and psychological inclusion (GEMR, 2018). Furthermore, many more parents referenced formal access rather than epistemological access, indicating an understanding of inclusion linked to placement as opposed to participation and achievement. A focus on placement may be linked to changes that occurred in the school application system. This change has meant that parents can apply to a school of their choice, be it a neighbourhood school, a school close to their place of work or a school where siblings attend (Inside Education, 2018).

4.8.3 Effect of exclusion

Six interview respondents and 37 questionnaire respondents referred to the effect of exclusion in their understanding of inclusion and exclusion. The effect of exclusion was however understood through the impact it had on children with barriers to learning specifically. The effect of exclusion is a novel finding in this study with previous studies demonstrating parents' understanding of the positive and negative effects of including learners. This focus on the effects of exclusion may have emerged in this study as a result of the country's history, which is marred by exclusion. The majority of the respondents in this study would have had first-hand experience of being excluded in one way or another resulting in an awareness of the effect of exclusion. The first aspect identified was the emotional development of the child:

> *Now, when we talk about excluding that learner, it also becomes painful to him and challenges his sense of self and worth … because one of them must be removed due to disability. The entire friendships and relationships they had are stripped away from that child's life*. (Participant 3)

The emotional element of exclusion was substantiated by participants, who noted that,

> *exclusion may cause children to lose their self-confidence and to lose concentration.* (Participant AA4:58)
>
> *when you start to exclude, by not involving the child now in classroom activities, they become aggressive. As a result, the child lacks concentration in class because of feelings of being inadequate and being different.* (Participant 10)

Thus, parents noted that exclusion has a negative impact on children's behaviour with the possibility of causing

> *children to be violent towards each other and not help each other with their school work.* (Participant AA3:41)
>
> *problems of bullying and victimisation of children with special needs and lack of empathy and mutual understanding.* (Participant 4)

The child's attitude towards learning was also thought to be affected by exclusion as it makes

> *learners become lazy about learning because they are afraid that no-one cares about them.* (Participant AA2:77)

This demotivation regarding learning could be linked to exclusion understood as a reason for learner attrition, for example:

> *Exclusion is the reason why kids drop out of school.* (Participant AA2:56)

We should end exclusion at schools because it leads to children dropping out of school. (Participant AA1:34).

4.8.4 Effect of inclusion

It is evident that parents' views on the effects of inclusion for children with and without barriers to learning shift their understanding from formal access to epistemological access. Thus, instead of being concerned with where children are included (formal access), parents start to think about what that access may be and the consequent outcomes thereof.

Parents' understanding of inclusion (interviews, n=9; questionnaires, n=22) was expressed through the predominantly positive impact inclusion had on the typically developing child as well as those traditionally excluded from learning. For the typically developing child,

inclusion prepares them for life after school and international travel, and they are exposed to different cultures which makes it easier for them to adapt. (Participant 1)

Being educated in an inclusive environment was thought to assist children in interacting with those with differences, give them the opportunity to learn from others and develop friendships. The pro-social outcome of inclusion is echoed by the parents in the De Boer et al. (2010), Duhaney and Spencer (2000), ElZein (2009) and Ferguson (2008) studies. These studies noted that children developed increased self-concepts, improved social skills and that an acceptance of individual differences was fostered through their interactions with children with barriers to learning. Parents also referred to the possibility of inclusion developing more inclusive societies, which is one of the aims of the Education White Paper

6 (DoE, 2001). Despite the positive outcomes of inclusion, the negative impact of inclusive classrooms is reflected by Participant 3, who stated,

> *Now you can imagine a situation where my child is being held back by another child who was supposed to be in a school for slow learners but now delays the rest of the learners. This may not be fair to other learners … slow learners, I don't think they should necessary take them to the school because they take time and slow things down a lot, in a way, they waste other kids' time.*

This reflects the notion that parents are in favour of inclusive education provided that it does not affect their child negatively. This is supported by a parent in Seery et al. (2000) who stated,

> *I don't think all education should be inclusionary because then someone always is lacking, missing out … I don't want the needs of the other children jeopardised.*

Positive outcomes for the children who were being included were also identified. A parent noted that,

> *mixing with other children also positively impacts on their self-esteem. The child does not have self-hate that they are in a school for the disabled and they are all disabled around him. The child in an inclusive school can feel that they can associate with other people, even though they have whatever condition they have. Mixing can also help them to accept themselves*. (Participant 2)

Not only did inclusion have a positive impact on the children emotionally but parents also felt that it had other benefits:

> *Inclusion in education gives one the opportunity to excel in their studies and to be more involved.* (Participant AA1:47)
>
> *[Inclusion] allows them to develop individual strengths and gifts with high and appropriate expectations.* (Participant CC1:4)

These findings are consistent with Seery et al.'s study (2000), where parents identified the benefits of inclusion in the social/behavioural and cognitive domains for children with barriers to learning along with ElZein (2009) who found that parents perceived social and academic improvements in their children.

As with children without barriers to learning, a disadvantage to inclusion also emerged for children with barriers:

> *Others are afraid to say that they do not understand because other learners catch things much faster. Now he may feel stupid*. (Participant 2)

While inclusion was identified as having a predominantly positive impact, a negative emotional impact was also identified. This parental concern was found by Leyser and Kirk (2004) with parents expressing concern about the emotional well-being of the child being included.

The identification of positive outcomes by parents for children with and without barriers to learning is supported by Nussbaum (2006, pp. 205–206) who states that the mainstreaming of children with disabilities

> *can be defended on the grounds of benefit to the mentally disabled child, who will be given more incentives to develop cognitively and who may be less likely to*

> *be stigmatised as type apart. It can also be defended because of the benefit it offers to so-called normal children, who learn about humanity and its diversity by being in a classroom with a child who has unusual impairments. They learn to think for themselves, their own weaknesses, and the variety of human capability, in a new way.*

The positive outcomes of inclusion were also noted by Duhaney and Salend (2000) who found that parents noted improvements in their children's self-concepts and acceptance of difference.

4.9 Limitations of the study

The biggest limitation of the study was that only parents of learners attending township schools were included. This resulted in not all of the population groups being sufficiently represented, along with the fact that only public schools were included.

4.10 Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to explore parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education and how this may influence their role in its implementation. The results of this investigation show that parents' understanding of inclusion is represented in four themes, namely, inclusion/exclusion criteria, levels of inclusion and exclusion, effects of exclusion and effects of inclusion. Analysis of the data showed that parents' perceptions of inclusion are strongly linked to the practice of inclusion as opposed to a deeper theoretical understanding. Thus, much of their understanding of whom and where children should be included links strongly to formal access. This lack of understanding from an epistemological

stance is problematic since what happens to the children once they are granted formal access goes largely uninterrogated. Given that South Africa aims to use inclusion in education as a gateway to developing a more inclusive, understanding, and tolerant society, a narrow understanding of inclusion will not assist in developing that but may instead further entrench separation and exclusion of those who are perceived as being different.

4.11 Acknowledgements

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Having obtained an understanding of parents' understanding of inclusion, focus was then shifted to how parents make sense of barriers to learning with specific focus on who they think should be included and who should be excluded.

Chapter 5: Who is in and who is out: Parents' views on barriers to learning

This chapter drew on the quantitative data collected from parents who were not members of the SGB and sought to expand on parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion by placing specific focus on barriers to learning. The paper titled: "Who is in and who is out: Parents' views on barriers to learning" was published in the International Journal of Inclusive Education (Appendix 11). See:

Kern, A. (2020). Who is in and who is out: parents' views on barriers to learning. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1–18.

South Africa is a country which is still feeling the impact of its discriminatory past resulting from apartheid era practices. These practices saw the educational sector split into four divisions based on the race categories identified in the country. Access to quality education was thus based on the colour of a person's skin, but also on ability levels with children experiencing barriers to learning having little or no access to an education that was often inferior to their mainstream counterparts (Walton & Rusznyak, 2014). However, the current Constitution of South Africa guarantees access to quality education for all children, with subsequent policy documents stating that parents have the right to place their children in the school of their choice (DoE, 1997; Republic of South Africa, 1996). Thus, parents of children who experience barriers to learning may apply for their child to be placed in a school with children without barriers to learning. In addition, barriers to learning, as per the policy documents, are not understood as solely intrinsic to the individual, but instead arise from a multitude of factors, including but not limited to socio-economic factors, language, health, nationality, and the curriculum. The focus of this article is thus on parents' perceptions of barriers to learning, with specific reference to how they support or hinder

children's access to education.

Given that parents' support for inclusion has been found to be influenced by the value that they place on it, this article further explores the impact that the notion of value, as expressed in the Capability Approach, has on parents' support for formal and epistemological access. This is an important element as the theory argues that value is determined individually and is thus not uniform across individuals. This variation, along with the notion that individuals have freedom of choice, has implications for parental support of formal and/or epistemological access for children experiencing barriers to learning.

A mixed methods concurrent design was employed for the paper. Given that this paper focused on parents' perceptions of barriers to learning, the 406 parents who indicated that their children experienced barriers to learning were excluded from the analysis in order to avoid contamination of the results. This resulted in a sample of 406 parents of children without barriers to learning completing the self-report survey while 222 parents responded to the open-ended questions. The survey results were analysed using SPSS, resulting in six items being removed due to ambiguity in their phrasing. Thematic analysis and literature were then used to place the remaining items into clusters. These clusters were then analysed. The open-ended comments were also analysed using thematic analysis. The outcome of the thematic analysis reflected themes of behaviour, school climate/environment, learning ability, discrimination, and teachers.

The results indicate that parents support inclusion as an idea however their perceptions regarding barriers to learning are mixed. Parents were able to think about barriers to learning as arising from systemic causes, such as lack of resources/infrastructure,

and the lack of teacher capacity and training. While this understanding is aligned with policy documents, it differs from findings in the previous paper where these factors were identified as concerns in including children experiencing barriers to learning. Despite being able to identify causes of barriers to learning, parents were ambivalent regarding the inclusion of children with barriers to learning. This ambivalence arose from the perceived negative impact the inclusion of children with barriers to learning would have on the quality of education their own children received. This finding highlighted the role that the value of individual functionings has on the parents' support for inclusion. The finding is also in contrast to the South African concept of Ubuntu, which encompasses humaneness, compassion, and a sense of caring for one another's well-being (Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2018; Walton, 2018), and again highlights the role that the individual's beliefs and values play in the support for inclusion.

Who is in and who is out: Parents' views on barriers to learning

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Abstract

South Africa, a country that suffered from discriminatory practices in the past, is still feeling the impact of these practices currently. One of these practices limited access to educational institutions, particularly for children experiencing barriers to learning. The focus of this article is on parents' perceptions of barriers to learning as they aid or constrain learners' access to education. In addition, the article explores how the notion of value, as it is expressed in the Capability Approach, influences support for formal and epistemological access. Four hundred and six parents of children without barriers to learning completed a

self-report questionnaire from seven mainstream primary schools in Gauteng, while two hundred and twenty-two parents responded to the open-ended questions. The questionnaire comprised a demographic section and 61 Likert-type scale and two open-ended questions which explored parents' perceptions of barriers to learning. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the responses to the open-ended questions, while responses to the scale were analysed using SPSS. The results clustered around the themes of behaviour, school climate/environment, learning ability, discrimination, and teachers, which indicate that parents assign greater value to the functioning of education than to inclusivity. The general stance however was in favour of formal access over epistemological access.

Key words:

Barriers to learning, Capability Approach, epistemological access, formal access, inclusion

5.1 Introduction

Access to quality education has been a pressing issue in South Africa since the abolition of apartheid in 1994. While access to educational institutions has been legislated through numerous policy documents, it is still elusive for many children, for a number of reasons. The role of parents and other stakeholders in the implementation of Inclusive Education (IE) is espoused in these policy documents. However, little is understood about how parents in South Africa view various barriers to learning (BTL), which is central to the way inclusion is understood. Given that barriers include "mental barriers" (Horsthemke, 2017, p. 23), which present the preconceptions and prejudices of individuals without barriers towards those experiencing barriers, parents could present as barriers, instead of facilitators, to inclusion. An understanding of parents' perceptions towards BTL will point to

"who" they believe should be granted access, in its various forms, to education. This understanding will highlight biases and prejudices that may inhibit the successful implementation of inclusion.

In the following sections, I provide an understanding of IE and BTL, particularly with reference to the South Africa context. While policy notes the importance of parents in the successful implementation of inclusion, I suggest that there is a gap in the literature to date, as parents' views on BTL, as understood in South Africa, are not explored. These views will have a direct impact on their motivation to support or reject inclusion. I then argue that, in order to understand parents' views on BTL, it is important to understand the value as is understood within the Capability Approach, that parents assign to inclusion. This understanding sheds light on the type of access, formal or epistemological, that parents believe should be afforded to children experiencing BTL. Hence, this study explored parents' perceptions towards BTL with the aim of understanding how these affect their support for formal and epistemological access.

5.2 Inclusive Education (IE)

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact inception date of IE but there have been "clusters of influence that have contributed to the origin and growth of the field" (Slee, 2011, 62). Arguably, one of these key clusters of influence centres on the Salamanca Statement which appeals to governments to recognise diversity and "adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education" (UNESCO, 1994, ix). South Africa was a signatory to this statement which is concerned with lessening the effect of "actual and potential exclusion in its varied forms" as opposed to being focused solely on the "child with the disability" (Slee,

2008, 107). The Salamanca Statement argues for the formal and epistemological access to education for all children through not only granting access to educational institutions but also in ensuring that children acquire the requisite knowledge and skills, thus referring to epistemological access.

While, prior to 1994, children in South Africa were educated in segregated settings based on the colour of their skin and disabilities. The implementation of IE through subsequent policy developments (such as the South African Schools act [SASA] and Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education), as a national priority, is about effectively supporting and responding to learners, parents, and the resultant communities through the transformation of the education system. This transformation is envisaged to be achieved through the removal of BTL (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2015).

One of the seminal documents for IE in South Africa is the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education – Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education [DoE], 2001) which advocates for the provision of access to education for all learners irrespective of their BTL, be it economic, social, language, class, behaviour, or other barriers. The key goals of Education White Paper 6 are twofold: firstly, a move away from segregation according to classes of disabilities is envisioned and, secondly, the provision of support for learners with disabilities should be made based on the level of support that is needed by these individuals (DoE, 2001). Thus, there is a focus on addressing and accommodating learners who experience BTL from medical causes or systemic barriers (Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel and Tlale, 2015; Engelbrecht Nel, Smit and Van Deventer, 2016).

5.3 Barriers to learning and parents' perceptions of barriers to learning

In the 1960s, a deficit medical model predominated the thinking around disability. Categories for "exceptionality" were created for physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities, with the deficit being located within the individual (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001, 305). However, in the 1980s, a move towards a broader focus on special educational needs emerged. This137ounselling137izationn of special needs resulted in learning and behavioural problems being viewed as the interplay between the child's individual predisposition and the environment around him/her. Consequently, societal factors, such as poverty, deprivation, limited access to medical and healthcare facilities, and exposure to violence, could be viewed as causes of disabilities. The result of the interplay between socio-economic and environmental factors means that the incidence of BTL is high (Dednam, 2011; Nel & Grosser, 2016). BTL are also viewed as arising from the inability of the school system to adapt to meet the diverse needs of its learners (Nel & Grosser, 2016).

Despite the move towards a broader view of BTL and the significant role that parents play in the successful implementation of IE, parents' perceptions of BTL, as a concept, have not been explored in the literature. What has been explored is their attitude/perceptions towards specific disabilities, such as physical disabilities, autism, and special educational needs (Bossink, Van der Putten & Vlaskamp, 2017; De Boer & Munde, 2015; Sproston, Sedgewick & Crane, 2017). These studies reflect the medical model of how BTL develop, which does not address the current understanding of the gambit of BTL as reflected in the South African policy documents. In addition, the parents' understanding of BTL is explored using the Capability Approach (CA) and Morrow's theoretical concepts of formal and epistemological access (Morrow, 2007).

5.4 Theoretical overview

Parents' role in education and, more specifically, IE are given more attention in policy documents that emerged after 1994. Parental involvement is embedded in the SASA, which gives parents the choice of placement of their children, thereby superseding the admission policy of schools (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The Education White Paper 6 also identified parents as key to the implementation of IE. However, parental involvement is dependent on their ability to make a "meaningful contribution to the preventing, identification and removal of barriers to learning" (Du Plessis 2013, pg. 89). Thus, parental involvement in inclusion is dependent, in part, on their capabilities and functionings. Despite the reliance on parents to identify and remove BTL, and their impact on implementation, not much is known about their attitude towards various BTL, as they are understood in South Africa. It is important to ascertain parents' attitudes towards difference and disability since these are argued to complicate the implementation of inclusion (Engelbrecht et al., 2016). This paper therefore sets out to understand the perceptions of parents (of children without BTL) are towards BTL through the CA.

Policy documents outline the importance of inclusion for children experiencing BTL and promulgate the formal and, to some extent, the epistemological inclusion of children. The value of inclusion is thus presented in a top-down manner. The CA however argues that value is an individual choice that is present across three different, but interconnected constructs within the CA: freedom, agency, and capability.

Freedom, understood to be the opportunities that individuals have to do what they value, provides a basis for understanding parents' perceptions of inclusion and subsequent

BTL. Capabilities, the “real opportunity we have to accomplish what we value” (Sen, 1992, 31) and agency also make reference to value with agency being understood as the ability to choose functionings that one values. If one presumes that inclusivity is a functioning, then parents, by exercising their freedom, may choose whether to value inclusion or not and, in so doing, develop the capabilities that would support inclusion. The value assigned to inclusion would subsequently determine whether parents act in support of formal and/or epistemological access of children to schools, with formal access referring to the admission of children and epistemological access referring to the “goods” of “knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions that children develop both for their benefit and for the benefit of others” (Brighouse et al., 2016, 1).

Epistemological access could be argued to be dependent, in part, on the availability of resources that, in education, are the teachers. CA argues that access to resources is less important than the way the resource is used and that equal resources do not equate to equal functioning (Claassen, 2014). With reference to teachers, this means that some children will require more attention than others in order to attain the same level of functioning. While research indicates that parents of children without BTL are in favour of formal access, the notions of epistemological access has not been explored (De Boer, Pijl and Minnaert, 2010; Vlachou, Karadimou and Koutsogeorgou, 2016; Kern 2020, accepted) neither has the manner in which tensions between valued functionings are resolved and the impact this has on the support of access for children experiencing BTL.

Inclusion, democracy, and education, as a means to escape poverty, are valued functionings in South Africa, largely because of the country’s divisive history. These functionings however are contested when parents are faced with a situation where they

perceive that the inclusion of a child experiencing BTL will negatively impact the education their own children receive. Previous research has demonstrated that, while parents are supportive of providing formal access to children, epistemological access is constrained by the inclusion of children experiencing BTL (Kern, 2020, under review; Lui, Sin, Yang, Forlin & Ho, 2015; Vlachou et al., 2016). This was shown by parents who, while they supported the formal inclusion of children experiencing behavioural difficulties, they felt these children should be placed in separate classes except for cultural and sporting activities. This example demonstrates how teacher attention impacts the support of access.

What emerges in the literature is that parents of children without BTL support the inclusion of learners experiencing barriers (Vlachou et al., 2016) thus formal access is promoted. This is in contrast to Kern (2020) who found that formal access was a concern when parents felt that the physical environment would provide hindrances to the children with BTL.

IE is seen as a way to combat the discriminatory practices of the past and address the inequalities that pervaded education during apartheid. This means that BTL has moved from a medical model to a more systemic understanding. The policy documents identified parents as being key role-players in the implementation of IE. However, little is understood about parents' views of BTL. In this regard, value within the CA was discussed as it relates to what could potentially influence parents' views of IE and their support of formal and epistemological access.

5.5 Research questions

Given the evident gap in the literature, this paper set out to answer the following

questions:

1. How do parents of children without BTL perceive BTL?

2. How do parents' perceptions of BTL inform their support for formal and/or epistemological access?

5.6 Methods

5.6.1 Research design and methods

The current paper is part of a larger study, which investigated the attitude of SGB members and non-SGB members towards inclusion. The focus for this paper was on parents' perceptions of BTL. The study employed a mixed-methods concurrent design. Mixed methods research is considered a "legitimate, stand-alone research design", particularly within the social sciences (Hanson, Creswell, Plano Clark, Petska & Creswell, 2005, p. 224) across numerous single research studies (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Creswell, 2008, 2012). In this study, the concurrent design is applied by collecting the quantitative data, in the form of a five-point quantitative scale, and qualitative data, in the form of open-ended questions, at the same time (Collins, Onwuegbuzie & Jia, 2006). In this way, the data collected from the two phases do not inform each other until the data interpretation stage (Collins et al., 2006).

5.6.2 Participants

Of the 11 primary schools that were invited to participate in the study, only seven principals gave consent for the parents to participate. The surveys were distributed to all the children at the seven primary schools. Of the 852 surveys returned by parents, 40 had

incomplete data and were removed from the sample. In addition, 406 parents indicated that their children experienced BTL and these were also excluded to prevent contamination of the results, resulting in a sample size of 406 parents. Of the 406 parents, 222 (54.68%) chose to respond to the two open-ended questions. The sample was a purposive sample of convenience.

The participants comprised 89 (22%) males and 315 females (78%). As depicted in Figure 1, the participants' ages ranged between 19 and 77 years with a mean of 38 years. A majority of the sample identified as black (53.9%, n=216), followed by 42.9% (n=172) identifying as Coloured. English was identified as a home language by 28.6% (n=113) of the sample. The predominant vernacular home languages were Setswana (14.4%, n=57), Zulu (14.2%, n=56) and Southern Sotho (13.9%, n=55). With regards to educational levels, 16.2% (n=64) of parents indicated that they have some formal schooling (primary school), while 18.5% (n=73) noted that they had some high school education. The majority of the sample, (32.4%, n=128), indicated that they had obtained a matric certificate. A summary of the demographic information is represented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Demographics of the sample

Demographic Variable		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	89	22%
	Female	315	78%
Language	Afrikaans	44	11.1%
	English	113	28.6%
	Zulu	56	14.2
	Xhosa	12	3%

	Southern Sotho	55	13.9%
	Setswana	57	14.4%
	Venda	6	1.5%
	Pedi	10	2.5%
	Tsonga	10	2.5%
	Northern Sotho	2	.5%
	Other	4	1%
	Bilingual	26	6.6%
Race	Black African	216	53.9%
	White	4	1%
	Indian	3	.7%
	Coloured	172	42.9%
	Other	6	1.5%
Education	No schooling	20	5.1%
	Grade 1–Grade 8	64	16.2%
	Some high school	73	18.5%
	Matric certificate	128	32.4%
	Diploma	50	12.7%
	Some college credit no degree	26	6
	Trade/technical/vocational training	14	6%
	Bachelo''s degree	15	3.8%
	Post Graduate degree	5	1.3%

5.6.3 Data collection

Ethical approval was obtained for this study from the University of the Witwatersrand's Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) (Protocol Number: H16/08/14), along with written consent from the Gauteng Department of Education and from the principals of the schools via individual meetings with the author. Parents were requested to participate in the study via the participant information sheet. Consent was obtained through completed consent forms. In addition, forms that were completed and returned without consent forms were assumed to have consent.

Parents' perceptions in this study were measured by the self-report questionnaire containing a self-developed scale which comprised 61 items using a five-point type response format that ranged from 1="Strongly Agree" to 5="Strongly Disagree". For the purposes of analysis, the results for the Strongly agree and Agree categories were merged, along with the results for the Disagree and Strongly disagree categories. In addition, qualitative data was gathered through the use of two open ended questions which were presented in the questionnaire. The scale addressed various BTL, related to type of disability, backgrounds, communicative ability, discrimination, and socio-economic status, among others. The questionnaire was piloted on parents of primary school children who did not form part of the sample of the study, to evaluate the clarity of the specific survey items. The pilot sample consisted of 19 parents, five males and 14 females, with ages ranging between 28 and 48 years. The results from the pilot study were incorporated to enhance the scale.

5.6.4 Data analysis

Data were entered, cleaned, and coded in an Excel spreadsheet and analysed using

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics employing frequency analysis was used to analyse the data. Based on the analysis, items 13, 14, 18, 28, 52 and 60 were removed as they were found to be ambiguous. The remaining individual items were placed into clusters based on thematic analysis and themes that emerged in the literature. These clusters were then analysed. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the responses to the open-ended comments. In doing so codes were generated and potential themes identified. Thematic analysis was used for the data analysis because of its ability to provide a rich, detailed, and complex account of large data sets, through the identification of key features within the data set. In addition, it offers the opportunity to examine the unique perspectives of research participants, "highlighting similarities and differences" (Braun & Clark, 2006; Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017).

5.7 Results

This section is an explication of the themes and subthemes based on the statistical and thematic analysis of the results from the questionnaire and open-ended responses, as reflected in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Themes and Sub-themes

Theme/Scale	Subtheme /Sub-scale	Item		Mean	Std. Dev	Qualitative analysis	
						N	%
Behaviour Mean: 2.35 Std. Dev: .37		2	Children who have emotional difficulties should be allowed in my child's class.	2.22	.831	6	2.7%
		12	Children who are continually aggressive towards class mates should not be in ordinary classrooms	1.91	.872		
		16	Children who are often aggressive towards school staff should not be in the same class with my child.	1.95	.897		
		37	When children mix with children who are different to them they develop acceptance and understanding,	2.75	.589		
		39	Only children who are well behaved should take part in fun activities (such as casual day, cultural activities and sports).	2.53	.801		
		41	Children from single parent homes are badly behaved.	2.71	.606		
Learning ability Mean: 2.07 Std. Dev: .35		3	Children who have special learning needs should be allowed into my child's class.	2.24	.856	7	3.15 %
		17	Only children who can cope with the curriculum should be in the same class with my child.	2.32	.844		
		31I)	Children with special needs can do the same work as normally developing children.	2.20	.869		
		33	Children with learning difficulties will feel bad in an ordinary class.	1.61	.800		
		38 (R)	Children who struggle with their school work should stay in at break to catch up.	2.27	.862		
		44 (R)	This school should have a special class for children who struggle with their school work.	2.41	.847		
		47	Children who experience learning difficulties are likely to be	1.89	.912		

			bullied				
		49	My child should not be expected to help children who are struggling with classwork.	2.61	.705		
		50	Children who are academically able are bored in this school.	2.46	.717		
School climate/environment Mean: 2.32 Std. Dev: .26	Transport Mean: 2.18 Std. Dev: .48	10	Children who live in different areas should be allowed in my child's class.	2.76	.591	3	1.35 %
		20	Children should go to a school close to their home.	1.73	.897		
		51	There are inadequate transport services to this school.	2.04	.786		
	Capacity/Environment Mean: 2.31 Std. Dev: .36	21	The extra-mural policy of the school makes it difficult for all children to participate.	2.32	.793	13	5.85 %
		32	Inclusion is expensive	2.08	.792		
		46	This school should have a separate class for children who are repeating a grade.	2.47	.812		
		58	My child's school can cope with children with physical disabilities.	2.23	.752		
	Treatment of individual children Mean: 2.4 Std. Dev: .41	53	My child is encouraged to think out of the box in his/her class.	2.60	.680	17	7.65 %
		55	My child is valued for the uniqueness that they bring to the class.	2.39	.767		
		56	This school nurtures all children, not only the "clever" children.	2.72	.610		
		59	Children need to fit in if they want to attend this school.	1.96	.884		
Discrimination Mean: 2.60 Std. Dev: .26	Sexual Orientation Mean: 2.63 Std. Dev:	7	Children who have same sex parents should be allowed in my child's class.	2.58	.704	3	1.35 %
		19	Children who have same sex parents should attend a different school	2.64	.665		
		57	My child should only play with children who have parents of the opposite sex.	2.65	.679		

	.44						
	HIV Mean: 2.56 Std. Dev: .3	8	Children who are HIV positive should be allowed in my child's class.	2.73	.601	17	7.65 %
		25	Children who are HIV positive should attend the same school as children who are not HIV positive	2.36	.878		
		26	Children who are HIV positive are welcome to come to this school but should not join in any sports	2.46	.775		
		61	I do not want my child to mix with children who are HIV positive.	2.67	.637		
	Religion Mean: 2.63 Std. Dev: .42	6	Children who hold different spiritual beliefs should be allowed in my child's class.	2.66	.671	6	2.7%
		11	Children who come from different religious backgrounds are likely to create confusion in the classroom.	2.38	.822		
		45	I want my child/ren to mix with children of different religions.	2.82	.500		
	Disability Mean: 2.06 Std. Dev: .57	1	Children who have physical disabilities should be allowed in my child's class.	2.47	.781	29	13.0 6%
		35	Children with physical disabilities should attend schools that are built for them.	1.65	.850		
	Culture Mean: 2.71 Std. Dev: .42	4	Children who come from different ethnic groups should be allowed in my child's class.	2.75	.588	16	7.2%
		5	Children who come from different racial groups should be allowed in my child's class.	2.79	.576		
		24	Immigrant children should go to a different school from this one.	2.60	.709		
	SES Mean: 2.69 Std. Dev:	9	Children who come from poor backgrounds should be allowed into my child's class.	2.84	.492	11	4.95 %
		15	Only children whose parents can pay school fees should attend my child's school.	2.69	.668		

	.33	22	All children should be treated the same regardless of their financial status.	2.85	.512		
		23	Only children who have paid school fees should receive a school report.	2.68	.673		
		27	Only children who bring material from home should join in art and cultural activities at school.	2.64	.692		
		40	Children should only attend school if they have the school uniform.	2.39	.868		
Teachers Mean: 5.85 Std. Dev: 1.01	Capacity Mean: 2.06 Std. Dev: .52	29	It is too much to expect teachers to teach children from different backgrounds.	2.29	.879	14	6.3%
		30	Teachers should not be expected to teach children with different academic abilities.	2.34	.841		
		36	It is impossible to adjust the lessons to meet the needs of all children at this school.	1.90	.858		
		42	It is impossible to adapt most materials in a classroom to truly meet the needs of all children.	1.83	.813		
		48	Children who struggle with their schoolwork take too much of the teachers time.	1.87	.863		
	Training/Skills Mean: 2.43 Std. Dev: .61	34	Teachers have the skills to cope with the needs of all children.	2.44	.808	13	5,85 %
		43	Teachers are adequately trained to meet the needs of all learners.	2.61	.680		
		54	Fear/Scare tactics are used to discipline children at this school.	2.66	.822		

5.7.1 Behaviour

From the results presented in Table 5.2, it is evident from the mean of 2.35 and standard deviation of 0.37 that the parents' responses converged towards the neutral option on the 1–5 scale. However, the mean score of 1.91 (*SD=.872)* and 1.95 *(SD=.897)* for items 12 and 16 indicate that parents do not want children who express disruptive behaviour towards learners or teachers to be in the classroom with their children. The theme of behaviour emerged from 2.7% (n=6) of the qualitative responses. This is best expressed by participant BB1:58 who stated that "children from unstable or violent family background should not be allowed in the normal mainstream learning because they are more likely to bully others". The concern regarding granting formal and epistemological access to children with behavioural difficulties is confirmed by Vlachou et al. (2016) who found that parents were concerned about their children's safety. De Boer et al. (2010) also found that parents were least positive about the inclusion of children experiencing behavioural difficulties.

5.7.2 Learning ability

While the overall average score for learning ability is 2.07 (*SD=.35)*, there is variability between the individual items comprising this scale ranging from agree to neutral. The results for item 33 (*M=1.61, SD=.800)* and 49 *(M=1.89, SD=.912)* indicate that parents feel that the inclusion of children with learning difficulties into a mainstream class are likely to have negative emotional consequences for those children. This is also expressed in the qualitative data by seven (3.15%) of the participants, with participant CC1:146 stating, "I think children with special needs should have a school of their own that caters for their

need because they are most likely to be victims of bullying".

The tension between wanting to seem inclusionary and wanting a good education for their children is expressed in following comment: "Integration in school is good but not in their learning areas, only in the school premises" (AA4:117). This means that the children with BTL may be enrolled at the school but should not be included in the actual teaching, thus formal access should be granted but epistemological access withheld. This idea extends to children who excel academically: "… bright kids should not get better treatment that those that underperform. Bright kids should be put in different classroom than those who under-perform" (AA2:7). These comments indicate that parents value education over inclusion and are aware of the difference between formal and epistemological access, but favour both of these for their own children, sometimes to the exclusion of children experiencing BTL. This finding is supported by De Boer et al. (2010) who found that parents were concerned about the impact a child experiencing BTL would have on their children's educational experiences.

5.7.3 School Climate/Environment

School climate refers to the role that the school and its structures play in the implementation of inclusion. The overall mean for school transport is 2.32, with a standard deviation of .36. This indicates that parents hold generally neutral views towards the school climate/environment as a barrier to learning. Analysis of the qualitative data indicates school climate emerged as a theme for 14.85% (n=33) of the participants. A more nuanced analysis of the sub-themes however provides a different picture.

5.7.3.1 Transport

While the overall mean for transport is 2.18, with a standard deviation of .48, the difference between the individual items indicate that parents' responses are not uniform. Results indicate a neutral response *(M=2.76, SD=.591)* to the item referring to children attending school outside of the area that they live in, yet parents indicated a positive response *(M=1.73, SD=.897)* to the item indicating that children should attend a school close to their homes. Of the qualitative data, 1.35% (n=3) made reference to transport. While there are broader contextual factors, which necessitate sending children to schools outside of the areas they live in, this theme specifically relates to the admission of children to the neighbourhood school. Based on the responses, it is evident that parents do not want children from outside areas to attend the school in their neighbourhood. The response to the item is expressed by participant CC3:25 who states that, "where children stay, that's where they should attend school." Another participant commented on the effect that children who come from different areas have on class size: "Children who come from different areas leave schools in their areas to come to our schools that's why the classrooms are so full and it impacts the learning of our children" (CC3:225). This demonstrates the concern parents have about the impact that inclusion has on the quality of education that their children receive.

5.7.3.2 Capacity

Most parents are neutral towards the capacity of the school with results indicating a mean of 2.31 and standard deviation of .36. This result may indicate that parents are unaware of the schools' capacity to accommodate children experiencing BTL. These results

are in contrast to the qualitative data, 5.85% (n=13), that indicate that parents are aware of the schools' capacity, or lack thereof, to accommodate children experiencing BTL. Participant CC3:141 stated that "if government equipped the school to cater for all the different needs to meet the various requirements, it would be good". The relationship between government provision and the schools' ability to facilitate inclusion is also highlighted by participant CC3:212 who points out that "most mainstream schools are not fully resourced to accommodate learners with disabilities. Lack of in-service training of teachers hence they are forced to refer learners to special schools". Based on these comments, the manner in which government's lack of provision stifles inclusion or acts as a BTL is highlighted. Another parent comments: "I do not think our school is really equipped to handle children with disabilities (wheelchair bound, etc.). There are also no special classes for children with special learning needs and no teachers to take up the need" (CC3:174). The link between including children with BTL, facilities and the capacity of teachers is further expressed in the following comment: "It does make it difficult though if the school does not have the facilities and qualified caregivers who specialise with disabilities or disease …" (BB1:79). These comments illustrate that the government and teachers are viewed as BTL. The capacity of the school to accommodate learners with BTL is explored in Donohue and Bornman (2014). These authors found that the support provision for learners from the DoE was lacking and thus acted as a hindrance to the inclusion of learners.

5.7.3.3 Treatment of individual children

Analysis of the data indicates that parents are neutral regarding the treatment of individual children *(M=2.4, SD=.41)*. This neutral stance extends to children "being

encouraged to think outside of the box" *(M=2.60, SD=.680)*, "being valued for the uniqueness" *(M=2.39, SD=.767)* and "the school nurturing all children" *(M=2.72, SD-.610)*. This is in contrast to the qualitative data, where the theme emerged for 7.65% (n=17) of the participants that indicates that parents feel that children should be treated equally irrespective of their race, culture, social economic status (SES) and background: "Children must be treated equally at school irrespective of their background" (AA4:49), "Each child should have the same benefits as any other child at school" (CC1:134). These comments allude to the fact that children are not treated equally. However, the Capability Approach alludes to the notion that in order to attain the same level of functioning, equal resources are not what is required (Deneulin and McGregor 2010). In fact what is required is equity, where people are treated according to the need that they display considering that individuals require different amounts of resources in order to attain the same level of functioning. Thus, children may require additional time, lessons, and practice from teachers in order to attain the same level of functioning as their peers. The term "equal" and the notion of "receiving the same" is inadequate in society in general, but particularly when working with children experiencing barriers. This is because children require varying levels of support to perform at the same level as their peers.

5.7.4 Discrimination

The discrimination theme was analysed according to the sub-themes of sexual orientation *(M=2.63, SD=.44, qual. 1.35%, n=3)*, HIV *(M=2.56, SD=.3, qual. 7.65%, n=17)*, religion *(M=2.63, SD=.42, qual. 2.7%, n=6)*, disability *(M=2.06, SD=.57, qual. 13.06%, n=29)*, culture *(M=2.71, SD=.42, qual. 7.2%, n=16)* and socio-economic status *(M=2.69, SD=.33, qual. 4.95%, n=11).*

Table 5.2 shows that the overall result of the overarching theme of discrimination, as well as all the sub-themes, is neutral. However, there are contrasting results for the items related specifically to the sub-theme of disability. Here, an average score of 2.47 *(SD=.588)* was obtained for the item indicating that "*children with disabilities should be allowed in my child's class*", while a positive score of 1.65 *(SD=.850)* was obtained for the item indicating that "*children with disabilities should attend schools that are built for them*". This means that parents are ambivalent towards the admission of children with disabilities into mainstream schools. Alternatively, social desirability bias may have influenced the responses to item 1. The qualitative results mirror the ambivalence towards the inclusion of children who have a disability with 7.65% (n=17) noting this sub-theme. This is reflected in the following comments: "As a parent, I would not [like] to be informed that my child's school excludes other children from learning. All children are the same, irrespective of race or gender. However children with disabilities or mental health issues should be taken to schools that are appropriate for their needs" (AA1:48) and "We should not let any children out. But I believe children who have disabilities should go to a different school and children with special needs should also be in different schools because they need special attention" (CC3:98).

While some parents expressed ambivalence, other parents expressed a very clear opinion that formal access to mainstream schools should be denied to children with disabilities: "… those with disabilities must be taken to their own schools so all children can get equal opportunities of learning" (AA4:114) and "Children with disabilities must attend their own school to avoid confusion when it comes to teaching and learning" (AA4:114). These comments imply that the formal and epistemological access for children with

disabilities will affect the epistemological access to learning for children without disabilities. They believe that including children with disabilities into mainstream education will impact the equality of the education provided. The results from this study do not express the same opinions as parents from ElZein (2009) who favoured the inclusion of children with "motor handicaps".

Though quantitative responses to children with HIV indicate a neutral response, the qualitative responses indicate that including children who are HIV+ should be conditional: "I have no issues with children that are HIV positive, they just need to be treated with care" (AA2:89) and "Kids with HIV should be allowed but with necessary precautions" (BB1:70). The notion of treating HIV+ children with care goes against the idea that "all children should be treated equal regardless" (CC3:132). However, one parent highlights the dilemma that may arise because of HIV: "HIV is sensitive because do I risk my child maybe being in a fight and there's blood and my child becomes infected?" (BB1:89). The seeming tension around HIV highlights the conflictual nature of functionings and the manner in which they may be prioritised. Thus being disease free is a functioning valued more highly by parents than being inclusive. While parents are espoused as being key proponents of inclusion in schools, what they value will predict their support for the policy.

5.7.5 Teachers

It is evident from the mean of 2.19 and standard deviation of .379 that parents' responses regarding teachers' capacity *(M=2.06, SD=.52)* and teachers' skills *(M=2.43, SD=.61)* neither agree nor disagree. These subthemes were also reflected in the qualitative results with teaching capacity being expressed by 6.3% (n=14) of the participants and

teacher skills expressed by 5.85% (n=13). However, the results for individual items on the subscale related to teachers' capacity vary between agree and neutral. Parents are neutral regarding teachers' ability to teach children from different backgrounds *(M=2.29, SD=.879)* and with different academic abilities *(M=2.34, SD=.841).* This indicates that parents may be uncertain about the teachers' abilities to teach a diversity of students. However, the positive scores related to the expectations of teachers *(Item 36, M=1.90, SD=.858; Item 42, M=1.83, SD=.813)* indicates that parents do not believe that teachers are capable of adapting the curriculum and environment to accommodate all children in mainstream classrooms. Furthermore, parents' average score of 1.87 *(SD=.863)* indicates that parents believe that learners experiencing BTL will detract from the time teachers have for all students.

While the quantitative responses indicate that parents are neutral regarding teachers' ability to teach children experiencing a range of BTL, the qualitative responses indicate that "if most schools can be equipped with equipment and teachers who are able to deal with different abilities, then we will not have a problem with inclusion in our schools" (BB1:25). This statement highlights the manner in which the school and teachers act as BTL. It is further supported by the following: "To include disabled children with able bodies can be very challenging to both learners and teachers" (CC1:167). These comments indicate that parents do not believe that teachers are able to teach a diversity of learners. Furthermore, the issue of teacher time is also raised, "By virtue of being in a public school, diversity is a given. However, inclusion of such diversity limits the educator's attention on each student. Exclusivity, on the other hand, provides the much needed attention that each parent wants for his/her child …" (BB1:4). The idea that teachers are not equipped to deal

with children with BTL is expressed by parents of children with BTL in Vlachou et al. (2016). The allocation of teacher time was also raised as a concern for some parents in the Narumanchi and Bhargava (2011) study who felt that their children without BTL would receive less attention than learners with BTL, and that this will compromise their children's academic development.

5.7.6 Discussion

South African policy documents regarding IE emphasise the important role that parents play in its successful implementation. Consequently, research has been conducted exploring parents' perceptions of IE, both from the perspectives of parents of children experiencing BTL, as well as those without. Prior studies have suggested that parents of children with and without BTL support IE (Engelbrecht et al., 2016; Lohmann, Wulfekühler, Wiedebusch & Hensen, 2018). In addition, previous research focused on parents' perceptions of inclusion and their attitudes towards specific BTL (Bossink et al., 2017; De Boer & Munde, 2015; Sproston et al., 2017). However, very little was found in the literature on the question of parents' perceptions of BTL in South Africa. Furthermore, children's epistemological access, based on parents' notions of value of various functionings and capabilities, is not addressed.

The current study supports the findings by Engelbrecht et al. (2016) that parents in the South African context are supportive of inclusion as a construct. However, a mixed picture emerges regarding the perceptions towards specific BTL. Ideologically, parents believe that no-one should be left out of education however practically they are faced with decisions that make implementing the ideology difficult.

Comparison of the findings with those of other studies confirms that parents view BTL from a medical model however shifts have been made to consider systemic causes of BTL. The most obvious BTL that emerged were the lack of resources/infrastructure from government and the lack of teacher capacity and training. While parents identified these in the present study, previous research identified these as concerns for the inclusion of children with BTL. This shift in thinking demonstrates parents' ability to think about BTL as arising from systemic factors, as opposed to purely medical deficits (DoE, 2001; Nel & Grosser, 2016). This ability to think about BTL as arising from systemic factors, as well as individual factors, is in alignment with the policy documents regarding inclusion.

However, being able to identify the causes of BTL has done little to shift parents' perceptions on the inclusion of learners experiencing barriers. This study found that parents hold inconsistent views regarding the inclusion of children with barriers particularly in relation to children with behaviour difficulties, learning difficulties, transport, disability, and HIV. Parents' ambivalence is around the impact that the inclusion of children experiencing these barriers has on the education of their own children. This finding is supported by Lui et al. (2015) and Vlachou et al. (2016). The researchers found that parents were concerned about the quality of education their own children would receive as a result of including children with BTL. Furthermore, the ambivalence emerges from the tension that exists between the values assigned to various functionings and capabilities, specifically those of being educated and being inclusive. While parents support formal access to education for all children, the perceived negative impact that epistemological access for children with BTL will have on the acquired functioning of their own children causes parents to withdraw their support for it. Parents therefore express support for education in separate classes and

separate schools. Consequently, instead of supporting inclusion, the parents' attitudes towards difference complicate the implementation of inclusion. This is because parents can identity BTL but exercise their freedom to support exclusionary practices because the value assigned to education is higher than the value assigned to inclusivity (Engelbrecht et al., 2016). Parents therefore make a choice between functionings (Sen, 1992).

The allocation of resources affects the type of access desired for children with BTL because parents perceive that the teachers' time, a human resource, will be unevenly distributed in the classroom. This outcome causes parents to vacillate between not desiring formal access, through having children with BTL enrolled in special schools, to not granting epistemological access by having children attend separate classes within a mainstream school. Both of these outcomes are in opposition to IE (DoE, 2001). The issue of teacher attention and time is corroborated by Narumanchi and Bhargava (2011) who found that parents were concerned that their children without BTL would receive less attention that children with barriers, resulting in the compromising of their children's academic development.

The withdrawal of support for the inclusion of children experiencing ITL implies that parents may act to stifle the successful implementation of inclusion, which will further perpetuate the discrimination, marginalisation and inequalities that exist in education. This withdrawal of support is understood to emerge from the attempt by parents to resolve the conflict that arises when functionings compete in relation to value, as discussed in CA.

Ambivalence in the data, which is a potential limitation, emerged mostly in the quantitative data and stems from the manner in which respondents used the mid-point in

the survey. Participants do not necessarily use the midpoint to reflect a neutral opinion; instead, they use it when items are “unfamiliar, ambiguous or socially undesirable” (Chyung et al., 2017, p. 17). In order to overcome this in the future, it is suggested that an “I don’t know” anchor be included because of the nature of the survey which taps into social desirability pressures. The qualitative data presented views that were more direct and in opposition to the inclusion of children with particular BTL. This result stems from the issue of value, what is valued, what functioning is prioritised over the others and how this priority and value affects formal and epistemological access. Thus, while parents do not want anyone to be excluded, the value that is assigned to their children being educated outweighs the value that is assigned to the inclusion of children with special learning needs. This outcome has important implications for the role that parents play in inclusion and the information that needs to be disseminated to them.

An additional limitation relates to the generalisability of the information. Given that the sample predominantly represents black African and Coloured parents from townships, the sample is not representative of all South African parents. Finally, given that the current study focused on mainstream primary school settings in a specific area, differences in parents’ perceptions might be found if parents from other education levels and areas were to be explored.

5.8 Conclusion

Despite any potential limitation, I believe that the current study provides valuable insights as it explores the perceptions of parents of children without BTL from a CA and access perspective. This study suggests that the value of particular functionings and

capabilities affects parents' support for formal and/or epistemological access for children with BTL. As such, this study provides directions for future research and could provide essential information for developing programmes aimed at improving knowledge and support for IE.

To conclude, the results are disparate with parents preferring that formal access not be granted to children with disabilities, while supporting formal access, but not epistemological access for children with behavioural and learning difficulties. Parents also identified the school climate/environment and teachers as potential sources of BTL. The trend towards promoting the development of their own children's functioning at the expense of inclusion could imply that parents are not in support of the implementation of inclusion while supporting the ideology of inclusion.

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Having answered the research questions with regards to parents who were not members of the SGB in the previous articles, focus was then turned to the parent members of the SGB, in an effort to gain an understanding of their views on inclusion.

Chapter 6: SGB's perception of inclusion: The parent component

The paper entitled "SGB's perception of inclusion: The Parent component" has been submitted to the South African Journal of Education for review.

Prior to the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, parents' participation in schools was relegated to fundraising. However, the promulgation of SASA in 1996 meant that parents were to be included in the decision-making body of the school; this was done in support of the political push towards democratisation. School governing bodies (SGBs) were thus seen as vehicles to drive democracy, equity, and equality at a school level (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018; Mncube & Mafora, 2013). However, literature illustrates that SGBs, instead of being channels for democracy, are in fact continuing apartheid era praxes with the governing body by acting in a way that discriminates against member governors (Mohapi & Netshitangani, 2018). Parents, as members of the SGB, are responsible for drafting policies that support or hinder inclusion. These policies may relate to fees, uniforms, and extra-mural activities (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Thus, their perceptions of inclusion would inform the manner in which these policies are drafted and would have a direct impact on the implementation of inclusion at a school level. Understanding the role of parent members of the SGB is thus important, particularly given the dearth of literature that exists in this sphere.

The perceptions of parent members of the SGB towards inclusion were explored using a fixed mixed method design, given that the quantitative data were collected and used to inform the subsequent qualitative data collection. However, only the qualitative aspects of the data were used for this paper. The final data set used to inform this paper consisted of 40 questionnaires and nine semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis, as outlined by

Braun and Clark (2006), and applied to both the open-ended responses and the interview transcriptions, generated five themes. These were: inclusionary/exclusionary criteria; barriers to learning; effect of inclusion/exclusion; lack of understanding of the scope of inclusion; and what it will take for inclusion to work. The themes mirror those of parent members who were not part of the SGB with the exception of the "What will it take for inclusion to work" theme. This finding is aligned to policy and demonstrates insider knowledge that parent members of the SGB may have and that the parents, who are not members of the SGB, may not have.

Additionally, much like parents who are not members of the SGB, parent members of the SGB also do not have a comprehensive understanding of inclusion. Instead, they too focus on the concrete elements of inclusion, such as who needed to be included and where. Of particular interest were parents' references to the inclusion of children who live in the community, and by implication, the exclusion of children from outside of the community. This finding was unique to parent members of the SGB and supports the notion that SGBs perpetuate exclusionary practices. This support for exclusionary practices may be grounded in the finding that value for education affects their ability and willingness to attain other functionings and capabilities, such as that of being inclusive. With reference to barriers to learning, parent members of the SGB appear to have shifted their thinking from a medical model towards a more systemic one by identifying extra-personal characteristics as barriers to learning.

SGB's perceptions of inclusion: The Parent component

Abstract

It is expected that school-governing bodies (SGBs) are a channel for democracy, equity, and equality. What emerges in the literature however suggests that SGBs are, in fact, perpetuating apartheid-era practices by excluding learners from schools. While a large volume of literature exists describing the important role that parents play in the implementation of inclusion at schools, there is a dearth of literature regarding the role of parents as members of the SGBs. This qualitative study aimed to ascertain the perceptions of parent members of the SGB towards inclusion and how these perceptions impact on their role in its implementation, within the context of South African mainstream primary schools. This was achieved through the use of nine semi-structured interviews and 40 questionnaires. Five core themes emerged from Braun and Clark's content analysis. The study revealed that parent members of the SGB do not fully understand the concept of inclusion, focusing instead on tangible elements to the exclusion of more abstract elements of inclusion. This narrow focus may impede parents' ability to promote inclusion within their role as SGB members.

Keywords

Inclusion; parents; school governing body; South Africa.

SGB's perceptions of inclusion: The Parent component

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6.1 Introduction

The legal cases between the Gauteng Department of Education and the Federation of School Governing Bodies have placed a spotlight on the roles of school governing bodies (SGBs) in creating exclusion in schools. In 2016, the court found that the final say on

admissions policies was to be held by the Department of Education (DoE) and that some policies implemented by SGBs "may constitute indirect discrimination" (Kubheka, 2016). Some of these policies have seen schools in the spotlight recently for withholding reports and denying admission for non-payment of fees, return of damaged textbooks and non-return of textbooks (Githahu, 2019; Maako, 2019; Mamacos, 2019). Thus, while SGBs are tasked with developing policies, these policies have the potential to hinder or foster inclusion, with the understanding that inclusion is a multifaceted term. Inclusion is not a once-off event, but a process that represents more than "where" a child is placed or even "who" is placed. According to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), "inclusion involves a process of systemic reform embodying changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures and strategies in education to overcome barriers" (CRPD, 2016, p. 4). Inclusion is also a political ideal with the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report on Inclusion (GEMR, 2018, p. 4) stating that inclusive education is a "statement of political aspiration, an essential ingredient to the creation of inclusive societies." This is echoed in the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001).

The GEMR (2018, pp. 6–7) identifies four dimensions of inclusion, namely, physical, social, psychological, and systematic inclusion which refer to "national legal frameworks and education policies, governance and finance, curricula and learning materials, teachers, school leaders, and education support personnel, schools, and finally communities, parents and students." These governance structures are intended to "advance the democratic transformation of society" (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 1).

One such dimension of inclusion in South Africa is the South African Schools Act (SASA) that affords SGBs a significant say with regard to decision-making in the school. The

development of inclusion in schools is to be assisted by the school governance structures, which are aimed at building a democratic South Africa (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004). The individuals who make up this group, i.e., parents or guardians of learners, teachers, learners who are elected members of the Representative Council of Learners, and non-teaching members of staff, principal and members who have been co-opted into the SGB (Republic of South Africa, 1996), have a part to play in the inclusion and exclusion of learners, both in terms of access as well as internal exclusion, which involves the inclusion of an individual in a group, while simultaneously excluding that individual from interaction within the group (Mncube, 2007).

This study investigated how parent members of the SGB, who are in the majority (51%), perceive inclusion and exclusion, with the aim of understanding how value and choice, as conceptualised within the Capability Approach (CA), affect their support for inclusion and, by extension, their actions within the SGB. To this end, the study sought to answer the following questions:

- How is inclusion conceptualised by parent members of the SGB?
- How does this conceptualisation affect their support for inclusion?

The following section presents an overview and critique of SGBs followed by the notion of value and choice as it is found in the CA. I suggest that it is not enough to understand attitudes towards inclusion and exclusion but that an understanding of what is valued and how it is valued influences choices and impacts behaviour, in this case, the development of policies, which may aid or hinder inclusion.

6.2 History of SGBs

In South Africa, the notion of a democratic governing body arose in the aftermath of the Soweto school uprising of 1976 and the development of a People's Education discourse in the 1980s (Karlsson, 2002). This, along with other developments, saw the national government gradually move away from its divisive and segregated past towards democracy, which led it to the path of decentralisation of power through the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Section 5(1) of the SASA abolished compulsory exclusion stating that public schools are required to register learners and serve their educational needs without unfair discrimination (Republic of South Africa, 1996). While addressing inequalities and promoting quality education through the democratic transformation of schools (Dervin & Zajda, 2015), the decentralisation of power also resulted in greater autonomy regarding school governance, funding, language policies and admissions policies through the establishment of SGBs that should be grounded in the democratic values of "representation of all stakeholder groups, active participation, tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making" (Mafora, 2013, 101).

In a post-apartheid South Africa, the challenge is to ensure that "South Africans have the knowledge, values, skills, creativity and critical capacities required to build democracy, development, equity, cultural pride and social justice" (Canada, Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 9). While these skills are in abundance in urban areas with many parents being educated, township schools are characterised by parents who have low levels of education (Mafora, 2013). They may therefore not necessarily have the skills, knowledge, and critical thinking

skills to develop and implement policies that are for the good of all (Heystek, 2011; Mncube, 2007). Parents in townships who are educated, the "township elite" (Mafora, 2013, pp. 101–102), opt to send their children to schools in the suburbs (Heystek, 2011; Mangena, 2012). This brings into question the functionings and capabilities of the parent members of the SGB in township schools, particularly as they relate to inclusion.

6.3 Critique of SGBs

While SGBs have been tasked with developing democracy in schools, reports of policies promoting exclusion, as well as exclusionary practices based on class, gender and race being embedded in the SGB itself, result in continued discrimination, albeit under a different guise (Mncube, 2007).

Studies into the functioning of SGBs have found that these governance structures, in fact, limit and silence the voices of its members who are seen to oppose the "set agenda" (Mafora, 2013). Thus, while parents are victims of intolerance and undemocratic practices, they also behave in a manner that is indicative of intolerance and undemocratic practices. These same parents are entrusted with promoting democracy and the rights enshrined in the constitution, including the inclusion of learners experiencing barriers to learning in schools.

While the African middle class in South Africa is growing, these educated parents send their children to private or former white schools (Heystek, 2011). Given that the reading and development of policies require a high literacy level, many parents in township schools, despite having obtained matric certificates, are not literate enough to fulfil these tasks (Heystek, 2011; Xaba, 2011). The inequalities that exist in the level of skills ultimately

affect the ability of the SGB to fulfil its mandate resulting in greater reliance on the principal and teacher component of the SGB with regards to decision making.

School governance in South Africa has given rise to new forms of exclusion. Since SGBs are mandated with determining their own policies, “maintaining standards” has emerged as a way of creating exclusion within schools (Sayed, 2002). Such standards can be used to exclude parents from the SGB (Sayed & Soudien, 2005) and learners from the school. The approaches taken by SGBs enable them to control which learners shall be admitted to schools and who is to be excluded. Currently, this is done through language policies that are used to exclude learners and parents. Despite an exemption from school fees for those who meet the requirements, fees are another method of excluding learners, if not from the school, then from activities within the school (Sayed, 2002; Sayed & Soudien, 2005).

6.4 An understanding of parent members of the SGB using the Capability Approach

This paper is grounded in the Capability Approach (CA), a human rights approach developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum. The CA offers an understanding of education as the opportunity to “expand young people’s capabilities and develop opportunities for them to pursue the life they have reason to value” (Hart, 2009, p. 401). This is achieved through the development of programmes and policies with the entire school population in mind, including those who may, at times, be excluded and/or marginalised. Given that the SGB members play a role in both the development and implementation of these policies, this approach is used to understand the functionings and capabilities of the SGB members in their ability to execute their functions.

The functionings of parent members of the SGB are the "beings and doings" that individuals value (Sen, 1999, p. 75). Their capabilities are the ability to pursue and participate in activities that they consider valuable (Claassen, 2014; Deneulin & McGregor, 2010). These concepts have implications for the development of inclusion in schools, given that a particular level of education is required to develop policy documents. Training on the functionings and capabilities for parents in their role as SGB members is provided by the Department of Education (Heystek, 2011; Xaba, 2011) however, research has shown that the training is either ineffectual or non-existent (Xaba, 2011). This, together with the tri-annual election of SGB members means that the parents' opportunities to develop by being active members are further compromised. Mafora (2013) also shows that parent members of the SGB are not seen as valuable contributors, or are silenced when their views are seen as oppositional.

Parents in SA have the goal of educating their children and research has shown that this goal may be more highly valued than the goal of inclusion (Kern, 2019, under review). Decisions are therefore taken to promote education, at the expense of inclusion. The CA argues that individuals who see the value in inclusion will be willing to implement the inclusive education policy, while those who see little or no value in inclusion will be reluctant to implement the policy. Thus, the value that parent members of the SGB assign to inclusive education will correlate with their willingness to implement the policy.

Value is tied to choice which emerges in two concepts in the CA, namely, freedom, which is what an individual will do given the opportunity and choice (Reindal, 2016), and agency which is the individual's ability to choose the functionings that he/she values (Sen, 1992). Parents who are on the SGB therefore have a choice whether to apply the skills that

make inclusion possible, or to reject them.

SGBs were implemented in SA as a way of decentralising power, with the majority being assigned to parents, who were thought to have the most investment in the successful running of the school because their children were enrolled at the institution. Research has demonstrated that parents require particular skills and knowledge to be effective and contributing members on the SGB. However, parents who have this capability often opt to send their children to schools outside of their residential area, thereby making themselves ineligible to stand on the SGB in their communities. In addition, while SGBs are meant to promote democracy, it has been found that SGBs are, in fact, marred by undemocratic and exclusionary practices.

6.5 Methods

6.5.1 Participants

For the quantitative phase, a non-probability, convenience sample of 40 parent members of the SGB (n=27, 67.5%, females and n=12, 30% males) completed questionnaires, with the majority identifying as Black African (n=27, 67.5%) followed by Coloured (n=5, 12.5%) and White (n=3, 7.5%). Participants ranged in age from 24 to 63 years. The parents' education ranged from no schooling to Bachelor's degree with the majority having obtained some high school education (n=10, 25%).

For the qualitative phase, a non-probability convenience sample of nine female parent members of the SGB, between the ages of 29 and 44 agreed to be interviewed. Three of the participants identified as coloured while six identified as Black African.

Table 6.1: Demographics of the quantitative sample

Demographic Variable		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	12	30%
	Female	27	67.5%
Race	Black African	27	67.5%
	White	3	7.5%
	Coloured	5	12.5%
	Other	3	7.5%
Education	No schooling	5	12.5%
	Grade One–Grade Eight	4	10%
	Some high school	10	25%
	Matric certificate	5	12.5%
	Diploma	2	5%
	Some college credit no degree	4	10%
	Trade/technical/vocational training	1	2.5%
	Bac'elor's degree	4	10%

6.5.2 Research Design

The current study adopted a fixed mixed method, sequential design, in that the quantitative data, collected via the use of a self-developed questionnaire, was used to formulate the semi-structured interview schedule, used for the subsequent qualitative

phase of data collection (Collins, Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2007). However, only the qualitative aspects are described in this paper.

6.5.3 Instrumentation

Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used in this study. The questionnaire comprised a demographics section and a section aimed at assessing SGB members' perspectives of inclusion and barriers to learning. The open-ended questions asked what parents understood by the terms "inclusion" and "exclusion" in education while the 61 item, self-developed scale used a five-point type response format that ranged from 1="Strongly Agree" to 5="Strongly Disagree." The pilot sample consisted of 19 parents, five males and 14 females, with ages ranging between 28 and 48 years.

A more nuanced understanding of SGB members' perceptions of inclusion and exclusion, the exclusionary and inclusionary criteria used within their children's specific school, as well as the criteria they would use when thinking about their children, was obtained through the semi-structured interview schedule. The schedule was developed based on the data analysis of the questionnaires. The interview schedule was piloted on two parents.

6.5.4 Data Collection

The research was approved by the University of the Witwatersrand's Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) (Protocol Number: H16/08/14), as well as the Gauteng Department of Education. The principals of the seven schools that participated consented to the study via individual meetings with the author. The SGB members were informed about the study via a participant information sheet. Return of the consent forms

and completed questionnaires were taken as consent. For participants who agreed to participate in an interview, arrangements were made to meet at a time and place that was convenient for them. The interviews were conducted as per the semi-structured interview schedule and were recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

6.5.5 Data analysis

Thematic content analysis was conducted, as per the steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), to analyse the responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, as well as the interview transcriptions (Braun & Clark, 2006). Codes were generated and potential themes identified. The demographic data were analysed using descriptive statistics, frequencies, and percentages.

6.6 Results and discussion

The findings, presented as core themes, combine the results from the interviews and open-ended questions in the questionnaires. Each theme summarises the views and beliefs of respondent SGB parents following the data analysis process described above. Five themes were identified from the data:

- Inclusionary/exclusionary criteria
- Barriers to learning
- Effect of inclusion/exclusion
- Lack of understanding of scope of inclusion
- What it will take for inclusion to work

6.6.1 Inclusionary/exclusionary criteria

The way participants understood inclusion is different from the aims and definition of inclusion (CRPD, 2016) with the majority of participants referring to inclusion in terms of who needed to be included and excluded. The highest percentage of respondents (interviews: n=9, 100%; questionnaires: n=20, 62.5%) referred to inclusion in terms of children who needed to be included, while 100 percent (n=9) of the interviewees made reference to children who needed to be excluded. With a focus on the one element of who is included and excluded, parents demonstrated some understanding of inclusion.

Inclusion is seen as providing an opportunity for children who have been previously excluded from education. Parents identified three groups of children who should be included that are: everybody (interview: n=5, 55.5%; questionnaires: n=6, 18.75%), children with disabilities (interview: n=3, 33.3%; questionnaires: n=7, 21.87%) and children who lived in neighbourhoods surrounding the school (interviews: n=3, 33.3%; questionnaires: n=3, 9.37%). Including "everybody" was given expression in the following comment: "Inclusive education is an educational system that is accessible to all; it does not discriminate against any" (BB1:65). Including children with disabilities was expressed as: "Inclusion secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers" (BB1:40). Parents in the Vlachou Karadimou and Koutsogeorgou (2016) study also make reference to including children with disabilities. Given that inclusion is usually associated with children with disabilities (Horsthemke, 2017; Walton & Bekker, 2013), it is surprising that this particular theme was mentioned infrequently. While some parents thought about including children with disabilities, disability was also considered when thinking about excluding children with 44 percent (n=4) of the interview respondents.

Changes to the school application system has meant that parents are able to apply to schools in their neighbourhoods, close to their places of work, where siblings are attending or a school of their choice (Inside Education, 2018). This change has meant that school enrolment may be a contentious issue with parents who noted that they were unable to enrol their children in their neighbourhood school because it had reached its capacity. This emerged as a consideration for inclusion. With regards to living within the community, parents commented that "space needs to be prioritised to children living in the boundaries first before accepting children outside the boundary" (CC2:121) and "I think one thing is considered is children living in the community" (SGB3). This finding implies that parents preferred to exclude children from outside of the community. This emerged in four of the interviews (44%).

6.6.2 Barriers to learning

Parents identified that there were particular factors that acted as barriers to learning (interviews: n=9, 100%; questionnaires: n=6, 18.75%), with socio-economic status (interviews: n=8, 88.8%; questionnaires: n=5, 15.6%), teachers (interviews n=7, 77.7%; questionnaires: n=6, 18.75%) and language (interviews: n=5, 55.5%; questionnaires: n=2, 6.25%) being identified most often. These factors could be characterised as extra-personal characteristics, those things that are outside of the child's control. While this finding aligns with non-parent members of the SGB (Kern, 2019; under review), parent members of the SGB did not reference interpersonal characteristics, such as disability, learning ability and behavioural difficulties, despite considering these factors when thinking about who should be included or excluded. This alludes to a shift away from a medical model of understanding barriers, towards a more systemic one, as indicated by the CRPD (2016).

Socio-Economic Status (SES) and background play a significant role in academic performance as well as in the interactions and expectations from educators. Consequently, teachers expect less from learners from low SES backgrounds (Batruch, Frédérique & Fabrizio, 2017; Walker, 2014). In this way, SES acts as a barrier to learning as confirmed by participants who noted that "children should be treated the same regardless of the financial status" (CC1:160) and "parents complain about not affording their school transport." (SGB5)

Stoop (2017) argues that school performance is severely hindered when learning does not occur in the mother tongue. The issue of language as a barrier to learning is two-fold. Firstly, parents referred to the inability to understand the language of instruction; secondly, language emerged as a barrier in terms of children's use of language and the impact that technology and social media have on children's language usage, expressed in their reading and writing:

> *Because of social media, so when they come into the classroom, they think that I can speak anyhow … they ignore spelling rules and also types of things, punctuations … You would know how to speak … you would know how to punctuate, you would know how to read and write, but these days, learners don't know how to, even in their own mother tongue, communicate fluently*. (SGB1)

6.6.3 Effects of inclusion/exclusion

Some participants in the study felt that inclusion impacted both negatively and positively on the well-being of children with and without barriers to learning (GEMR, 2018). Low self-esteem and low confidence emerged in 55.5 percent (n=5) of the interviews and

18.75 percent (n=6) of the open-ended questions as "*exclusion brings about low self-esteem*" (SGB6) leading to bullying of vulnerable children ultimately causing school dropout (AA1:51).

Concern regarding the impact of inclusion on learners without barriers to learning was expressed by participant SGB6 who said that it "may also disrupt other learners' education … So that is why we exclude these problematic children." The value assigned to education leads parents to make choices that constrain inclusion, since they opt to exclude children who are seen to hamper their children's education (Lui et al., 2015; Vlachou, Karadimou & Koutsogeorgou, 2016).

The positive outcomes referred to learning faster and improved school performance. In addition, an improvement in self-confidence was noted by participant AA2:72: "*It makes kids to be confident at school.*" This concurs with the literature, which found that children developed increased self-confidence and improved social skills (De Boer, Pijl & Minnaert, 2010; Ferguson, 2008; Vlachou, Karadimou & Koutsogeorgou, 2016).

6.6.4 Lack of understanding of the scope of inclusion

Sixty-six point six percent (n=6) of parent members of the SGB in the interviews and two percent (n=6.25) of the open-ended questions referred to the legal frameworks and policy element of inclusion. The policies, systems and procedures were expanded to include the procedures used to place children within specific schools and how children are accepted into the school. Participants referred to policy and procedures as follows: "Inclusion may be a policy, most probably from government down to schools, that tells each school who is able to be taken into their schools and on what basis" (SGB5) and "School inclusion is a

government policy influenced process that entails the way a school admits its learners … a decision making process" (SGB6). This finding highlights the lack of training that members of the SGB in this sample have received regarding the relevant education policies. Xaba (2011) argues that members of the SGB receive training that is ineffectual or non-existent. Training for SGB members may be hampered by the tri-annual cycle in which members serve or the fact that parents may only serve on the SGB while their children are enrolled at the school.

6.6.5 What will it take for inclusion to work?

An additional element of inclusion that was discussed by parent members of the SGB is what is required for inclusion to work (interviews: n=5, 55.5%; questionnaires: n=4, 12.5%). This refers to the need for parental support and physical resources (Barton, 2013; Vlachou, Karadimou & Koutsogeorgou, 2016) that emerged as dominant requirements (interviews: n=3, 33.3%; questionnaires: n=4, 12.5%). Common comments included: "Parental involvement is important for inclusion processes" (SGB4) and "Parent involvement is also needed" (CC1:114). However, parental support in township schools is a challenge since many parents, who are able to offer support based on their education levels, choose to enrol their children at schools outside of the townships (Heystek, 2011; Mafora, 2013; Mangena, 2012). While many parents are unable to support their children academically because they are illiterate, do not understand the language or do not have the requisite level of education to do so. This limitation on parents' ability to support inclusion affects children's education (Benner, Boyle & Sadler, 2016; Dickson, Gregg & Robinson, 2016).

Reference to the lack of physical resources that negatively affects the implementation of inclusion (Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel & Tlale, 2015) was made by 44.4 percent

(n=4) of the interview respondents and 3.1 percent (n=1) of the open-ended responses. A participant commented: “Inclusion can only work if the necessary resources and manpower is available” (CC1:114).

A limitation of the current study is that the findings are confined to parent members of SGBs in township schools and therefore cannot be generalised to the rest of the population. Future research can examine SGBs of schools in suburban areas to ascertain if differences in perceptions exist.

6.7 Conclusion

SGBs have become integral to the functioning of government schools since the promulgation of SASA in 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996). However, while the decentralisation of power was envisaged as a means of advancing a democratic society, literature has provided evidence to the contrary (Mafora, 2013).

Inclusion is understood to encompass four elements: social, psychological, physical, and systemic (GEMR, 2018). However, results demonstrate that parent members of the SGBs’ perceptions of inclusion focus predominantly on the physical element of inclusion, with an interest in who is to be included and where they should be included. This focus lacks a depth of understanding of inclusion and negates the requirement for social, psychological, and systemic inclusion. With a lack of focus on what happens to learners once they are in an institution, SGB members are likely to promote internal exclusion, which means that children will be allowed in a group, i.e., class or school, but excluded from the interactions that occur within that group (Mncube, 2007).

Given the aforementioned lack of knowledge regarding inclusion, parent members

of the SGBs' ability to value inclusion limits the choices that they are able to make in this regard. It is evident that inclusion, while valued, is valued less than other functionings and capabilities by parent members of the SGB. The perception that inclusion may detract from their children's educational experiences results in parents viewing inclusion in a negative light. By valuing inclusion less than education itself, parents may make choices that are in opposition to inclusion thereby choosing to limit the admission of children with barriers to learning.

This study has shown that inclusion is a multifaceted concept that is not fully understood by parent members of the SGB under study. Instead, parent members of the SGB appeared to focus on the tangible elements of inclusion, such as resources, children, and buildings, while overlooking the more abstract elements of inclusion that refer to a process of reform, curriculum changes and teaching methodology modifications (CRPD, 2016). Parents need to undergo a process of reform in order to fully grasp the social, psychological, physical and systemic dimensions of inclusion (GEMR, 2018). Only once a holistic understanding of inclusion is grasped, can parents fully support inclusion for all.

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The findings of the article indicate that, while elements of the Bio-Ecological model and elements of the Capability Approach are useful in understanding challenges individuals face with inclusion, both have gaps in their offerings. Consequently, an integrated approach would be more useful in understanding inclusive education in South Africa.

Chapter 7: Using a combined Bio-Ecological and Capability Perspective to understand Inclusive Education in South Africa

Having identified that neither the Bio-Ecological model nor the Capability approach addressed concerns regarding the implementation of inclusion sufficiently, an alternative to these was sought. This alternative is presented in an article published in the Prospects journal in 2022 (Appendix 12). See:

Kern, A. (2022) Using a combined Bio-Ecological and Capability perspective to understand inclusive education in South Africa. *Prospects.* https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-021-09584-4

Inclusion has been implemented globally in an effort to address the inequalities in education. The process towards inclusion in South Africa was initiated in October 1996 with the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services and culminated in the Education White Paper 6; Special Needs Edition in 2001. However, as with the rest of the world, inclusion in South Africa has faced numerous challenges. These challenges have largely been explored from an Ecosystemic theoretical lens (Engelbrecht, 2020). By adopting this lens, inclusion is explored from a contextual background however insight into the individual and their personal characteristics, and the process factors affecting the interactions between the individual and the environment, goes unexplored.

This theoretical paper presents the ways in which both the Bio-Ecological model and the Capability Approach could be used to support inclusion. In addition, the gaps evident in these models are explored resulting in the notion that an integration of the Bio-Ecological Theory and Capability Approach is needed. In this new conceptual model, insight is gained

into the role and impact of an individual's context, personal characteristics, resources and conversion factors on their ability to support and implement inclusion. It is believed that these insights will provide guidance regarding the level of support, education and resources that are required to optimally support individuals in their implementation of inclusion.

Using a combined bio-ecological and capability perspective to understand inclusive education in South Africa

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Abstract

Inclusion educational practices have been adopted worldwide to address inequalities endemic to education systems. In South Africa, the process towards inclusion commenced in October 1996 and was realised in 2001 with the Education White Paper 6. However, the implementation of inclusion in South Africa has been marred by challenges. These challenges have been examined through an ecosystemic theory lens offering insight into the contextual challenges facing inclusion but this does not adequately explore the role that the

person involved in the implementation and their specific dispositions play in the enactment of inclusion. This theoretical paper argues that, to better understand the challenges individuals face with implementing inclusion, a broader lens integrating Bio-Ecological Theory and the Capability Approach is needed. This integration highlights the need to look at a complexity of issues to understand what is valued, as competing values, and the choices between these, will influence the implementation of inclusion.

Keywords: Bio-Ecological Theory, Capability Approach, education, inclusion

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7.1 Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2011), 20 percent of children in any schooling system could be experiencing some form of barrier to learning such as poverty, abuse, language, and disability. In South Africa, it is reported that, of the 5.8 percent of children identified as having disabilities, only 1.01 percent of these children are enrolled in mainstream education, with a total of 1.3 percent of children enrolled in mainstream education in the Gauteng Province (DBE, 2015). These figures indicate that, as a country, South Africa is experiencing difficulties implementing inclusion. This has been identified in numerous articles (DBE, 2015; Donohue & Bornman, 2014; Themane & Thobejane, 2018) and is typically understood from an ecosystemic theoretical lens (Abery et al., 2017; Davison & Scholl, 2017; Hackett, Hudson, West, & Brown, 2016; Kamenopoulou,

2016). An ecosystemic lens, as adopted in South Africa, has an ability to study relationships and connections between influential factors within environments (Anderson, Boyle, & Deppeler, 2014). It also offers insight into the contextual difficulties facing inclusion and was therefore used to identify challenges to inclusion (Engelbrecht, 2020). This perspective moves away from locating barriers to learning within the child to locating them within the macro-, meso-, and micro-systems that prevent access to education (Du Plessis, 2013; Engelbrecht, 2020; Potgieter-Groot, Visser, & Lubbe-de Beer, 2012; Swart & Pettipher, 2016).

South Africa has several policies related to inclusion, such as the Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) and the Policy on Screening Identification and Assessment however the support that these policies generate among those affected determines its success or failure. Cognisance therefore needs to be taken of the individuals tasked with the implementation of inclusion, along with their contexts. These include district officials, principals, teachers, and parents. This consideration is important given that the EWP6 (Department of Education [DoE], 2001, p. 33) states that “public awareness and acceptance of inclusion will be essential for the establishment of an inclusive society and the inclusive education and training system”. The education ministry explains that it aims to win the support of “national actors and role-players” and to review their “rights, responsibilities and obligations” (DoE, 2001, p. 33). Thus, the agency and capacity of individuals cannot be overlooked with regards to policy and its subsequent implementation (Du Plessis, 2013). Furthermore, the successful implementation of inclusion is dependent on various role-players such as parents and teachers. Responsibility and obligations infer action on the part of role-players. However, the various factors that influence the role-players’ ability to act

need to be explored in depth (Anderson et al., 2014) to determine if they are, in fact, capable of fulfilling the responsibilities and obligations assigned to them.

Consequently, this paper argues that the Bio-Ecological Theory (BET), with its focus on factors working in the present and how these factors affect an individual's future (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000), and the Capability Approach (CA), with its "agent-oriented view" (Sen, 1999, p. 281), could be used complementarily to understand some of the challenges inherent in the implementation of inclusion. Furthermore, the BET and the CA offer insight into the individual characteristics that may affect the implementation of inclusion and how these characteristics are impacted by an individual's particular context. This focus on the individuals responsible for the implementation of inclusion contrasts with the policy understanding of inclusion in South Africa, which is context- and systems-focused, with the DBE (2015, p. 7) stating that inclusive education is about the "transformation of an education system … into one integrated system." A focus on the individual is however aligned with Allan (2005) who asserts that inclusion is something that we do to ourselves and not something that we do to others.

Given that this paper aims to present a conceptual framework that integrates BET and the CA, relevant research reports and studies were reviewed with the aim of explaining BET and the CA and how they have been used in understanding and supporting education – more specifically, inclusion in education. This understanding would lead to an identification of the limitations of the theories with regards to inclusion (Xiao & Watson, 2019) on which the conceptual framework was built. Keywords used to identify relevant literature were "Bio-Ecological Theory", "Capability Approach", "education", "inclusive education", and "inclusion".

As inclusion is contextually specific, a short description of inclusion, with a focus on South Africa, is provided followed by an overview and critique of the BET and the CA. Subsequently, the manner in which the two theories complement each other is presented in a conceptual framework developed by the author to increase the understanding of factors affecting individuals' support for inclusion.

7.2 What is inclusion?

Inclusion is a complex concept, with numerous interpretations (Anderson et al., 2014; Artiles Kozleski, Dorn, & Christensen, 2006; Brantlinger, 2003; Göransson & Nilholm, 2014; Reindal, 2016; Slee, 2011; Thomazet, 2009). While the concept is used in various contexts, inclusion is a term often used in the educational environment.

In South Africa, inclusion in education was developed within the broader political, social, and cultural landscape. As a result, inclusion is aligned with the Constitution and is aimed at advancing human rights and freedoms, equality, and dignity (Andrews, Walton, & Osman, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2020). The focus of inclusion is thus about equity, access, full participation, and quality of learning (Engelbrecht & Muthukrishna, 2019). This alignment with the Constitution, and its subsequent focus, in conjunction with the language used in the policy documents related to inclusion in education in South Africa, led the author to adopt Reindal's community definition of inclusion (DoE, 2001; Engelbrecht, 2006; Yssel, Engelbrecht, Oswald, Eloff, & Swart, 2007). This definition states that inclusion is a way of creating communities with "specific characteristics" (Reindal, 2016, p. 4) of equity, care, justice, and value for diversity. The EWP6 states that it hopes that inclusive education would provide "a cornerstone of an integrated and caring society" (DoE, 2001, p. 10) where

negative stereotypes are uncovered and unconditional acceptance promoted. This is echoed by UNESCO (1994, p. ix), which describes a school as a microcosm of society, with the implementation of inclusion viewed as the "the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all". Thus, while the outcomes of inclusion are felt across communities, its implementation rests on individuals.

Okkolin, Koskela, Engelbrecht, and Savolainen (2018) discuss Kuippis and Hausstatter's three discourses of inclusive education. The first relates to the inclusion of people with disabilities. The second, while articulating a need to address issues of access, participation, and achievement, directing inclusive education to all, "focuses on certain populations considered the most vulnerable and marginalized" (Okkolin et al., 2018, p. 423). Heterogeneity is emphasised in the third discourse, with diversity becoming the "starting point for educational theory and practice" (Okkolin et al., 2018, p. 423). While diversity and the acknowledgment thereof are fundamental to inclusion, inclusion in South Africa appears to be aligned within the second discourse. This responds to the exclusionary practices associated with the country's history and the subsequent focus on ensuring that all children, principally those who are from marginalised and underprivileged or disenfranchised backgrounds, have access to quality education.

With regards to the school environment, inclusion refers to the education of all children, including those with disabilities, in mainstream classrooms with their peers (WHO, 2011). In so doing, a focus is on whole-school change as opposed to a focus on the individual child. This is aligned with the understanding of inclusion in South Africa which is "a process of addressing the diverse needs of all learners by reducing barriers to, and within the

learning environment" (DoE, 2020). To reduce barriers to learning, the manner in which barriers prevent children from accessing, participating in, and succeeding in education needs to be identified (Slee, 2011). Barriers are thus understood as possibly emerging from within the individual in the form of disabilities however barriers are also understood to emerge from within the education system, as well as socio-economic factors and life experiences (DBE, 2018; DoE, 2001).

Equality and equity are both underscored in the policy documents on inclusion in education in South Africa (DoE, 2001; Republic of South Africa, 1996), resulting in the redistribution of resources based on these characteristics (Sayed & Motala, 2012a). The policy documents refer to equality in education, which implies sameness and non-discrimination (Sayad & Motala, 2012a) given the historically rampant discrimination evidenced in the country's policies. However, inclusion in education is also a social-justice issue and thus links to equity, which means "the quality of being equal and fair" (Unterhalter, 2009, p. 416). In this regard, an unequal distribution of resources and differentiation may be needed as Wrigley, Thomson, and Lingard (2012) argue that an equitable distribution of resources is needed to see meaningful change. South Africa, with its quintile system, aims to be more equitable, with poorer schools receiving a greater percentage of funds per child, compared to their richer counterparts.

Based on the aforementioned, inclusion in South Africa is focused on the changes that need to take place within the systems in order to support individual children. However, while it is acknowledged that individuals are responsible for the implementation of inclusion, these individuals are not prioritised and placed at the centre of the systems. Instead, with inclusive education being located within the ecological systems theory, the

learner (and not the implementer of the policy) is placed at the centre of the system (Anderson et al., 2014). Bronfenbrenner's BET and its use in inclusive education in South Africa is discussed below.

7.3 Bio-Ecological Theory (BET)

Bronfenbrenner's theory of human development underwent considerable change from its introduction as the ecological systems theory in the 1970s, to the emergence of BET of human development in 2007 (Anderson et al., 2014). The theory reflects developmental and systemic dimensions (Smit, Preston, & Hay, 2020) aimed at understanding the influence that the "forces operating in the present had on the development of an individual in the future" (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000, p. 117).

Within BET, the individual is viewed as influencing and being influenced by the environment through feedback loops. When feedback gives rise to a change in the system, it is referred to as positive feedback, while no change is referred to as negative feedback. Thus, negative, and positive feedbacks are associated with creating, respectively, stability, and change within the system. The introduction of the EWP6 would be considered positive feedback since it signalled major changes in the education system however these changes did not necessarily translate to changes in the individual and their abilities to implement inclusion. While the system instituted an inclusive policy, and mandated training (DoE, 2001), not all teachers feel equipped to teach learners with barriers (Dalton, Mckenzie, & Kahonde, 2012; De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011; DBE, 2015; Engelbrecht, 2020), nor do parents know what is required of them (Kern, 2020). Consequently, the individuals who are identified as integral to the success of inclusion (DoE, 2001) find themselves in a system that

has received positive feedback while, as individuals, they are in a state of negative feedback.

Unlike the ecological theory, with its nested structures that demonstrate the influence of context, BET posits that the context is only one dimension that affects development. The mature version of the theory consists of four dimensions: (1) process; (2) person; (3) context; and (4) time. While the four dimensions influence development simultaneously, the process dimension is central to the theory, as can be viewed in the author's model of the theory captured in Fig. 1 below.

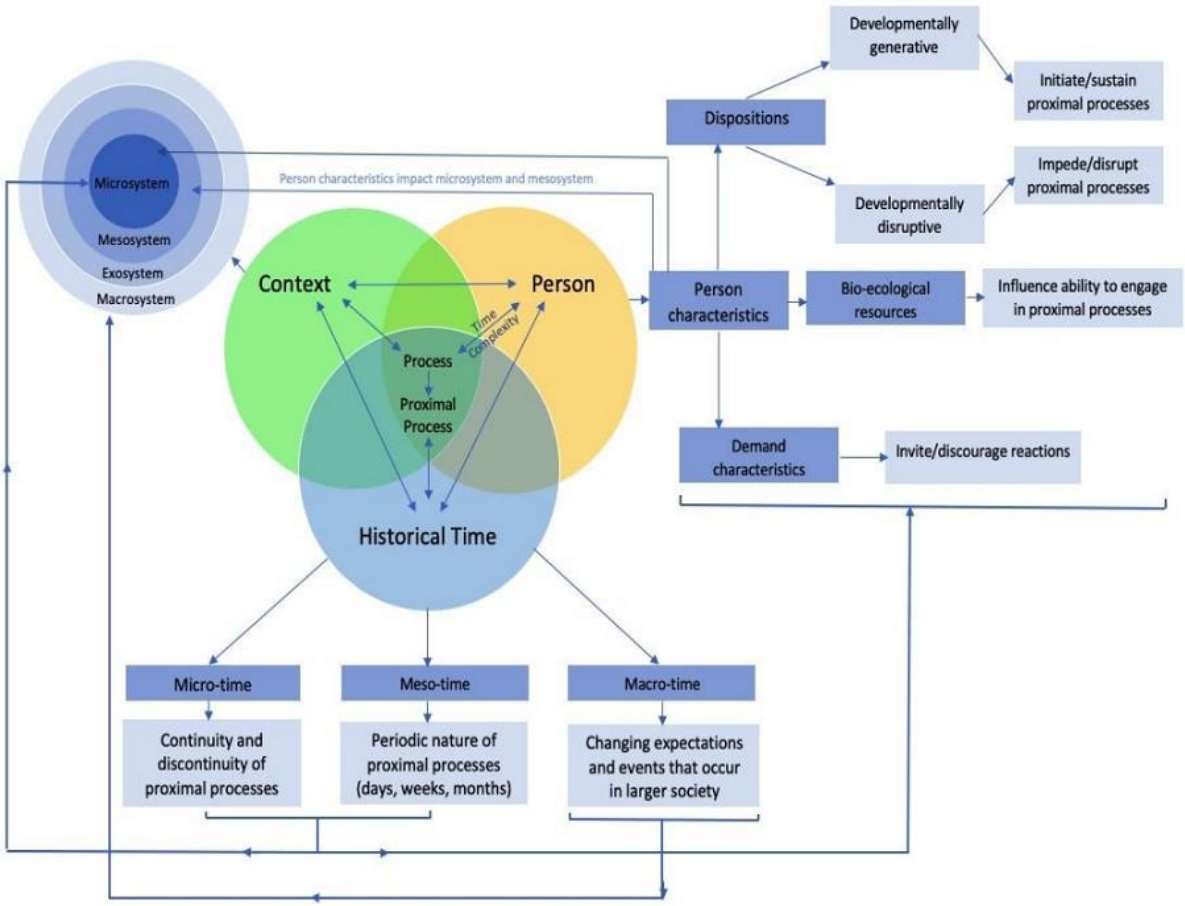

Figure 7.1: The bio-ecological model

The following is a broad-level overview of the four dimensions of the theory and their interactions which are presented in Figure 7.1. At the centre of the model are the four

interacting dimensions, with the process dimension of the theory situated centrally. According to Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007), the process dimension captures the dual interactions that occur between the person and the context across time. The process dimension comprises proximal processes, which refer to specific interactions that occur between the individual and people, objects, or symbols (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007) and impacts human development, directly or indirectly (Smit et al., 2020). To facilitate development, the proximal processes must occur regularly over time and must increase in complexity. Within inclusion, the interactions that take place between the role-players themselves, their environments, and the various education departments, constitute the proximal processes. These interactions are influenced by the individual's personal characteristics and occur within and across contexts as well as across time.

While the EWP6 outlines the department's responsibility to educate society, it is evident that this knowledge has not been imparted to teachers (Engelbrecht, 2020; Lui, Sin, Yang, Forlin, & Ho, 2015). Given that teachers, who are at the forefront of implementing inclusion, lack knowledge of inclusion (Engelbrecht, 2020; Seedat, 2018), it is assumed that parents are also unfamiliar with it (Kern, 2020). A conclusion could therefore be drawn that the proximal processes between parents, teachers, and other role-players have not been sufficient to develop their understanding of inclusion. In addition, research (Singh & Mbokodi, 2011) has shown that parents are not always at ease with communicating with the schI which hinders the proximal process between parents and the school. Thus, an understanding of proximal processes may provide much-needed insight into the nature of interactions that occur between various role-players and how these may facilitate or hinder inclusion.

The person dimension refers to the biologically based personal characteristics of an individual (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). By influencing the direction and power of proximal processes, the person dimension is instrumental in shaping the course of future development. The person characteristics are a product of development but also produce development through their ability to set proximal processes in motion and sustain them. Person characteristics comprise three components that refer to dispositions, which are developmentally generative or developmentally disruptive biological resources that influence an individual's ability to engage in proximal processes and demand characteristics that serve to invite or discourage interactions with others (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Person characteristics have the potential to influence an individual's ability to implement inclusion as they comprise characteristics, such as distractibility, shyness, responsiveness, knowledge, skills, and experience, to name a few. However, these dispositions, ecological resources, and demand characteristics are not considered when evaluating the factors influencing the implementation of inclusion.

The person characteristics influence the interactions that occur in the micro-system and meso-system and are, in turn, impacted by micro-time and meso-time, which refers to the continuity of proximal processes and their occurrence over time, respectively (Bronfenbrenner & Morris 2007; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). With regards to inclusion, the person characteristics of teachers, principals, and district officials impact the nature of the interaction with the individuals at the centre of the system, for example, parents, thereby impacting the proximal processes that occur between the parents and the micro-system and meso-system. Examples of parental person characteristics that impact proximal processes include language and parents' levels of education (De Boer et al., 2011). However, while BET

identifies that the person characteristics impact development, it does not account for how or why these characteristics are employed or not. This means that how the person is able to mobilise their person characteristics to assist in their well-being and development is not explained within the theory but is important to understand if insight into the factors affecting inclusion are to be better understood.

The context dimension refers to a set of four nested structures that reciprocally influence other structures. The micro-system refers to the patterns of immediate interactions and settings that have contact with the developing individual. It usually refers to friends, family, and teachers. The meso-system refers to the relationships that exist between the individual settings found in the micro-system. Examples are interactions between teachers and parents and between therapists and teachers/parents. The exo-system refers to settings that have an influence, directly or indirectly, on the developing individual but which do not interact directly with the individual. Examples of these systems are school management boards and parents' workplaces. Lastly, the macro-system refers to the cultural world surrounding the developing individual and includes beliefs, ideologies, customs, traditions, and policies (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Landsberg et al., 2005; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Specifically, apartheid would be found in the macro-system; similarly, inclusion and its policies are also located within this system. The influence of the macro-system on individuals, in terms of the development of their values and beliefs, contributes to an understanding of their support for inclusion.

The last dimension of BET is time, both ontogenetic and historical time, that is presented at three successive levels, i.e., micro-time, meso-time, and macro-time (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Micro-time and meso-time impact

the interactions that occur in the micro-system. Macro-time, which refers to changing expectations and events that occur in larger society and within and across generations, influences the macro-system. Macro-time has played a major role in the development of inclusion in South Africa; the changing expectations of individuals across macro-time may have been one of the driving forces towards inclusion.

A limitation with this theory in relation to explaining the adoption of inclusion is that it does not explain how individuals use their person characteristics to promote their development. In addition, the challenges that arise when resources are and are not available are not understood. Based on the theory, it can be assumed that, with the requisite training, an individual will shift towards being inclusive, i.e., they will act in a way to support the implementation of inclusion. However, this theory does not take cognisance of the individual's freedom and agency which impacts the individual's move towards and support for inclusion. This criticism is mirrored by Phasha, Mahlo, and Dei (2017) who argue that BET does not address issues of power and identity. Houston (2017) expands on the issue of power to include the limited ways agency and structure are understood as shaping the "person-context" interrelationship.

Additionally, BET has been criticised for the way it addresses culture. Vélez-Agosto, Soto-Crespo, Vizcarrondo-Oppenheimer, Vega-Molina, and García Coll (2017) argue that culture is a product of human activity and is thus not separate from the individual. It should therefore not be placed in the macro-system but within the micro-system where it plays a role in everyday activities. Understanding an individual's support for inclusion in South Africa, with its diversity of cultures, therefore becomes more nuanced when one considers that the individual's culture will affect their proximal processes within the micro-systems.

BET could also be criticised for its focus on the child and their characteristics given that inclusion necessitates a move away from the child experiencing the barrier to learning (Anderson et al., 2014, p. 5). This shift to the focus on the child and their characteristics is opposed to the understanding of inclusion, which seeks to address barriers within the system. However, individuals do impact the implementation of inclusion. Perhaps an argument could be presented that the individual at the centre need not be the child, and perhaps factors affecting the implementation of inclusion could be better understood if the individuals/stakeholders tasked with the responsibility of implementing inclusion are placed at the centre.

7.4 Capability Approach (CA)

The CA, developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, is a framework used to assess individual well-being and social arrangements. Its consideration of heterogeneity, in terms of "personal characteristics, external circumstances, inter-individual variations … and inter-end variations" (Terzi, 2005, p. 205), draws parallels with the third discourse on inclusive education (Okkolin et al., 2018) and highlights a consideration for equality and justice (Dalkilic & Vadeboncoeur, 2016; Terzi, 2005). In this way, the CA could be used to explain inclusion. The consideration is made when determining the level of provision of resources required by individual children in order to attain specific capabilities. In so doing, the child's "capability to be educated" is enhanced.

The CA comprises three fundamental concepts: (1) functionings; (2) capabilities; and (3) agency (Deneulin & McGregor, 2010; Robeyns, 2005). At its core however is a focus on what people are able to do and be, i.e., their capabilities, while recognising that social and

environmental structures influence an individual's ability to convert resources into functionings. Within the educational setting, functionings refer to the "beings and doings" a child has achieved such as "access to and participation in education, learning and achievement" (Okkolin et al., 2018, pp. 424–425). Both Sen and Nussbaum consider "being educated" an essential capability (Okkolin et al., 2018) with inclusive education prom213ounsel development of capabilities (Terzi, 2005). Although capabilities are at the core of the approach, as you will see in the author's figure below, the conceptualisation of the approach starts with resources.

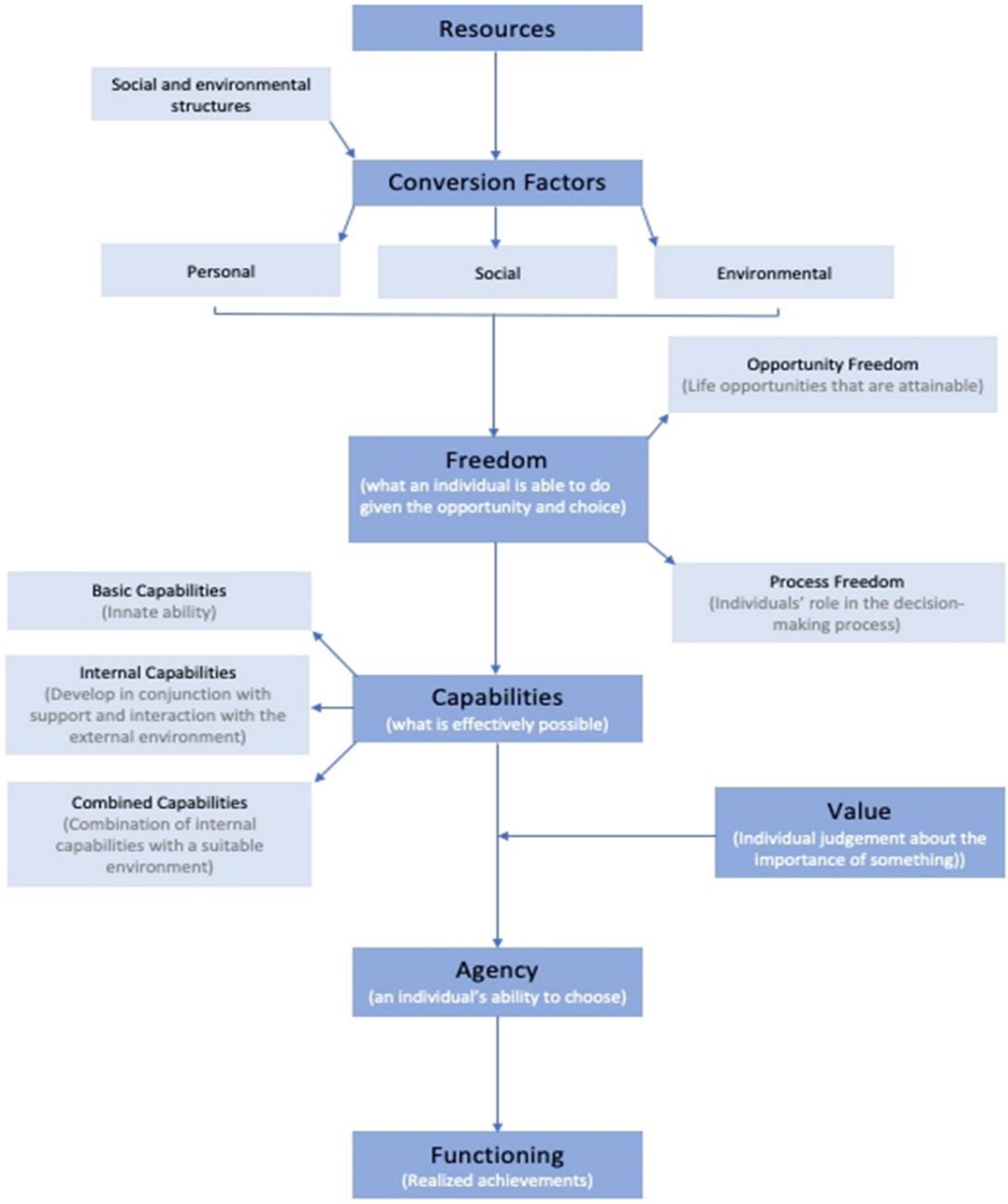

Figure 7.2: The Capability Approach

Within the CA, resources have value since they provide an individual with the opportunity to develop capabilities (Deneulin & McGregor, 2010). The availability of resources is also important for successful inclusion (Andrews et al., 2019; Engelbrecht, 2020). These refer to human resources, physical resources, financial resources and knowledge, and are also referred to as goods or commodities (Crocker & Robeyns, 2010;

Robeyns, 2005). However, as the CA argues, access to resources does not equate to capabilities and functionings, in this case, being inclusive. Instead, what a person is able to do with the resource determines the outcome and what a person is able to do is affected by the individual's personal, social, and environmental conversion factors (Robeyns, 2005). However, while the CA addresses what a person is able to do, it does not account for the role of the individual's innate factors, referred to as "person characteristics" in BET. So, while an individual may have access to training and development (a resource) with regards to inclusion, their personal characteristics, e.g., being distractible or curious, mean that they walk away from the training with different levels of knowledge. Thus, the personal characteristic, in conjunction with the conversion factors, influences the attainment of a functioning.

The conversion factors, which i215ounselhe ability to develop capabilities, are affected by what the individual is able to do given the opportunity and choice. This equates to freedom that is however impacted by the macro-system of the individual, for example, in environments where disability or difference is viewed as witchcraft, individuals may not have the freedom to act inclusively based on the cultural beliefs of the community. Alternatively, a school environment, in terms of policies and practices, may prohibit a teacher from implementing inclusion, thereby inhibiting the teacher's freedom. It is therefore important to note that conversion factors can act to promote or hinder inclusion (Trani et al., 2011).

Capabilities also refer to an individual's ability to pursue and participate in activities that they consider valuable (Claassen, 2014; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Walker, 2012). The notion of value emerges in the explanation of capabilities and functionings that indicate that the

activities and skills that people pursue are driven by the value that has been attached to them. However, the question is whether the capabilities or functionings being pursued are valued as a means to an end, or as an end in themselves (Okkolin et al., 2018). For example, is being educated valued because it is a means to acquire specific skills (e.g., the ability to read or do everyday math) (an end) or is it valued because it gives a person the opportunity to pursue a better life (a means)?

Value is expressed through the individual's agency, which refers to the individual's ability to choose what they do or can do to achieve a specific outcome (Crocker & Robeyns, 2010). Consequently, a capability, which refers to a possible achievement, is only converted into a realised achievement, i.e., a functioning, if the individual values the functioning and expresses their agency in their attainment of specific functionings. In relation to inclusion, the CA would argue that individuals will aim to attain inclusion if they value it and have the freedom to pursue it. Given the history of South Africa, inclusion is embedded in the Constitution and the education policy documents. However, this value is ascribed by external parties. What is not investigated is to what extent the individuals responsible for implementing inclusion value it, and whether they have the resources, conversion factors, and freedom to seek out what they value.

This is linked to Sen's idea of "adaptive preferences" (Otto & Ziegler, 2006) that argues that individuals adjust their aspirations to reflect what is available to them (Nussbaum, 1999). Capability theorists however argue that, just because someone has come to expect specific treatment, does not mean that they are not entitled to more and that their feelings should not be considered when thinking about capabilities and functionings that would constitute a good life for them (Begon, 2015). This belief is thought to further

alienate marginalised and oppressed groups because their preferences are characterised as "unreliable, and those who hold them as irrational and 'defective agents'" (Begon, 2015, p. 242).

With regards to adaptive preferences, the oppressive history and current living conditions of many individuals in South Africa may indicate that inclusion is not something that they aspire to because it has not been available to them previously. With regards to parents specifically, many have been excluded as a result of apartheid and its ongoing legacy. They therefore continue to see and experience exclusion and may, in fact, not believe that inclusion is possible therefore it is not an expectation. This belief that inclusion is not possible may be externalised, which results in parents inadvertently acting against inclusion. This adaptive preference affects an individual's freedom, resulting in an individual not having the freedom to pursue inclusion.

All aspects of the CA however cannot be applied fully to all spheres of society. Children, in particular, cannot exercise their freedom and agency in its entirety, due to their dependency on adults. Education is one such element of a child's life. CA acknowledges that education plays a role in developing children's capabilities through the expansion of both ability and opportunity while also improving well-being, freedom, and achievement (Terzi, 2005). However, given that children are dependent on the adults responsible for them, their freedom and agency are limited. In South Africa, children between the ages of seven and 15 are required by law to attend school (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Consequently, their freedom (i.e., not to attend school) in this regard is restricted. Conversely, some parents may choose not to send their children to school, possibly due to financial reasons, despite the child's desire to attend school. It is the freedoms, agency, capabilities, functionings, and

values of the adult, who is required to protect the children's interests and meet their needs (Terzi, 2005), that impact on the child's freedoms and agency. With regard to the successful implementation of inclusion, this demonstrates the value in shifting the focus from the child to those responsible for implementing inclusion.

An additional criticism against the CA has been that it is too individualistic and, as a result, does not pay attention to groups (Robeyns, 2005). An argument against this criticism however is that the CA embraces ethical individualism, which refers to the notion that individuals are "the units of moral concern" (Robeyns, 2005, p. 107). With a focus on ethical individualism, CA is concerned with the impact of social structures on the individual (Robeyns, 2005), as can be seen with the impact of social and environmental conversion factors on the acquisition of functionings. Deneulin and McGregor (2010, p. 514) also highlight the shortcomings of the approach in relation to the "social and political nature of human well-being" noting that gains for some may be losses for others. This is a perception held by some parents who perceive that the inclusion of children with barriers is a loss for their children without barriers in relation to teacher time and attention (Kern, 2020).

As has been demonstrated, both the BET and the CA have aspects to offer in understanding the challenges facing inclusion however both also have gaps in their understanding. Consequently, an integration of the two theories offers a conceptual framework in which the limitations of both are addressed and the identified strengths are used to offer a more holistic understanding of the challenges facing inclusion from an individual perspective.

7.5 Reconceptualised understanding of factors affecting inclusion

While there are numerous challenges facing the implementation of inclusion in South Africa, one such challenge relates to the individual role-players within inclusion, with the DBE (2015) stating that managers and teachers are unable to support the learning needs of all children. This challenge relates to a lack of knowledge, commonly held stereotypes, and cultural beliefs, among others. An understanding of the challenges to implementing inclusion is difficult to obtain without considering the cultural-historical contexts and lived realities of the community as argued by Engelbrecht (2020, p. 8). This idea is further supported by Singal and Muthukrishna (2014, p. 300) who assert that "it is only when we truly begin to develop deeper appreciation of the context and make efforts to understand individual and collective stories that we can open up the moral and political space for effective education reform efforts". The conceptual framework presented in Figure 7.3 considers the cultural and historical contexts while exploring the factors that affect an individual's ability to be inclusive. Consequently, an amalgamation of BET and the CA appears best suited to explain some of the challenges facing inclusion in South Africa on an individual level. The concepts used in the framework therefore mirror the meaning reflected on the original work of the theorists.

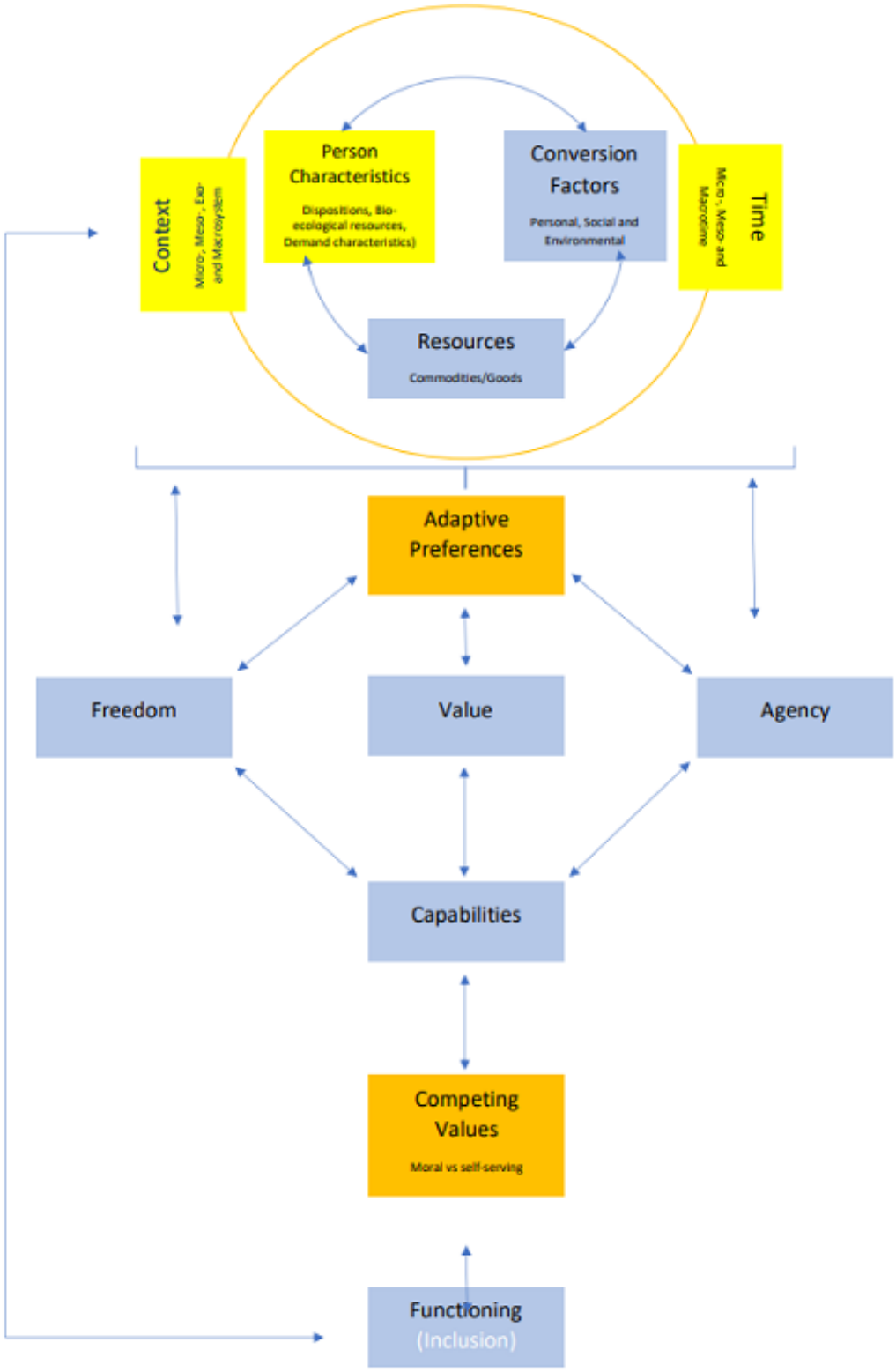

Figure 7.3: Combination of the Bio-Ecological Theory and the Capability Approach

If one considers "being inclusive" as a functioning, a way of being, then the

framework aims to understand the factors that support or hinder an individual's development of this functioning. The framework conceptualises "being inclusive" (functioning) as a desired end, with a discussion of how the interaction between the various factors drawn from BET and the CA act as a means to the end.

The framework starts with a representation of the bi-directional interaction between the person characteristics (BET), resources (CA), and conversion factors (CA) within the space of context (BET) and time (BET). According to BET, a person comprises person characteristics that determine the way an individual responds to the world (context) and how the world responds to the individual (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). With regards to inclusion, an understanding of the person characteristics offers insight into how the person relates to, for example, children, teachers, district officials, and trainers, given that person characteristics influence a person's ability to engage with others while simultaneously encouraging or discouraging interactions from those around them. The EWP6 (DoE, 2001, p. 50) states that partnerships between parents and the institution should be developed so that they can be

> armed with information, counselling and skills, participate more effectively in the planning and implementation of inclusion activities, and so that they can play a more active role in the learning and teaching of their own children, despite limitations due to disabilities or chronic illnesses.

The person characteristics of the parents and teachers will therefore determine the extent to which these partnerships flourish or deteriorate.

Person characteristics interact with resources, also referred to as goods or

commodities by Robeyns (2005), which are available to an individual. Resources are important to development because they provide an individual with an opportunity to do something with them (Deneulin & McGregor, 2010). However, what a person can do with a resource is determined by conversion factors (personal, social, and environmental) and person characteristics. For example, a parent may be provided with a booklet regarding inclusion and its benefits. However, if the parent is illiterate (person characteristic), their personal conversion factors will impact on their ability to use the resource (information booklet) to gain knowledge. In another instance, the parent may be able to read, understand, and integrate the information gained from the booklet (resource) however their ability to action that information may be impacted by societal and cultural stereotypes (conversion factors).

Given that barriers to learning arise from a multitude of mostly socio-economic factors, conversion factors are important in understanding an individual's motivation to attain the functioning of being inclusive. These conversion factors affect the implementation of inclusion as, while policy determines that a child with barriers to learning should attend their neighbourhood school, the social conversion factors (e.g., attitude of the community) or the environmental conversion factors (e.g., school without ramps) will mean that the child is unable to access the school. An example of the impact that the environment has on the implementation of inclusion was found by Engelbrecht (2020) where teachers who demonstrated a commitment and motivation to teach inclusively were hindered by the leadership in their schools. Thus, their personal characteristics were impacted by the environmental conversion fac222ounselhe development of personal characteristics, conversion factors, and resources occur over time within specific contexts. Time specifically

relates to micro-time, meso-time, and macro-time. In South Africa, the impact of macro-time in conjunction with the macro-system cannot be overstated. The system of apartheid is a historical event that would be captured in the macro-system however its impact is seen across macro-time. The impact of this system is seen in the person characteristics, conversion factors, and resources available to an individual. The disparate education system emerging during apartheid resulted in the emergence of inclusion within the macro-system post-apartheid. However, the effect of the apartheid system is that many adults in present-day South Africa may be hindered by a mindset (person characteristic) which may result in adaptive preferences that are, in fact, in opposition to inclusion. Similarly, teachers' lack of initial teacher training with regards to inclusion may make them feel that they are unable to teach within an inclusive environment (Engelbrecht, 2020; Seedat, 2018).

Adaptive preferences are what individuals come to expect for themselves given the context that they find themselves in and the impact of events over time (Begon, 2015; Otto & Ziegler, 2006). Adaptive preferences will consequently influence what a person comes to value, their agency, and their freedom to act. Thus, an individual who has lived a life of discrimination may continue to expect it from the environment and may act in a way to perpetuate discrimination. Given their experiences, teachers too may have difficulties with implementing inclusion, perhaps due to a lack of resources or overcrowding, and may consider inclusion too difficult to implement (Engelbrecht, 2020). In both of these examples, parents and teachers may continue to exclude children with barriers to learning believing that inclusion is, in fact, not possible.

Value, agency, and freedom (CA), having been impacted by adaptive preferences, in conjunction with context and time, will determine the capabilities that a person develops.

This implies that what the person has come to value, along with their freedom to choose and act, will impact the potential beings and doings that the individual develops. The individual then determines which capabilities they convert into functionings. However, the functioning that is realised may be influenced by competing values. For example, parents in South Africa value education and inclusion (Kern, 2020) however these are sometimes seen to be competing functionings because inclusion, while valued, is viewed as a hindrance to a quality education. As a result, in an endeavour to provide their children with quality education, parents may choose to exclude those who they view as interfering with their children's education. Being educated is thus chosen as a functioning at the expense of being inclusive.

7.6 Conclusion

According to the DBE (2018), the main aim of an inclusive education system is to ensure that all children have access to an inclusive quality education on an equal basis with their peers in the community. This is achieved through the support of children irrespective of their background, culture, language, ability, or disability. Consequently, research into inclusion usually has at its centre the child who should be included and the criteria that would be met for inclusion to occur successfully (Engelbrecht, 2020). However, this paper argues that a focus on the child overlooks an important determinant of inclusion, which is that the adults are responsible for implementing inclusion.

Inclusion, a social-justice issue, has at its core a respect for the diversity of individuals (DoE, 2001, 2020). By applying this statement to the adults regarded as integral to the successful implementation of inclusion, the conceptual framework presented is used

to obtain an in-depth understanding of the person, allowing insight into factors that hinder or support their move towards inclusion. By placing an emphasis on heterogeneity, the conceptual framework moves away from the predominant second discourse of inclusion, which ultimately focuses on the inclusion of specific groups of people, to the third discourse with educational theory and practice as the focal point.

Gaining an understanding of the individual using the conceptual framework presented would allow a more nuanced approach to the strategy the DoE will use to win the support of role-players, and the training and support needs to be offered before "rights, responsibilities and obligations" (DoE, 2001, p. 33) are thrust upon them. In so doing, support for the policy of inclusion may increase thereby increasing the likelihood of its successful implementation (Du Plessis, 2013).

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Author Biography

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Chapter 8: Discussion

8.1 Introduction

Inclusion gained traction in South Africa when the legal system of racial segregation ceased. Stakeholders were identified as being instrumental in the successful implementation of the inclusive education policies. Among these are parents, with their role in the implementation of inclusion highlighted in policy documents and literature (see DoE, 2001; Engelbrecht et al., 2005; UNESCO, 2017b). However, a search of the literature investigating parents' attitudes towards inclusion focuses on inclusion under specific conditions (Bossink et al., 2017; De Boer & Munde, 2015; Sproston et al., 2017) such as autism and disabilities. Consequently, this study was conducted to reveal what parents of children in seven South African primary schools understand by inclusion and exclusion as this impacts their attitudes towards inclusion and policy development, and how they interact and relate to those with barriers to learning. Hence, the following research questions were explored:

- What are the perceptions of parent members of the SGB towards issues of inclusion and exclusion?
- What are the perceptions of non-SGB parents towards issues of inclusion and exclusion?

The sub-questions were as follows:

- What do parent members of the SGB and other parents understand by the terms "inclusion" and "exclusion"?
- What characteristics do parent members of the SGB and other parents use to include

and exclude learners from school and/or school activities?

A mixed methods approach was adopted for the study, using data collected by means of a survey assessing parents understanding of inclusion and exclusion as well as semi-structured interviews. The interviews focused on parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion, their perceptions of specific barriers to learning, and how these perceptions affected their feelings towards the inclusion of children with those barriers. A non-probability, convenience sample of 861 parents who did not form part of the SGB, and 40 who were parent members of the SGB completed the survey anonymously. The survey responses were analysed using descriptive statistics specifically employing frequency analysis. An analysis of the survey results revealed parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion and their perceptions of various barriers to learning including but not limited to language, religion and behaviour.

The responses to the open-ended questions and the interview transcripts were analysed thematically. Core themes were inclusion/exclusion criteria, spaces of inclusion and exclusion, and the effects of inclusion and exclusion. The results of both the surveys and interviews are discussed in this chapter using the Bio-Ecological Theory and Capability Approach. The Bio-Ecological Theory is a developmental theory, while the capability theory is a multidimensional approach to human welfare (Kuklys, 2005). The theories, while applicable to inclusion in education, are thus not being used as originally intended. Instead, various concepts from the theory and approach have been applied to the field of inclusion.

In the discussion that follows, I discuss the themes and subthemes in relation to the literature and theoretical framework. I also provide evidence from the data to support the

themes.[3]

8.2 Parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion

The definition of inclusion provided in the Concept Note for the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) is that inclusion "focuses on the full and effective participation, accessibility, attendance and achievement of all students" (UNESCO 2018, p. 4). The GEMR states that inclusion is "a process: actions and practices that embrace diversity and build a sense of belonging" (GEMR, 2018, p. 11). Neither of these definitions includes considerations of inclusion, that is, under what conditions, if any, should children be included. Conditions of inclusion are however included in the Education White Paper 6, with arguments made that children should be included if the school is able to support the children's learning (DoE, 2001). The idea that inclusion is conditional appears in the analysis of parents' responses as well. However, the conditional nature of inclusion for parents is usually based on the person characteristics, resources, and conversion factors of the individual and the education system. While scholars, such as Walton (2016) and Slee (2019), are critical of conditional inclusion, the parents in this study asserted that inclusion should be conditional because of the perceived impact that including children with barriers to learning would have on the education of their children. This is echoed in the international studies conducted by Lui et al. (2015), and Vlachou et al. (2016) in Hong Kong and Greece respectively.

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[3] Direct quotes from the interview transcripts and open-ended questions are used to support the themes. In this regard, interviewees are referred to using numerals, e.g., Participant 1. Excerpts drawn from the survey responses are referenced using letters and numbers, e.g., AA1:1. The letter and number indicates the specific school, while the subsequent number indicates the specific participant from the school.

The conditions of inclusion are contrasted with the support that some parents have regarding the ideology of inclusion by expressing the notion that no-one should be left out of education (AA2:64; AA1:45; AA4:22; AA4:62; BB1:9; BB1:36). This shows the value that parents in South Africa have regarding both inclusion and education as functionings (Kern, 2020). However, parents perceive that including children with barriers to learning will detract from their children's educational experiences and, consequently, they believe that those children should be educated in separate schools or separate classrooms ultimately making a choice between what Sen (1992) refers to as functionings. This finding contrasts with Artiles et al. (2011) who argue that, in developing countries, the focus of education is on access and completion while, in developed countries, the focus of education is on participation and outcomes. What emerged in this study is that parents are concerned with the quality of education their children receive, thus the outcome of education. This may be because access to education in South Africa is enshrined in the Bill of Rights (RSA, 1996b) and various other policy documents (SASA, Education White Paper 6), with Hall (2019) reporting that 98% of 7–17 year olds were enrolled and attended school in 2018. No significant differences in the rates of attendance across the various race groups were noted. Attendance is therefore not a concern for parents since it is prescribed, while what it is that children attain when they are in school is a concern. The belief that the inclusion of children with barriers to learning will affect the learning outcomes of their children without barriers to learning may cause parents to support exclusion. In so doing the parents are exercising their freedom and agency. In so doing, parents may perpetuate the discrimination and inequalities present in education, impeding the successful implementation of inclusion.

While the education system is marred by inequalities, the understanding of inclusion

adopted for this study reflects the ideals of social justice, equality, and equity (Andrews et al., 2019; Engelbrecht, 2020; Engelbrecht & Muthukrishna, 2019). By focusing on intrapersonal and extrapersonal characteristics, it is evident that these ideals have not been adopted by the parents in this study. Parents' understanding of inclusion is therefore not wholly aligned to the aims and definition of inclusion presented in earlier chapters. With a focus on who needs to be included, parents demonstrated that their understanding of inclusion is aligned with the second discourse of inclusion. While articulating a need to address access, participation, and achievement, the second discourse of inclusion focuses on the inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups of individuals (Kuippis & Hausstater, cited in Okkolin et al. 2018). This understanding however contrasts with South Africa's policy documents, as well as the CRPD and GEMR where definitions of inclusion encompass not only who needs to be included, but also what needs to happen once they are included.

The focus on who needs to be included resulted in the first theme, i.e., inclusionary and exclusionary criteria with a specific focus on disability, language, socio-economic status, learning ability and behaviour. This theme and the subsequent subthemes are discussed below.

8.2.1 Inclusionary/exclusionary criteria

Both parent members and non-members of the SGB referred to specific characteristics within the individual when reflecting on their understanding of inclusion and exclusion. Slee (2011, p. 64) refers to these as "identity groups". Parents use these identity groups to determine the inclusion or exclusion of groups of children. These groups also align with the person characteristics identified in the Bio-Ecological Theory. While the Bio-

Ecological Theory acknowledges that individuals comprise a multitude of characteristics, no overt acknowledgement in this regard is made by parents. What then occurs when these characteristics intersect in a single individual is not addressed by parents.

The characteristics that parents use to include or exclude reflect the diversity of individuals. According to Sen (1999), individuals are different in four ways:

1. "their personal, internal characteristics" (p. 205)
2. their external circumstances
3. their ability to convert resources to freedoms
4. their goals (Terzi, 2005).

Thus, the person characteristics of disability, language, socio-economic status, learning ability and behaviour, as identified by parents, reflect the heterogeneity of children within the school setting. However, these person characteristics are also considered barriers to learning in the South African context. As outlined in Chapter 1, barriers to learning arise from a multitude of factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic to the individual, and affect the system's ability to adequately support the teaching and learning of the child. These person characteristics, identified by parents, are discussed below.

8.2.2.1 Disability

Understanding of disability

Within the Capability Approach, disability is understood as "a deprivation or limitation in capability or functioning" (Norwich, 2014, p. 17), with a limitation in capability

identified as a “potential capability”, and a limitation in functioning as a “real disability”. According to the Capability Approach, disability should therefore be considered when reflecting on the heterogeneity of children, along with considerations of gender and age, among others (Terzi, 2005). The Capability Approach further states that disability arises out of the interplay between the individual and the social environment (Norwich, 2014; Terzi, 2005). Thus, it is the nature of the proximal processes between the individual and others or objects, that determines if a functioning or capability is restricted within that context, i.e., a disability.

Interplay between individual and the environment

The parents recognised the impact of the environment and social relations on the individual identified as having a disability and that the proximal process between the individual and the built environment affects the child with a disability. Participant 3 stated:

> *Ok, firstly we have disability, right. This highly determines whether learners can access the school. For example, if a child is in a wheelchair, there is no way he/she can go around in a school with no ramps and elevators to allow him to move around.*

Parents also identify the interaction that exists between children without disabilities and a child with a disability, acknowledging that the person characteristics of the child are impacted by interactions with others in the micro-system. This understanding is reflected in the bi-directional nature of interactions within the Bio-Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). The person characteristics of the child with a disability impacts on the interaction within the micro-system, and the individuals in the micro-system have an impact

on the child. Parents however did not reference their own impact on the child with the disability, and the interplay that exists between them and the child. Parents may therefore continue to act in ways that may marginalise those with disabilities due to their lack of awareness.

Beliefs regarding the aetiology of disabilities

While Grech (2015) argues that an understanding of disability emerged prior to the colonial period, Reynolds (2010) maintains that beliefs around the aetiology of disabilities, along with what constitutes a disability, influence the way individuals with disabilities are viewed and treated. These beliefs about disability exist within the macro-system however its impact on the individual is felt within the micro-system through proximal processes.

Mckenzie et al. (2013) however argue that disability, while understood as arising from medical conditions in the western world, is complex in African countries such as South Africa, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Uganda. In these countries, disability is also understood as being related to spiritual elements such as witchcraft, also referred to as “non-biological based beliefs” by Mutasa and Ruhode (2015, p. 153). The finding that disability may be understood as emerging from non-biological based beliefs is further supported by Reynolds (2010) who argues that beliefs held in certain communities influence the way people with disabilities are viewed and treated. The idea regarding non-biological based beliefs extends to mental illness with a prevalent belief being that those suffering with mental illness have been bewitched (Egbe et al., 2014). These beliefs affect the way resources for the individual with a disability can be accessed, i.e., their social conversion factors. The freedom to access a local school for parents of children who are disabled would be limited due to prevailing

beliefs in the macro-system, thereby limiting their ability to develop capabilities and functionings.

Support for the inclusion of children with disabilities

Otto and Ziegler (2006) demonstrate that past experiences influence expectations. Consequently, the inclusion of those who were identified as having a disability is expected, given that most individuals associate inclusion with those who have disabilities (Horsthemke, 2017). Kefallinou et al. (2020), in a review of international and European literature, also found that studies have focused on the outcomes of inclusion for children with disabilities. In the current study, parents' support for the inclusion of children with disabilities is noted in comments such as "*even the disabled children are allowed to get into the school and learn*" (Participant 2) and "*inclusion [is] making sure that all the students that are having disabilities are reaching/getting education*" (BB1:1). This contrasts with Wazakili et al. (2006) who found that individuals with disabilities are socially excluded. In addition, based on the excerpts, parents tend to focus on formal access when thinking about disability taking into consideration the impact of the resources that are available for the development of the child's capabilities and functionings. This is expressed through a consideration of the school facilities and infrastructure in accommodating children with disabilities and their ability to be mobile within the environment that aligns with the concept note for the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2018). However, parents do not focus on the quality of education being received which falls short of the aim of inclusion. While parents in this study appear to consider children with disabilities when thinking about inclusion, statistics presented by Hall (2019) taken from Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) indicate that 15% of non-school attendance was attributed to children with

disabilities. Thus, parents may not actually be faced with the inclusion of children with disabilities. This notion is supported by the Human Rights Watch (2019) that found that education officials, doctors and social workers continue to refer children with disabilities to special schools.

The severity of the disability as well as the school's ability to accommodate the disability, i.e., environmental conversion factors, was a consideration for parents with Participant 1 mentioning: "*In all partial mental disability and physical disability is no problem if the school can cater for the needs of the child fully*". Thus, while some parents advocate for the inclusion of children with disabilities, others, while seemingly advocating for inclusion, place restrictions on the conditions under which the child should be included. These "clauses of conditionality" (Slee, 2011, p. 76) are also embedded within policy documents that explain that the type of school children should attend is dependent on their support needs with children with low support needs attending ordinary schools, children with moderate support needs attending full service schools, and children with high support needs attending special schools (DoE, 2001). Accordingly, parents identified that for the child with a disability to express their agency in being included, the environmental conversion factors need to support the acquisition of this functioning.

The ambivalence towards the inclusion of children with disabilities, as reflected in the previous paragraph, is mirrored in the following comment:

> *As a parent, I would not [like] to be informed that'my child's school excludes other children from learning. All children are the same, irrespective of race or gender. However, children with disabilities and mental health issues should be*

taken to schools that are appropriate for their needs. (Participant AA4:48)

While the ambivalence of parents towards the inclusion of children with disabilities was evident in the qualitative data for parent members of the SGB, as well as those who are not members, this was not the case for the quantitative data. Analysis of the quantitative data shows that parent members of the SGB have positive views of the inclusion of children with disabilities (*M=1.87, SD=.59*). In contrast, parents who are not members of the SGB are neutral towards the inclusion of children with disabilities (*M=2.06, SD=.57*).

Some parents were however clear that children with disabilities should be enrolled in separate schools. These opinions are reflected by AA4:114 and CC3:98 respectively who state that "*those with disabilities must be taken to their own schools*" and "*children who have disabilities should go to a different school*". These extracts express parents' desire that formal access be denied to children with disabilities in ordinary, mainstream schools. The implication of the previous comments is that the epistemological access of children without barriers to learning is impacted by the formal and epistemological access of children with disabilities, a type of barrier to learning.

Despite the thematic analysis of the data reflected in Chapters 5 and 6, identifying disability as the most prominent criterion for inclusion, it is interesting that this criterion is not identified more often in the data. Thirty-three percent of parent members of the SGB were open to the inclusion of children with disabilities, while 10.33% of parents, who are not members of the SGB, identified this criterion. This variation could be attributed to the training that the parent members of the SGB received.

While disability emerged as the most prominent theme when thinking about barriers

to learning, language emerged as the following theme.

8.2.2.2 Language

South Africa, a linguistically diverse country, has eleven official languages. This however was not always the case, with a state instituted policy of bilingualism instituted during apartheid. This policy gave status to English and Afrikaans at the expense of other African languages. The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) of 1997 promotes additive bilingualism with the underlying principle that a home language is to be maintained while facilitating access to and acquisition of additional languages (DoE, 1997). Despite this, English is the language of higher education, commerce, and government; it is also the preferred language of instruction in public schools (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014). Gordon and Harvey (2018) report that the majority of the general population prefers that their children be educated in English with the perception that English language proficiency leads to perceived socio-economic advantages. When viewing this finding using the Bio-Ecological Theory and the Capability Approach, the English language appears to be viewed by parents as a person characteristic that has the potential to impact their children's ability to co245ounselle resource of education into the acquisition of capabilities and functionings later in life (i.e., being educated and economically stable).

The participants in this study identified language as a tool of exclusion in the analysis of the qualitative data, with specific reference to African languages. Parents in this study recognised that exclusion is "*denying a person the opportunity to learn in their native language or not allowing them to talk in a different language from that of teaching and learning*" (Participant AA1:46). This statement highlights parents' awareness of the role that

language plays in both formal and epistemological access, as well as in the development of capabilities and functionings.

The findings of this Iesearch indicate that parents consider an additional language as the language of teaching and learning as detrimental to their child's learning as hinders epistemological access, i.e., internal exclusion. This was noted by Participant AA4:135, who stated:

> *At most times such (inclusive) education uses English as its primary language of teaching and learning, it puts children at disadvantage learning in a language that is not theirs. I wish children could learn in their mother tongue so that their language knowledge can grow.* (Participant AA4:135)

This idea is supported in literature with the argument being made that school performance is severely hindered when learning does not occur in the mother tongue (Brock-Utne, 2007; Stoop, 2017). This finding is further echoed by Manyike and Lemmer (2014) who found that home language teaching supports children's ability to become lifelong learners, as well as productive members of society, while failure to teach in the home language affects children's self-identity and alienates them from their cultures.

Children are allowed access to the school but their freedom to use their home language within the classroom, for teaching and learning, as well as in social spaces, such as the playground, is hindered by policies developed within the meso-system. However, this is in direct contrast to section 29(2) of the South African Constitution which states that "Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable"

(RSA, 1996b). The reference to "reasonably practicable" could be identified as a clause of conditionality referred to by Slee (2011) but it refers to the ability of the teachers to teach in specific home languages. This will, in part, determine the language of instruction adopted by schools, thus impacting the freedom of the parents to send their child to a specific school. In South Africa, achievement has been proven to be low in the PIRL study which indicated that many Grade 4 learners are functionally illiterate (Howie et al., 2017). The academic performance of the children in the PIRL study could, in part, be as a result of the language of instruction (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014).

While the disparity between home language and language of instruction emerged as an area of consideration, language was also linked to ethnicity with mention made that "*each school chooses a certain vernacular language they prefer to teach and a parent cannot take their child to a school of Sothos while they are not Sotho or cannot even speak the language*" (Participant 3) and "*it is not unusual for schools to reject children because they do not speak a certain language, like in X School, they are Tswana speaking, they will reject a child because he is Zulu*" (Participant 12). Hence a parents' ability to express their freedom and agency in obtaining formal access to the school is denied based on the person characteristic of home language. However, the link between ethnicity and language not only affects the inclusion within schools but affects inclusion in social groups as well with parents noting that "*it is not easy to integrate children who do not speak the same language because they name call each other. The cause of this is that learners come from different ethnic groups*" (Participant AA3:38). Here, parents identified that the person characteristic of language impacts proximal processes in the micro-system. In addition, it is apparent that parents view language as a facet of education that could impede both formal and

epistemological access since children could be denied access to schools but also be denied quality learning experiences if they are allowed access. Language is also thought to inhibit the attainment of participation and acceptance as outlined in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994).

Language demonstrates two of the four elements of heterogeneity expressed by Sen (Terzi, 2005). The first element is that individuals differ with regards to their person characteristics. While it is expected that the home language of individuals will vary in a country with 11 official languages, the Language in Education Policy is meant to support the acquisition of capabilities and functionings in a home language. However, due to beliefs in the macro-system regarding the value of being educated in English, this element of heterogeneity is considered problematic (Phindane, 2015; Gordon & Harvey, 2018). A consideration of parents' views regarding language and its use in education is thus important from a broad macro-systemic standpoint as well as from the standpoint of skills acquisition. The second element of heterogeneity is inter-individual variation (Terzi, 2005). For children who speak the language required by the school, their ability to convert the resource into being educated is enhanced. This is because their proximal processes are supported by the micro-system and the exo-system. However, children who do not248ounsehe preferred language are unable to convert the resource into a functioning because their freedom and agency is hindered.

Based on discussion and excerpts presented in the previous paragraph, parents perceive language as a hindrance to inclusion, not just in terms of access to the school environment, but also access to what is being taught as well as social groups. Being taught in the English language is perceived to be related to the development of socio-economic

advantage, with socio-economic status being discussed in the following section.

8.2.2.3 Socio-economic status

The diversity of the South African population extends to their socio-economic status, with vast differences in the incomes of households across the country. While language is viewed as a difference in terms of person characteristics and inter-end variation, socio-economic status is captured by Sen who notes that people differ with respect to their external circumstances (Terzi, 2005). Schools are also subject to the socio-economic status of the communities in which they fall, with fee paying schools charging up to R60 000 annually (Thompson, 2021), while no-fee paying schools rely on government funds and donations from the community. Despite fee-exemption policies, socio-economic status (SES) was considered as a contributing factor to whether children were included or excluded from a school. This status affected a variety of factors from the ability to pay school fees to buying uniforms[4] and stationery that reflects inter-individual variation, as well as inter-end variation as noted by Sen. The cost of schooling, including uniforms and transport costs is identified by Hall (2019) as the reason provided for 13% of children not attending school in South Africa.

The quantitative data demonstrates that parents hold neutral attitudes with regards to SES (Parent members of the SGB: *M=2.39, SD=.39*; non-SGB parents: *M=2.69, SD=.33*). This however is contrasted by findings from the qualitative date. Here the findings highlighted that socio-economic status played a role in parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion. With respect to the cost of schooling, parents identified school fees as a

[4] In South Africa, children attending public as well as private schools are required to wear a school uniform.

factor which dictated where parents could enrol their children, i.e., independent or public schools. [5] Additional costs related to schools, such as the cost of school uniforms, was another factor that was considered by parents in the present study. In this regard, a standard school uniform, i.e., grey or black pants/skirt with a white shirt could cost between R300 and R800 (Karssing, 2019). However, 49.2% of South Africans are living below the upper-bound poverty line, while 29.3% of people living in the Gauteng Province are identified as living in poverty. Individuals falling into the upper-bound poverty line earn an income of approximately R1 183 (Bittar, 2020; StatsSA, 2019). It is for this reason that participants in this study consider the costs of uniforms prohibitive. Participant 10 noted that

> *parents' abilities play a crucial role too; we have parents who cannot afford to pay fees for their children. In that case, we then have to choose a school that is free or at least [they] can afford. Good schools are private and expensive so they do not take a child whose parents cannot afford the fees they want … the only worry we have in relation to inclusion is buying school uniforms for our children because a child is not allowed to wear casual clothes to school … the school do chase away children without proper school uniform* (Participant 10).

The perceptions of parents in this study correlate with findings by Meny-Gilbert and Russell (2012) that economic status impacts on formal access, with a positive correlation between socio-economic status and access to education in South Africa. They found that, while

[5] A public school refers to schools that are ultimately governed by the Department of Basic Education and funded by the government. Independent schools are privately funded and while they must adhere to government rules, they are governed independently.

school fees in themselves are not barriers to education, the costs related to education, such as those of school uniforms, are prohibitive. Even though there is acknowledgement by parents in the current study that government does provide free education, with policies located in the macro-system, there are additional factors related to education that create feelings of exclusion. In particular, parents referred to the completion of exemption forms as a barrier to inclusion, highlighted in the following excerpt: "*When you get to the school, you can't afford, there are things like exemption forms; some people feel overwhelmed by filling that form* …" (Participant 16). The completion of exemption forms, linked to person characteristics, thus presents as a structural barrier to inclusion. To my knowledge, no research has investigated whether the completion of exemption forms at schools impacts on parents' willingness to apply for fee-exemption in South Africa. However, anecdotal evidence suggests this to be the case and there are newspaper articles related to the difficulties parents face in applying for fee exemptions (Chisholm, 2016; Ally & McLaren, 2016). In one such case, a single mother was denied a fee exemption because she could not obtain the requisite information from the child's father (Prinsloo, 2019).

According to the American Psychiatric Association (APA) (n.d.), socio-economic status is a measure of income, occupation and, of particular relevance to this section, education. Research (De Boer et al., 2010; Leyser & Kirk, 2004; Opoku et al., 2019) indicates that there is a direct correlation between parental level of education and attitude towards inclusion. However, research does not address the way parental level of education affects a child's formal access to school. In this study, parental level of education, particularly as it relates to computer literacy, is understood by participants to affect a child's inclusion within schools.

> *Already we have a huge population of parents who are illiterate. Problems arise in such cases where now they have to go online to do an application. That on its own can be seen as exclusion in a systematic way … [as] not being able to register the child in time online, many parents with lack of ICT skills and basic understanding of the world of the internet may struggle.* (Participant 13)

This finding indicates that parental computer literacy may restrict a child's formal access to school even though many libraries are designated by the government to assist in the application process. Here the interplay between the macro-system and the individual's functionings and capabilities is evident, where policies are designed to support access to education, yet an individual's functioning, i.e., computer literacy, hinders access to a resource that is provided through the policy.

This section shows that parents do not merely consider the access to the resource, i.e., finances, as impacting inclusion. Instead, what the finances do or do not offer has an impact on their understanding of inclusion. Socio-economic status aligns with the Capability Approach and resources that include the ability to pay for school fees and buy uniforms. Alongside these, parents have considered the inability to complete forms, both in person as well as online, as negatively impacting inclusion. The ability to complete these is impacted by their level of education, which is a measure of SES. Having discussed the impact of socioeconomic status on parents understanding of inclusion and exclusion, the next section discusses parents' notions of learning ability in relation to inclusion and exclusion.

8.2.2.4 Learning ability

Parents noted that a lack of learning ability, referred to by parents in this study as

"slow learners", needed to be a consideration when thinking about inclusion and exclusion. "Slow learners" is not identified as a barrier to learning in the policy on screening, identification, assessment, and support (DBE, 2014), nor is it a diagnosable disorder in the DSM-5 (APA, 2013). This is thus not a term associated with inclusion in South Africa. However, parents' references to "slow learners" are not to be confused with children diagnosed with Specific Learning Disorder, which is characterised by "unexpected academic achievement" (APA, 2013, p. 69). Children diagnosed with Specific Learning Disorder usually fall within the average or even superior IQ range, and experience difficulties in a specific academic domain, or combination of domains, i.e., reading, written expression and/or mathematics (APA, 2013). In contrast, literature identifies children who are characterised as "slow learners" as typically having a below average IQ and have the potential to learn, however their learning is slow and requires more effort than their peers (Muppudathi, 2014; Santoso et al., 2021; Zakarneh et al., 2020). "Slow learners" may also be confused with children diagnosed with intellectual disability disorder, which is characterised by intellectual functioning which is approximately two standard deviations away from the mean, affecting the conceptual, social and practical domains of functioning (APA, 2013). Learners who fit the description of slow learners are usually taught in a mainstream class however they may also be placed in remedial or special schools.

A person characteristic referred to by parents in this study as "slow learners", highlighted the perceived impact that the freedom and agency of one could have on the acquisition of capabilities and functionings of others. An analysis of the data indicates that parents held the opinion that the inclusion of the child identified by parents as a "slow learner" would impact on the acquisition of being well educated (functioning) of others.

Participant 3 stated:

> *We also have so-called slow learners, which we say they are slow in comparison to other learners which are the majority in the school. These learners require special attention at all time, leading to a time consuming process … Then, in such a case … we need them to be removed from schools that cannot teach them fully for their safety and convenience of other students.*
> (Participant 3)

Here a consideration of the proximal processes between the child and thI teacher in the micro-system, across micro-time and meso-time, is thought to influence the proximal process between the teacher and other children in the class. This means that the interaction between the teacher and the rest of the class across the academic year is perceived by the parents to be negatively impacted by the presence of the child identified as a "slow learner". The perceptions of parents in this study correlate with parents from India who were concerned that their children (without barriers to learning) would receive less attention because of the inclusion of a child with special needs, thereby negatively impacting academic development (Narumanchi & Bhargava, 2011).

With regards to "slow learners", the parents considered the impact of enrolling the child in a mainstream school on both the children identified as "slow learners" as well as those without any barriers to learning. In both cases, negative outcomes were perceived by the parents, indicating a preference for excluding these children from mainstream classes. Parents support for this is expressed in the following statements:

> *Here we are trying to avoid a situation where we have extreme slow learners*

> *and a normal learner, if there are those disparities, remember the child can feel pressure, the pressure to perform and peer pressure. So, to minimise the whole pressure on the child we need to see that we refer the child to another school*. (Participant 1)

> *Children who pick up slowly must be put in their own classroom and get the opportunity to learn and understand*. (AA4:140)

Parents' focus on their desired outcome of a good quality education for their children may have not considered that inclusion has a diversity of goals and outcomes, not necessarily academic but may be related to the social and emotional development of their children. The comments above reflect the failure of parents to acknowledge inter-end variations and focus on the academic development of the learners being included however research has demonstrated that parents identify the social and emotional benefits of inclusion for their children with barriers (Engelbrecht, 2006; Stevens & Wurf, 2020). Thus, while the participants may value the functioning of being educated highly, other parents may value emotional and social development highly, thus aiming for a different outcome of inclusion.

In the current study, parents' concerns were related to the epistemological access for their children, that is, the quality of education their child without barriers to learning would receive, because of the formal access granted to children identified as "slow learners". Here, access and distribution of resources, i.e., the teacher and his/her time, affected parents' support for the inclusion of "slow learners". While the qualitative data indicate parents' concerns around including "slow learners", the quantitative data present a different picture. Analysis indicates that parent members of the SGB are positive towards the inclusion of

these learners (*M=1.92, SD=.37*), while parents who are not members of the SGB are neutral (*M=2.07, SD=.35).*

Parents expressed similar perceptions to the inclusion of children identified as slow, to those expressing behaviour difficulties, as expressed in the following section.

8.2.2.5 Behaviour

Children's behaviour was an additional criterion considered when parents thought about inclusion and exclusion. From the quantitative results, it was evident that parents, both members of the SGB and those who are not members, are neutral towards the criterion of behaviour (*M=2.17, SD=.37; M=2.35, SD=.37)*. However, contrasting evidence emerged from the analysis of the qualitative responses. As regards the subtheme of behaviour, parents identified that positive behaviours would gain support for inclusion, while negative behaviours would generate support for exclusion from parents. Exclusion "*could happen for different reasons, ranging from a child who has behavioural problems and always is in trouble …*" (Participant 11). The behaviours range from what one may consider as mild to more extreme behaviours:

> *Problem children are like … there are incidents in school when children go to school with knives, carrying bricks in their bags, and all that funny stuff, those are problem children … these days, you hear of instances of child being kicked out for drugs … I think the child should be taken to an institution where they can still get guidance and school work.* (Participant 16)

Participant 16's feelings regarding the inclusion of children with behaviour difficulties correlates with Participant AA4:152 who added: "*I do not like children who are violent*

because they make others afraid to go to school". Here access and distribution of resources, i.e., the teacher and his/her time, affected parents' support for the inclusion of children with behavioural difficulties that is thought to impact on other children's conversion factors and freedom.

Children's behaviour could be used as a gauge of parents' perceptions towards inclusion and exclusion, with bad behaviour resulting in a preference for exclusion from the institution (formal access) while good behaviour promotes inclusion. Parents noted that children needed to be "*respectful to everyone and be able to keep themselves clean*" (Participant AA3:53) and that education that is inclusive is about "*encouraging children to listen and be more determined in school*" (Participant AA4:45). However, parents not only considered the child's behaviour but also the child's micro- and meso-system. They believed that these environmental and social conversion factors could affect the child's ability to convert a resource into a functioning. Parents stated that "*children from unstable or violent family backgrounds should not be allowed in the normal mainstream learning because they are more likely to bully others*" (BB1:58). Here the bi-directional nature of interactions between the person characteristics of the child and the micro-system is acknowledged, as well as the impact of the systems on each other, to the detriment of the child living under those conditions. However, while parents identified an unstable or violent family background as a reason to exclude a child from school, the DBE (2014, p. 12) notes that "physical, emotional, and sexual abuse" are barriers to learning that should be overcome through inclusion.

Like "slow learners", parents' preferences to include or exclude based on behaviours is directly linked to the potential impact the behaviour may have on their children. This

finding mirrors those of the student participants in Walton's (2013) study where behavioural exclusion was advocated because of concerns for the children enrolled at the school. The potential negative impact of granting formal and epistemological access to children with behavioural difficulties was also expressed by parents in Greece (Vlachou et al., 2016), with parents noting their concern for the safety of their children if aggressive behaviour was demonstrated by the included child. Albuquerque et al. (2019) also argue that parents' negative perceptions towards the inclusion of children with behavioural difficulties is linked to the impact the child with the difficulty has on interpersonal relationships as well as on other children's academic performance in Portugal. These studies demonstrate that parents tend to hold similar perceptions regarding the inclusion of children with behavioural difficulties.

Thus, while parents tend to hold a generally positive view of inclusion, this is overshadowed by the impact that those included may have on their children and their learning. Parents did not however consider their children as those being included, instead referring to the children with barriers to learning as being included. In this way, parents tended to "other" children with barriers to learning. Parents' support for the formal and/or epistemological access for children with the person characteristics discussed is influenced by the intersection between the person characteristic in relation to the conversion factors and resources within the context. It has been demonstrated that parents' own person characteristics come to bear on their support for and understanding of inclusion and exclusion.

8.2.2 Spaces of inclusion and exclusion

While parents in this study were concerned about who is included, as evidenced in the criteria that they used for inclusion, to a lesser extent, they also considered the different spaces in which to include children. These spaces include schools, classrooms, activities and teaching and learning. Motala et al. (2009, p. 260–261) argue that "the key South African access issue is not simply physical access … but what learners have access to". Thus, dimensions of inclusion, i.e., physical, social, psychological, and systematic inclusion, as identified in the Concept Note for the GEMR, is a consideration for parents and alludes to a broad understanding of inclusion as conceptualised in the GEMR (UNESCO, 2018).

Spatiality refers to the relations and patterns of power and agency, with space understood as a "passive container for social action" (McGregor, 2004, p. 351). The space of home, schools and city serve to regulate a child's mind and body (James et al., 1998). However, an analysis of the results indicates that the parents' consideration of space aligns with Morrow's (2007) formal and epistemological access. Formal access refers to admission into a space whereas epistemological access refers to what happens when one is in the space. While it is encouraging that parents reflect on epistemological access (10 interviewees and 42 survey responses), the percentage of parents who do so is minimal, indicating that most parents think about inclusion in terms of formal access (19 interviewees and 114 survey responses).

8.2.2.1 Formal access

Formal access could be considered the first step to the implementation of inclusion as it allows children admission, through enrolment, to a space. In this study, parents

considered admission into the school and the classroom. This consideration is aligned with the first dimension of inclusion, identified as physical inclusion, in the Concept Note for the 2020 GEMR on inclusion (UNESCO, 2018). In this regard, parents commented that inclusion "*secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in general education classrooms*" (CC3:165), and that "*all students attend and are welcomed by the neighbourhood school*" (CC3:208). Given the directives in various South African policies regarding education (RSA, 1996a; DoE, 2001), it is not surprising that parents reference physical access to school, with Hall (2019) indicating that 98% of children access educational facilities in South Africa.

This focus on placement is however not considered inclusion by Runswick-Cole (2008), a researcher at the Research Institute for Health and Social Change at Manchester Metropolitan University. By focusing on where children should be placed, parents demonstrate an emerging understanding of inclusion despite government's assertions that communities will be educated on their roles and responsibilities with regards to inclusion (DoE, 2001). It is evident from parents' responses that this knowledge transfer has not taken place. Parents' understanding, in turn, affects their ability to support the implementation of inclusion. In addition, with a focus on where children should be placed, an understanding of the systems that affect inclusion is not understood and, by implication, a lack of awareness of the support structures in place to support inclusion.

Formal access to education does not equate to being educated, with The World Bank (2019) noting that education is in crisis globally given that children are attending school yet are not being educated. In South Africa, the outcomes of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLs) noted that 78% of Grade 4 participants did not attain the

lowest benchmark. This means that the children were unable to find or reproduce information presented in a written text (Howie et al., 2017). The fact that children are not attaining the functioning of being educated requires an analysis of what happens to the children once they are in the system. A minority of parents in this study considered what would happen to children once they were in the academic space. Epistemological access is thus considered next.

The United Nations reports that failure to progress in school is mainly a result of a lack of access to school, attrition rates and the quality of education received (UNESCO, 2017a). While the majority of parents only considered formal access when thinking about inclusion, only a minority of parents also thought about what happened to the children once they were at school, referring to the quality of education they received.

8.2.2.2 Epistemological access

Epistemological access, as defined by Morrow (2009), asserts that epistemological access "is learning how to be a successful participant in an academic practice" (p. 78). Thus, Morrow foregrounds the role of the individual student in the acquisition of knowledge (Du Plooy & Zilindile, 2014). The role of the individual is also captured in the Capability Approach, through the child's agency freedom, since agency freedom refers to "someone who acts and brings about change" (Sen, 1999, p. 19). However, authors such as Lotz-Sisitka (2009) and Slonimsky and Shalem (2006) shift focus away from the role of the individual and postulate that epistemological access forms part of the role of the institution. This idea is supported by Pendlebury (2009) who states that "access is meaningful only when schools ensure epistemological access" (p. 24).

With regards to the role of teaching for meaningful access, epistemological access would ensure quality teaching and learning, highlighting the role of the teacher (Du Plooy & Zilindile, 2014). However, Morrow (1994) argues that epistemological access is something that individuals do for themselves, facilitated by the systems and individuals around them. This would be done through the development of carefully designed learning programmes and materials (Pendlebury, 2009) with the aim of enabling children to develop valued capabilities and functionings.

In this study, a limited number of parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion, moved beyond placement (formal access), to include the idea that inclusion, and knowledge acquisition is reliant on circumstances external to the child, specifically, the capabilities of the teachers. Parents state that:

> *Inclusion takes into account the classroom activities, whereby, as a teacher, you are able to accommodate even the weakest learners in the classroom.* (Participant 4)

> *Taking everyone into consideration when you teach children, here we [are] talking about being able to reach all the learners in a meaningful manner that ensures they understand the content [that] you, as a teacher, is delivering to them. So, I would say that a school that is serious about inclusion … includes all children in the learning process.* (Participant 15)

Motala et al. (2009, p. 251) echo the ideas of the parents in this study by arguing that quality education should provide "meaningful learning, achievement and completion … access must be more than just a place in a school for every child; it must be meaningful

access." This however differs from Morrow who notes that material circumstances do not guarantee epistemological access (Gamede, 2006). It appears that person characteristics, and the interaction between these person characteristics and the various systems are a consideration for Morrow when taking into account epistemological access, along with access to resources.

This reference to how knowledge and content is accessed links to one of the elements of inclusion, "active and meaningful participation", identified by Engelbrecht et al. (2005, p. 462). Ainscow (2005, p. 113) describes participation as "the shared experiences and negotiations that result from social interaction within a purposive community." This implies that, for inclusion to occur, children must be consistently involved in the classroom interactions with their peers and teachers, also understood as proximal processes. Parents in the current study reference interactions as being a consideration of inclusion. However, parents note that the interaction between the person characteristics of the children and teachers support or hinder their ability to participate meaningfully. For example, participant BB1:75 commented:

> *Well, sometimes it depends on what kind of disability a child has because he or she may need special attention which means the teacher must have all those qualities and skills to be able to teach those kids.*

Environmental conversion factors, such as class size, and access to resources were also noted as impacting on the teacher's ability to teach inclusively. Thus, a consideration of the characteristics of the child or teacher, that is to say, what they bring to an interaction, will impact on their ability to engage meaningfully with the learning material and

programme, thereby attaining epistemological access.

Linked to formal and epistemological access, parents also considered what the outcome of this inclusion and/or exclusion would mean for the child, leading to the next theme, which discusses the effects of inclusion and exclusion.

8.2.3 Effect of inclusion and exclusion

While the positive impact of inclusion is noted by parents in countries, such as the Netherlands (De Boer et al., 2010), Lebanon (ElZein, 2009), Scotland (Sosu & Rydzewska, 2017) and Greece (Vlachou et al., 2016), an understanding of the perceived negative impact of inclusion, along with the impact of exclusion on the children being excluded, from parents' perspectives, is limited internationally as well as in South Africa. Consideration of the effect of inclusion and exclusion could be linked to the psychological and systematic dimensions of inclusion as discussed in the GEMR (UNESCO, 2018).

8.2.3.1 Effects of inclusion

Parents' thinking about the effect of inclusion on children with and without barriers to learning demonstrates a shift in understanding from formal to epistemological access. There is thus a shift from thinking about where children are included (formal access) to what it means to be included and what the outcome of that may be. Participants in this study, both parent members of the SGB and parents who were not a part of the SGB, identified positive and negative effects of inclusion for children with barriers to learning as well as those without.

The pro-social outcomes of inclusion are articulated in the De Boer et al. (2010),

ElZein (2009), and Vlachou et al. (2016) studies where it was found that interaction with children experiencing barriers to learning resulted in an improved self-concept, improved social skills and acceptance of difference for typically developing children. The positive social outcomes for children with disabilities were also noted by Kefallinou et al. (2020) in the review of literature published between 2015 and 2020. The pro-social outcomes were mirrored by parents in this study who stated that "*it helps children to understand each other and to help each other*" (AA4:15), "*encourages acceptance between children*" (AA4:70) and "*education that is inclusive forges a friendship between children*" (AA4:65). Children's communication skills were also thought to be impacted positively with parents noting that inclusion "*helps children to communicate with each other*" (AA4:53). The proximal processes between children with barriers to learning and those without resulted in the development of person characteristics.

Parents reflected that the inclusion of children with barriers to learning in the mainstream classroom would have a positive impact on their academic development. This notion is supported by Waldron and McLeskey (2010) who investigated the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in the United States. However, these authors state that the positive impact is conditional on well designed and organised inclusive classrooms that are identified as environmental conversion factors supporting inclusion. While parents in this study noted the impact on academic functioning, they did not stipulate the conditions under which these would occur. However, the South African education system is characterised by overcrowding and under resourced classrooms (Marais, 2016; Stoffelsma, 2019; West & Meier, 2020). These environmental conversion factors therefore serve to impede inclusion therefore the impact of inclusion on the academic development of

children was noted as "*it will help children go further with their studies*" (AA2:15) and "*inclusion in education gives one the opportunity to excel in their studies and to be more involved*" (AA1:47). Not only was inclusion thought to impact the outcome of the child's academic development, but also the way the child approached their academics with inclusion thought to encourage "*children to work hard and diligently*" (AA2:56).

Additionally, parents made reference to inclusion promoting more inclusive societies that may be linked to the South African context with its focus on creating an inclusive society. It is also aligned to one of the aims of the SGB which is to facilitate transformation and democracy in schools and to the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001, p. 10) which states that inclusive education would provide a "cornerstone of an integrated and caring society". However, in this study, parent members who were not part of the SGB referred to building a democracy while parent members of the governing body did not. This may support Mohapi and Netshitangani's (2018) finding that parent governors in South Africa have not had access to the relevant policy documents and are not aware of their mandate. A parent who does not form part of the SGB and presumably does not have knowledge of the policy believed that inclusion would "*build a non-racial society across the border*" (BB1:87).

Seery et al. (2000) categorised the benefits of inclusion into social/behavioural and cognitive domains, with parents in that study, much like parents in this study, identifying benefits within the various domains. The parents in ElZein's (2009) study also perceived social and academic improvements for their children with barriers to learning. The ability of parents to identify the functionings and capabilities that would be developed through inclusion is interesting given the fact that their understanding of inclusion focuses

predominantly on formal access. This consideration leads to an understanding that the individual's development is impacted positively by proximal processes, i.e., the interaction between children with and without barriers to learning. However, an awareness that this development can only take place if the environmental and social conversion factors support this interaction, is needed. Additionally, the acquisition of these functionings needs to be valued above others.

While the positive impact of inclusion was clearly articulated, parents also identified negative effects of inclusion. For children with barriers to learning, the negative impact of inclusion related specifically to their psychological and emotional development. Parents expressed concerns regarding the impact of bullying. Parents also said that the children being included would be "*afraid to say that they do not understand because other learners catch things much faster now he may feel stupid*" (Participant 2). Concern regarding the emotional well-being of children being included is consistent with parents from South Africa and the Netherlands in the Siewe (2012) and De Boer et al. (2010) studies which found that inclusion may harm the child's emotional development and result in social isolation.

For children without barriers to learning, concern was expressed regarding the quality of education they received. Participant 3 said:

> *Now you can imagine a situation where my child is being held back by another child who was supposed to be in a school for slow learners but now delays the rest of the learners. This may not be fair to other learners … slow lear'ers, I don't think they should necessary take them to the school because they take time and slow things down a lot, in a way, they waste other kids' time.*

This demonstrates that parents prioritise the functioning and capability of their children over the functioning and capability of other children. This finding was echoed by Nigerian, Zimbabwean and Australian parents in the Afolabi et al. (2015), Magumise and Sefotho (2018), and Stevens and Wurf (2018) studies respectively. In these studies, parents also expressed concern regarding the impact of inclusion on the education received by children without barriers to learning. The value that parents assign to the functioning of being well educated may therefore result in parents making a choice that restricts inclusion, choosing to exclude those who are viewed as a hindrance to their children's education. Likewise, parents from Hong King (Lui et al., 2015) and Greece (Vlachou et al., 2016) held similar perceptions to parents in the present study noting the negative impact of including children with barriers to learning on the children without barriers to learning.

While parents in the study considered both the positive and negative impacts of the inclusion of children with barriers to learning, on both children with and without barriers, they also noted the impacts of exclusion.

8.2.3.2 Effects of exclusion

The impact of exclusion was expressed in relation to parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion. However, unlike the effects of inclusion, which parents thought would impact children with and without barriers to learning, the effects of exclusion are specifically related to children with barriers to learning. This is interesting given the pro-social outcomes that parents identified for children without barriers to learning.

The mean age of the parents in the study was 33.8 years implying that the parents were likely 10 years old in 1994, at the end of legalised apartheid. With the majority of the

participants identifying as black African, the participants would most likely have had first-hand experience of being excluded thereby resulting in an awareness of its effects.

One area of development thought to be impacted by exclusion is the emotional development of the child. Parents felt that the child being excluded would suffer negative emotional outcomes: "*Exclusion may cause children to lose their self-confidence and to lose concentration*" (AA4:58), "*Now, when we talk about excluding that learner, it also becomes painful to him and challenges his sense of self and worth*" (Participant 3). Parents also link the emotional outcome of exclusion to the attrition rates of learners. This implies that parents have linked the rate of school drop-out to the exclusionary practices these children face in the educational settings. Parents argue that exclusion "*demoralises other children towards learning as they feel like they are not like the other and this causes them to shy [away] from school*" (AA2:43), "*exclusion is w'ong and it's also the cause of why kids drop out of school*" (AA2:76) and "*exclusion is the leading cause of why children drop out of school; they discomfort in life and why they lack confidence and also why they feel they are different from all other children*" (AA1:15). When reflecting on the attrition rates due to exclusion, its potential impact was considered to be lifelong with exclusion adversely impacting the child's future. This finding is supported by the literature review conducted by Kefallinou et al. (2020) where being educated in exclusive settings was found to affect not only academic achievement, but paid employment as well. Excerpts taken from parent responses indicated that exclusion can "*have a crippling effect on a child's future*" (CC3:102) since "*exclusion denies children the opportunity to learn and be successful in their future*" (AA1:57). These comments suggest that parents view education as a means to an end. This contrasts with Sen and Nussbaum who view education as both a means to an end, as well as

an end in itself (Okkolin et al., 2018).

Negative behavioural outcomes were identified as a consequence of exclusion. Parents thought that exclusion may cause "*children to be violent towards each other and not to help each other with their schoolwork*" (AA3:41) and could "*lead to bullying amongst learners*" (AA2: 15). Additional negative behavioural outcomes relate to discrimination with comments such as "*our children will learn to discriminate amongst each other*" (AA2:20), and "*it is wrong because our children will learn to discriminate amongst each other"* (AA2: 55).

Parents consider the resources and conversion factors that the excluded individual will have access to in pursuit of the functioning of a good life. However, despite being able to identify the long-term negative impacts of exclusion, parents still consider the immediate impact on them and their children stating that "*integration of children may cause problems because children are not from similar families and have different religion and beliefs …*" (AA4:149). This highlights the tension between support for inclusion as an idea, and the impact of its daily implementation by acknowledging that various capabilities and functionings can come into opposition depending on their context and the value that they hold.

An analysis of the results indicated that neither the Bio-Ecological Theory, nor the Capability Approach provides an adequate explanation of the results in isolation. Consequently, the research has developed a conceptual framework which integrates the two theoretical approaches thereby drawing on the strengths of both models.

8.3 Conceptual framework

At the outset, an aim of the study was to use the Capability Approach to understand the limitations/challenges of inclusion in South Africa. However, an analysis of the data in relation to the Capability Approach found that, while the use of the Capability Approach offers insight into understanding inclusion in South Africa, this understanding is better supported by a conceptual framework which integrates the Bio-Ecological Theory and the Capability Approach (in blue and yellow respectively in Figure 8.1 below). I developed this conceptual framework from an analysis of the strengths and limitations of the Bio-Ecological Theory and the Capability Approach (discussed in Chapters 2 and 6), and the findings from this study, presented earlier in this chapter.

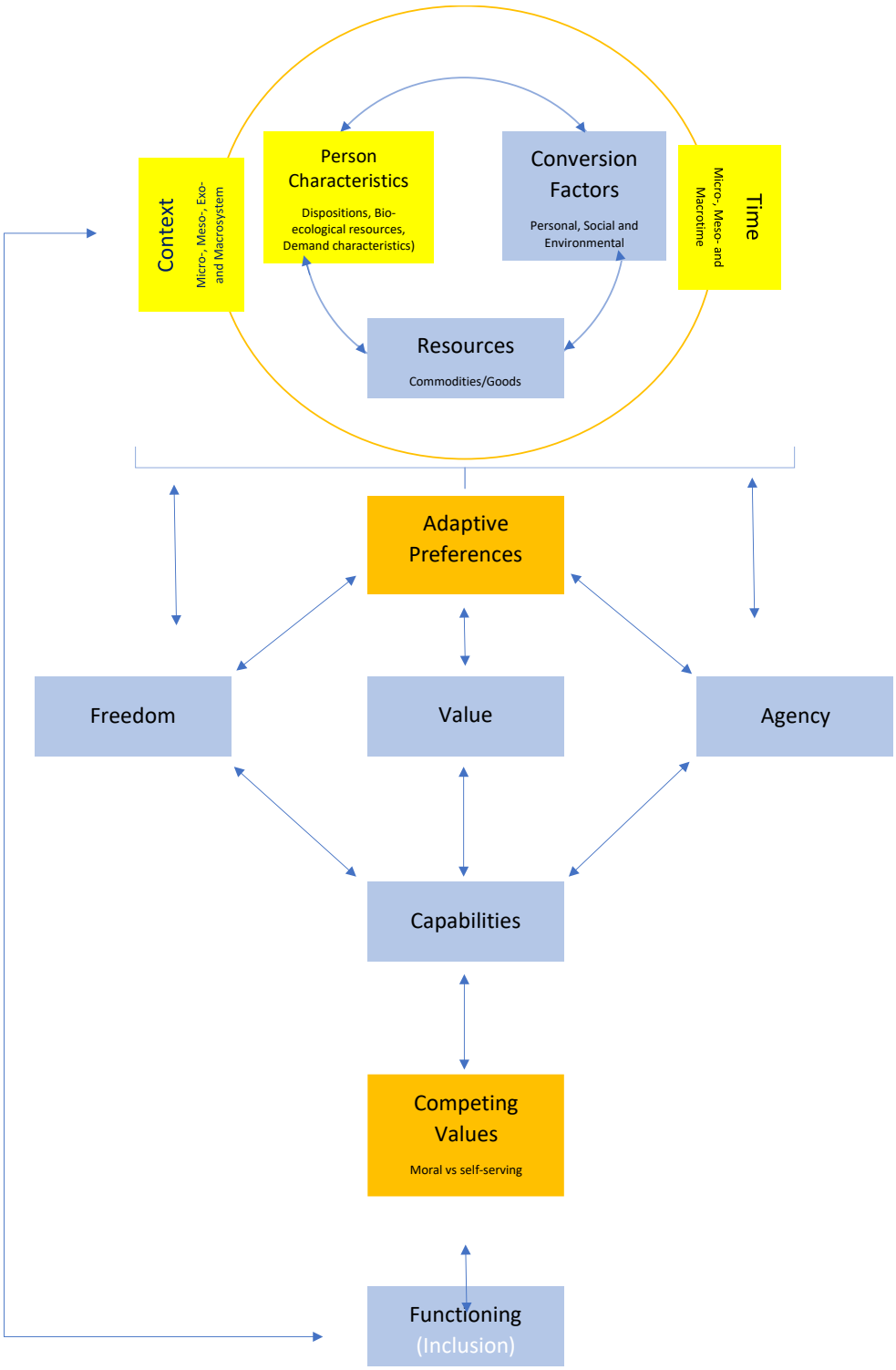

Figure 8.1: Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework aims to consider the cultural and historical contexts of

individuals, which Engelbrecht (2020) identifies as key to inclusion, while simultaneously exploring the personal factors that affect their ability to be inclusive. Thus “being inclusive” is conceptualised as a functioning, with the framework offering the factors that would support or hinder the development of this functioning. “Being inclusive” is therefore the desired end, while the interaction between the concepts drawn from the Bio-Ecological Theory and Capability Approach are understood as the means to the end. This focus on the individual and the development of their functionings is warranted given that the success or failure of policies is determined by the support that it garners from those individuals responsible for its implementation, as explored by Du Plessis (2013).

The framework acknowledges the bi-directional nature of the interactions between the various components found within the framework. This implies that the various components are influenced by and influence other components.

8.3.1 Person characteristics

The conceptual framework identifies the bi-directional interaction, by means of the bi-directional arrows in Figure 8.1, between the person characteristics, conversion factors and resources drawn from the Bio-Ecological Theory and the Capability Approach. As represented in Figure 8.1 above, the interaction of these three factors, in context, and across time, determines the diversity of individuals, referred to as heterogeneity by Sen (Terzi, 2005). Person characteristics refers to the dispositions, bio-ecological resources, and demand characteristics, as identified in the Bio-Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Specific examples of person characteristics include curiosity, responsiveness, the ability to delay gratification, impulsivity, explosiveness, distractibility,

apathy, aggression, and violence (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). These person characteristics influence the way individuals interact with the world, which in turn influences the way the world interacts with the individuals (O'Toole, 2016).

With regards to inclusion, person characteristics will determine the nature of interactions between, for example, parents and teachers, between teachers and policies, or between parents and district officials. The person characteristics will encourage or discourage the interactions between individuals and those around them. The interaction between parents and schools is captured in the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001), with the policy document stating that partnerships between parents and schools need to be developed with the aim of disseminating information and encouraging participation in planning and implementation of inclusion. The partnerships between parents and schools were also noted by parents in the current study in comments that inclusion is "*working hand in hand together*" (AA2:40); "*there must be a relationship between the school's leadership and parents*" (AA2:67) and "*parents must be more involved and help teachers when it comes to their children's education*" (AA1:43). This is echoed by a South African parent in the Yssel et al. (2007) study who states that "I do not think inclusion is going to be successful if the parent is not involved" (p. 360). This means that the person characteristics of the parents, teachers or school officials will determine the success or failure of these partnerships. For example, if a parent is responsive, this will nurture the development of partnerships however, if a parent is aggressive or shies away from interactions, the partnership will not be developed. In this way, the implementation of inclusion may be supported or frustrated by person characteristics.

Examples of the way person characteristics can affect the interactions between

parents and schools was found in the De Boer et al. (2010) study conducted in the Netherlands. The study specifically referred to the person characteristics of language and level of education as affecting parents' interactions with the school. In the current study, language also emerged as a person characteristic to be considered when thinking about inclusion. Some parents advocated for the use of home language instruction stating that' "*children's home languages are the reason children are not well integrated in the learning environment*" (AA4:78); "*other children do not get the chance to learn their home language also discourages a learner to perform well in their studies*" (AA4:55) and "*children must use their home language as their first language and English as the additional language so they can understan' when they're being taught*" (AA4:112). However, other parents believe that the use of home language should be discouraged in favour of English as a language of instruction stating that "*I believe that all schools should use English as their primary language of learning; it is much more inclusive*" (AA4:80); "*lack of understanding English language should not be accepted in our schools*" (CC3:3).

Despite the parents' opposing views regarding the language of instruction, South Africa's Language in Education Policy (LiEP) of 1997 promotes additive bilingualism. The underlying principle of the LiEP is that the home language is to be maintained while facilitating access to and acquisition of additional languages (DoE, 1997). This means that children should be taught in their home language as far as is possible. However, the support that the LiEP policy will receive is dependent on the person characteristics of the parents, specifically their dispositions. Additionally, parents' beliefs regarding the role that language plays in inclusion will affect their support for the policy. A parent who holds the belief that inclusion promotes the use of English as the language of instruction, while being opposed to

the idea, will not support the policy of inclusion and thus will act in a way to discourage its implementation. An example of this view held by a parent in the current study is:

> *At most times, such [inclusive] education uses English as its primary language of teaching and learning; it puts children at disadvantage learning in a language that is not his. I wish children could learn in their mother tongue so that their language knowledge can grow*. (AA4:35)

The aforementioned highlights how person characteristics can be developmentally generative or disruptive (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). That implies that person characteristics can support or hinder development, which in turn can impact the successful implementation of inclusion. However, person characteristics interact with resources to affect the development of functionings and capabilities.

8.3.2 Resources

Resources, also referred to as commodities or goods (Robeyns, 2005), are considered valuable because they are used in the development of capabilities. The importance of resources in relation to inclusion is noted by Andrews et al. (2019) and Engelbrecht (2020). However, the ability to convert a resource into a capability is affected by person characteristics. For example, a person may have access to the internet which provides them with information regarding school admission or exemptions policies however they may not be able to confront a school implementing illegal exemption policies, thereby impacting the inclusion of their child at the school.

8.3.3 Conversion factors

What a person is able to do with a resource is also influenced by conversion factors (personal, social and environmental) (Robeyns, 2005) that have a direct influence on the implementation of inclusion, by hindering or supporting its implementation (Trani et al., 2011). For example, while the Bill of Rights (RSA, 1996) and inclusion policies (DoE, 2001) advocate for the rights of children to education within their neighbourhood schools, the social conversion factors (beliefs of the community around the etiology of disabilities, for example) or the environmental conversion factors (a school with limited resources), may result in a child being excluded from education.

The bi-directional nature of the interaction between resources and conversion factors was identified by parents in the current study. The physical environment, such as classrooms and bathrooms, was identified by parents as hindering access to the resources within the school. Parents commented that "*it does make it difficult though if the school does not have the facilities*" (BB1:70), "*inclusion and exclusion may depend on certain types or level of disability of a child or person and also on whether the school is equipped to deal with such*" (BB1:108) and "*most mainstream schools are not fully resourced to accommodate learners with disabilities*" (CC3:212). The impact of the environmental conversion factors on children being included was also identified by parents noting that the nature of the built environment could negatively influence a child's experience within that environment. This is evidenced in the remark made by participant CC3:71, "*If the school is not equipped properly, life is made difficult for these students affecting their learning ability*".

Additional environmental conversion factors, in the form of class size also emerged as a factor impacting the implementation of inclusion in the present study. The number of children within a class was a consideration for parents when thinking about inclusion. With regards to class size, parents stated that "*children with emotional difficulties and special learning needs will require more teacher's attention, so I cannot say that they need to be separated but it will depend with the number of children in class*" (BB1:41) and "*I think, with inclusion, it is best to face less number of children in 'lass, that's how the teacher can manage. But if it is many children, it will be impossible to give every child attention*" (BB1:95). Teacher time emerged as a concern for parents in the Afolabi et al. (2015) study conducted in Nigeria, the Magumise and Sefotho (2018) study conducted in Zimbabwe, and the Geldenhuys and Wevers (2013) study conducted in South Africa.

The Engelbrecht (2020) study further demonstrates the way social conversion factors work to negatively impact the implementation of inclusion. In her study, teachers who demonstrated a commitment to inclusion were unable to teach inclusively because of the leadership in their schools. The ability to access the resource of inclusive education was thought to be impacted by teachers and parents in the present study, with teachers viewed as forming part of social conversion factors. In this study, parents commented that "*teachers favour those that come from affluent families, and when you are poor, you do not get exposed to a lot of opportunities at school*" (AA1:20) and "*teachers should not give preferential treatment by looking at a child's background*" (AA1:23). Parents perceived that teachers acted as a barrier towards accessing inclusive education.

8.3.4 Context and Time

Person characteristics, conversion factors and resources are found to develop within contexts over time, micro-time, meso-time, and macro-time. Time, particularly macro-time and the macro-system, has had a significant impact on the development of policies in South Africa, with the argument that the changing expectations of people over time influenced the development of the current inclusive policies. Apartheid, a historical system, can be captured in the macro-system (context) however its impact reverberates across macro-time, influencing attitudes, policies, and the education system. This effect is demonstrated in the link parents made between exclusion in this study. This belief may stem from parents' experience or knowledge of Afrikaans being used by the apartheid government to oppress Black South Africans and its forced use as the language of instruction, alongside English, in 1974, which resulted in the Soweto uprising of 1976 (Afrikaans: the language of black and coloured dissent, n.d.; The June 16 Soweto Youth Uprising, n.d.). Links to the apartheid past are reflected in the following comments in relation to what is meant by inclusion and exclusion: "*Education that is not inclusive is reminiscent of the past*" (AA4:117) and *"the democracy that Mr. Mandela fought for brought peace and encouraged that even in our difference, whether you are black, Zulu, Xhosa or even Tsonga, we are all equal and we can all succeed if we work together*" (AA4: 29). These beliefs, which have developed across time, form part of the parents' person characteristics. Furthermore, the resources that are available to groups of individuals have been impacted by the apartheid system, with systemic poverty being a key feature of the legacy of apartheid (Rousseau, 2019), along with the quality of education in South Africa today. Continued inequality in funding to schools (resources) means that black students continue to be educated in over-crowded, under-

resourced schools (context), where the educational attainment is low. This limits the students' prospects of attaining a higher education, affecting employment and socio-economic opportunities as expressed by Gallo (2020) and Ndimande (2013).

Despite the inclusive education policies in place currently, person characteristics, conversion factors, and resources available to individuals are still influenced by the apartheid system. This influence may still be felt in present day through the adoption of adaptive preferences which may impact the mindset of those who lived through that oppressive system.

8.3.5 Adaptive preferences

Adaptive preferences refer to the adjustments that people make to their desires because of their past and current circumstances (Begon, 2015; Otto & Ziegler, 2006; Sharif, 2018). Thus, it is what people expect for themselves given their context and the impact of events over time. These adaptive preferences impact an individual's freedom (i.e., what a person is able to do given the opportunity and choice), what it is they value, and their agency (i.e., an individual's ability to choose) (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007; Unterhalter & Brighouse, 2007). In their example, Unterhalter and Brighouse (2007) highlight how a woman may come to value education for herself less when compared to her male counterpart, because of societal norms within the macro-system. The choices that individuals make for themselves are thus influenced by the opportunities available (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007). Consequently, adaptive preference is an important consideration when looking at inclusion since individuals who grew up under apartheid, and continue to experience discrimination in their daily lives, may come to expect it from their environment.

This may result in them acting in a way that perpetuates discrimination. With reference to parents, they may come to believe that inclusion is not possible and therefore act in a way that perpetuates exclusion.

Adaptive preferences may also be seen in the specific beliefs parents hold with regards to teachers and their abilities. These beliefs may work to impact parent's adaptive preferences. For example, parents state that "*children must not be integrated because educators are trained to teach those with no disabilities and mental problems*" (AA3:45) and "*inclusion of such diversity limits the educator attention on each student exclusivity. On the other hand, [it] provides the much-needed attention that each parent wants for his or her child*" (BB1:12). Parents' belief that teachers are not adequately trained to teach children with barriers to learning may result in them sending their child to special schools, as opposed to their neighbourhood school, despite the inclusion policies.

8.3.6 Value, agency, and freedom

Value, as a separate component, emerges as an important consideration within the conceptual framework because value determines the capabilities and functionings that people seek to attain. Thus value, agency, and freedom, within the elements of context and time, determine the capabilities that an individual develops, with capabilities being the ability to participate in and pursue activities that they have reason to value (Claassen, 2014; Tikly & Barret, 2011; Walker, 2012). These capabilities are then converted into functionings which are actual beings and doings.

However, the capabilities that an individual chooses to convert to functionings are dependent on the value placed on that functioning. It stands to reason that some

functionings may be valued more or less than others. Consequently, in inclusion research, an understanding of the value of inclusion in relation to other functionings will dictate whether an individual will work towards achieving it.

8.3.7 Competing Values

Results in this study found that parents valued inclusion and they identified both positive and negative gains from including children with barriers to learning. A parent stated that "*when a child is uneducated, they do not lead a good quality of life because they do not get job opportunities*" (AA2:71). The positive outcomes to inclusion included "*to develop individual strengths and gifts … develop friendships with a wide variety of other children with the own individual needs and abilities*" (CC1:4), "*integration of children creates friendships and makes teaching easy as they learn together and in groups*" (AA3:162) and "*it gives children the opportunity to learn about races and to communicate with each other. Children learn to respect other cultures and ethnic groups and learn other languages too*" (AA4:72). This finding is echoed by parents in the De Boer et al. (2010) and Ferguson (2008) studies who noted that the positive outcome of inclusion for children included improved self-concepts, social skills, and an acceptance of difference.

Parents valued the functioning of being well educated with comments like, "*it is very important because education is an intangible gift. It gives one pride to be educated because, in this age, you are nothing if you [are] not educated*" (AA2:49), "*education is the key to o'r children's future hence we are fighting hard for our children to be more educated than us*" (AA1:52) and "*education is very important in this era. When one is educated, they will have a successful future*" (AA1: 57). Based on these comments, it is evident that the value attached

to the functioning of education is linked to the idea that it is a means to an end and not an end. This is mirrored by Okkolin et al. (2018) who argue that the value of a functioning is linked to whether it is considered a means to an end or an end in itself. Viewing education as a means to an end, with the end being a "successful future", in a context of lack and deprivation, the high value placed on education by parents can be understood.

When the functioning of inclusion was perceived to interfere with the quality of education their children received, thereby possibly jeopardising the envisioned end, parents' value for education went beyond the value they held for inclusion. This placed the functioning of being educated ahead of being inclusive in the present study. For example, parents commented that it "*may also disrupt other learners' education … so that is why we exclude these problematic children*" (SGB6) an' "*my child's education is the most important*" (CC1:10). Carrying on from these quotes participant 3 noted,

> *Now you can imagine a situation where my child is being held back by another child who was supposed to be in a school for slow learners but now delays the rest of the learners. This may not be fair to other learners … slow lear'ers, I don't think they should necessarily take them to the school because they take time and slow things down a lot, in a way, they waste other kids' time.* (Participant 3)

These quotes imply that parents make a choice between functionings based on the value assigned to each, in this case, between education for their child and inclusion for children with barriers to learning. The outcome of the choice results in the functioning that is attained. An understanding of competing values in the attainment of functionings, in this

case, “being inclusive”, is valuable since the functioning that holds the most value will be the one that parents work towards attaining.

8.3.8 Conceptual framework in the South African context

The conceptual framework allows for an understanding of the role that individual heterogeneity plays in the development of functionings. South Africa differs from other countries in its diversity and history. The diversity is evident in race, culture, language, religion, and socio-economic status, captured in the person characteristics, conversion factors, resources, context and time dimensions of the figure.

The history is marred by legalised discrimination and oppression through the apartheid laws, which were repealed in 1994. However, the impact of the apartheid laws, which is identified as existing in the macro-system, has had an impact across time to present day South Africa. The history of the country, in the form of apartheid, and its impact over time contributes to the diversity of the individuals in terms of their conversion factors and access to resources. With this overarching lens, the conceptual framework explains how context and time ultimately come to bear on the functionings a person comes to value and develop.

History and its impact on person characteristics, resources and conversion factors, means that what is valued cannot be assumed to be the same internationally. In a country where oppression and discrimination were law and were used with great effectiveness in the education sphere, the value of education must be understood within this context. While quality education is undoubtedly valued globally, in South Africa, it is viewed as a means of escaping poverty and improving people’s lives (Hogan, 2020). In this way, context and time

have come to influence the value assigned to specific capabilities and functionings. However, the same concepts of context and time also influence the resources available to individuals.

The political climate in South Africa also contributes to the acquisition of functionings. According to the South African Human Rights Commission (2016, p. ii), South Africa has a high rate of public protests which "manifests in many forms, including the burning of educational infrastructure, and the barring of learners from accessing school premises and other sites of learning". The educational and social conversion factors therefore do not support the acquisition of functionings. In addition, the freedom and agency of those wanting to attend school is hindered by protest action. However, schools hold value in various ways. For some, the value of the school is in its ability to provide access to education which is a valued functioning. However, for others, the value in the school is related to the type and amount of attention it can draw to a particular cause. Thus, vandalising a school may get school management to pay attention to a particular issue within a particular school community (De Wet, 2005). The value of the school is therefore not in the education it provides but in shining a spotlight on issues.

With the history of the country, power relations between race groups cannot be ignored. People identified as white held the power in the former dispensation. While this is no longer the case in theory, on a day-to-day level, white people are still perceived to hold power (Resane, 2021). This is relevant when thinking about education since many non-white children are now enrolled in what are regarded as former white schools with white teachers. The person characteristic of race influences the interactions between the parent and teacher, as well as parents' ability to express their agency and freedom.

In summary it is evident that while parents have a limited understanding of inclusion and exclusion in relation to policy documents and research, this understanding is impacted by several factors which require the application of a new conceptual framework.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I offer a conclusion to the study by providing a summary of the key research findings in relation to the research aims and questions while discussing the contribution of these findings to the study of inclusion in South Africa. I then reflect on the recommendations, implications, and contributions of the study in the "so what?" and "now what?" sections.

The aim of this study was to understand what parents, both members of the SGB and those who were not members of the SGB, understood by inclusion and exclusion, using the Capability Approach as a theoretical springboard. Nine hundred and one parents from seven schools, both fee and no-fee paying schools formed the basis of the research sites for the current project. These parents participated in a fixed mixed methods study, where the survey data were generated prior to the semi-structured interview data. Despite the number of participants, the study did not fully reflect the heterogeneity of the South African population.

9.2 Parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion

Notwithstanding the design and execution limitations noted in Chapter 3, the study still contributes to knowledge in the field of inclusion. Literature demonstrates that inclusion is a multidimensional concept, with inclusive education understood as inclusion in the educational setting (as discussed in Chapter 1) and parents identified as key stakeholders discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. However, the findings of this study indicates that parents' understanding of inclusion fails to reflect the multifaceted, complex nature of

inclusion. When thinking about inclusion, parents referred to “who” is to be included, and “where” they are to be included, that was reflected in the themes of Inclusionary/Exclusionary Criteria and Spaces of Inclusion and Exclusion discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 8. This finding is however contrasted by Torgbenu et al. (2021) and Opoku et al. (2019) who found that parents did not have knowledge regarding inclusion, or their knowledge was limited. The current study’s finding is that parents have some understanding of inclusion however this understanding considers conditions of inclusion. While conditions of inclusion are not identified in policy, parents note which type of children they feel should be included, where, and under what circumstances.

As regards who needs to be included, parents considered the person characteristics of disability, language, socio-economic status, learning ability and behaviour. These characteristics were predominantly raised in relation to concerns parents expressed about the impact on the quality of education for their child. This highlights the value parents assign to the functioning of educated for their children, in relation to the functioning of being inclusive.

Morrow’s concepts of formal and epistemological access were reflected in the spaces parents thought children needed to be included. These spaces included the school, classrooms, activities, and teaching and learning. Parents’ reference to who needs to be included and excluded, and where, are understood within the Bioecological concepts of proximal processes, person characteristics, and context, as well as within the Capability Approach concepts of conversion factors and resources. The fact that these are not fully understood within a singular approach or theory points to the necessity for a newly developed conceptual framework as discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

The conditions parents attach to the inclusion of specific groups of children, along with where they should be included, contradicts policy documents which state that the educational environment must be transformed to include the individual with barriers to learning. Policy places the onus on schools to be flexible and responsive to individuals and their learning needs. However, in identifying conditions of inclusion, parents perceive that schools are rigid and that individuals need to adapt to fit in, instead of the school adapting. This finding aligns with the idea that parents do not believe that the school is amenable to change, with the data reflecting parents' perceptions that teachers are unable to teach children with barriers and that the school infrastructure cannot accommodate children with disabilities.

While parents identified who needed to be included and where, they also identified the risks and benefits of inclusion for both children with barriers to learning and those without. The benefits include social development, academic development, and more inclusive societies, while concerns were expressed about emotional well-being and academic outcomes. The identification of risks and benefits of inclusion for children with, and without barriers to learning is contrasted by parents only identifying the effects of exclusion on children with barriers to learning. The risks of exclusion identified by parents in this study relate to emotional development and negative behavioural outcomes. Given the gains of inclusion identified by parents for children without barriers, the focus on the child with barriers to learning as regards the outcome of exclusion is interesting. This is because the exclusion of children with barriers to learning could mean that children without barriers to learning may not able to acquire the skills that will be acquired if children with barriers were to be included, or to the same extent. However, in identifying risks and benefits to

children with and without barriers as a result of inclusion and exclusion, parents identify that they do consider epistemological access, albeit to a lesser extent than formal access.

Analysis of the data using the Capability Approach and the Bio-Ecological Theory demonstrates that, used individually, they would result in gaps in parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion. However, the conceptual framework presented in Chapters 7 and 8 integrates aspects of the Bio-Ecological Theory with the Capability Approach, thereby minimising the gaps. This framework aims to expand on the understanding of the factors affecting an individual's ability to implement inclusion. These factors include person characteristics, conversion factors and resources understood within the elements of context and time. What stands out in this framework is the need to look at the complexity of issues at play in order to understand what individuals value, and the intersection of this with other capabilities that are valued. This results in an understanding that some functionings will be valued above others, partly explained by whether the functioning is a means to and end or an end itself. When these "competing values" emerge, the individual will need make a choice regarding which functioning to attain. Thus, while inclusion is undoubtedly a social justice issue, parental support for inclusion must address the value that parents assign to inclusion. Only when parents see the value of inclusion for children without barriers to learning as well as those with barriers, will they support the policy and its implementation.

9.3 So what?

The conceptual framework that was developed as an outcome of this research may prove valuable to researchers in the field of inclusive education. It brings researchers' attention to the various factors at play within an individual with regards to their ability to

support the implementation of inclusion. While a consideration of the context is valuable, an examination of the individual factors affecting an individual's ability to attain a functioning offers further insight into where interventions are required.

The findings from my study have implications for the training programmes designed for members of the SGB, as well as the general parent population. With regards to inclusion, training programs need to underscore that inclusion is something that happens for all children, and not a select few. With this starting point, inclusion is therefore valuable to the entire school population. This understanding offers parents an opportunity to support inclusion not view it in opposition to the quality of education they envision for their children.

The findings highlight the importance of understanding the context of the parents and the way this context interacts with the person characteristics, resources, and conversion factors, to influence the parental support for inclusion. A consideration of this interaction is therefore important for training and policy designers, as this has implications for the content, style of delivery, language usage, etc., of the training and policy. In so doing it is hoped that parents' ability to convert the resource of education into capabilities and subsequently functionings is enhanced.

9.4 Now What?

Based on the outcome of the literature review, few studies have explored what it is that parents understand by inclusion and exclusion. Researchers therefore need to continue to examine parents' views and particularly understanding of inclusion in a greater geographical area to ascertain whether this understanding may be hindering their support

for inclusion. Furthermore, a limitation of this study is the inability to generalise the findings to the South African population. As a result, future research could involve a more diverse sample population. This may include schools from various districts, a diverse population in terms of race, and public and private schools.

Given that the implementation of inclusion is affected by diverse factors, there needs to be a consideration of the cultural-historical context of the community, for training to be effective. In this regard, an understanding of the context and impact of time from a Bio-Ecological perspective is needed to understand the community since context and time will have an impact on the conversion factors, resources and adaptive preferences evident in the community. Additionally training programs need to be tailored to the needs of a specific community, bearing in mind the capabilities and functionings that are valued within that community. In so doing, the training would identify the needs of that specific community and address those needs.

The veracity of the conceptual framework that was developed for this study could be investigated in future studies by testing and validating the conceptual framework with opinions from experts in the field of inclusion. Additionally, it could be validated through a study exploring the factors that influence the value assigned to the functioning of being inclusive. In such a study, a survey could be designed generating demographic data, data regarding how individuals come to value specific functionings and under what circumstances functionings are valued. The data generated could be analysed using structural equation modelling aimed at identifying the critical attributes for evaluating the value assigned to functionings. In identifying which functioning is valued, and why, the outcome of the testing and validation may result in the adaptation/expansion of the

conceptual framework or a disproving of it. The framework could also be used to understand the factors impacting the ability of different stakeholder groups to implement inclusion. These stakeholder groups include teachers, principals, school-based support teams and district-based support teams. Furthermore, the conceptual framework could be used to offer insight, not only into what it is that individuals come to value, but also how individuals in partnerships come to value specific capabilities and functionings, and the role this plays in the development of collaborative partnerships.

Given the South African context, I acknowledge that my findings and the subsequent conceptual framework do not provide solutions to all the challenges to the implementation of inclusion. However, the research does provide a window into parents' understanding of inclusion, along with a possible conceptual framework from which to further explore inclusion. In this way, steps could be taken to realise the right to education for all.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: GDE Approval letter

For administrative use only:
Reference no: D2017 / 293
enquiries: 011 843 6503

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	19 September 2016
Validity of Research Approval:	19 September 2016 to 30 September 2016
Name of Researcher:	Kern A.
Address of Researcher:	P.O. Box 4963; Weltevredenpark; 1715
Telephone I Fax Number/s:	011 717 4506; 083 256 7126
Email address:	anywynne.kern@wits.ac.za
Research Topic:	SGB members' and other parents' attitudes towards inclusion and exclusion in Primary schools
Number and type of schools:	SIX Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg West

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

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

CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE

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

20/09/2016

Appendix 2: Ethics Clearance certificate

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Kern

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	PROTOCOL NUMBER: 1416/08/14
PROJECT TITLE	SGB members' and other parents' attitudes towards inclusion and exclusion in primary schools
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Mrs A Kern
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Human and Community Development/
DATE CONSIDERED	19 August 2016
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved
EXPIRY DATE	26 October 2019

CHAIRPERSON _____
essor J Knight)

DATE 27 October 2016

cc: Supervisor : Dr E Walton

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and ONE COPY returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we 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. I agree to completion of a yearly

progress report.

_____ _____/_____/_____

Signature Date

Appendix 3: Principal Information Letter

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4541 • Fax: 011 717 4559 • E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Dear Principal

My name is Anwynne Kern and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining my Doctorate of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand. The broader focus of my study will fall on the attitudes of parent members of the School Governing Body (SGB) and non-SGB parents towards inclusion and exclusion within South African schools. I would like to invite your school to take part in the study.

Participation in the study would require parent members of the SGB members and non-SGB parents to complete a closed-ended questionnaire which should take no-longer than 20 minutes. In addition, individuals who indicate a willingness to participate in an individual semi-structured interview will be interviewed at a time and place that is convenient for them. Participants will be asked questions regarding their conceptualisation of inclusion and exclusion, as well as their attitudes towards these and the manner in which it is fostered and/or hindered within the education system. With the informed consent of the participants, these interviews will be audio recorded. Participation in the study is voluntary and participants will not be disadvantaged in anyway if they choose not to participate. There are no expected risks or benefits that would result from participation in the study. Participants may choose to leave out any questions that they are uncomfortable with answering. Although the participants will complete the questionnaires anonymously, anonymity cannot be guaranteed within the individual interviews. However, within transcribing and reporting the data confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed as recordings will be transcribed in a private setting or with the use of headphones and participants will be coded so that no names will be included in the transcriptions or report. If direct quotes are used in the report, pseudonyms will be ascribed to all participants, with

all identifying information removed. All gathered data will be securely stored on a password protected computer and will only be accessed by myself, my research assistants and my supervisor.

If you choose to allow me to contact your SGB members and non-SGB parents to discuss the possibility of participation in this study, please complete the consent form attached. Once completed please return the forms to me. Alternatively I can collect them from you.

Your participation in the study would be much appreciated.

Kind regards

Anwynne Kern (Researcher)
0832567126
anwynne.kern@wits.ac.za

Dr. Elizabeth Walton (Supervisor)
011 717 3768
elizabeth.walton@wits.ac.za

Appendix 4: Principal Consent form

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4541 • Fax: 011 717 4559 • E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Principal Consent Form

I, _____ consent to Anwynne Kern contacting members of my school's SGB and non-SGB parents for the purpose of her PhD research study on the attitudes of these participants towards inclusion and exclusion within South African schools.

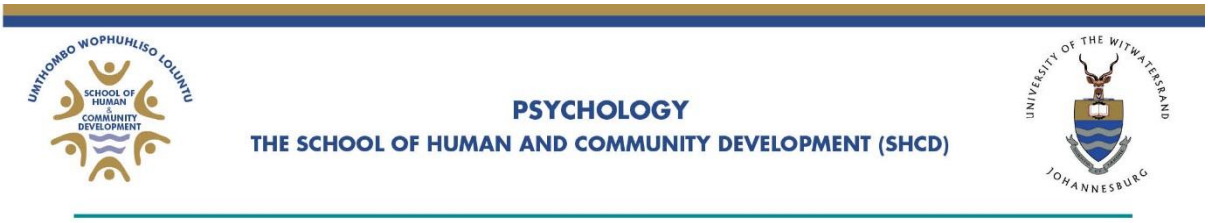
I understand that:

- Participation in this study is complete voluntary.
- No participant will be advantaged or disadvantaged for choosing to participate in this study or not.
- Participants may withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions that they do not feel comfortable with.
- There are no foreseeable risks or benefits for partaking in this study.
- Anonymity and confidentiality will be guaranteed in the final research thesis and any publications of conference presentations that might arise from it.

Signed: Date:

_____ _____

Appendix 5: Participant Information Sheet



Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 •Tel: 011 717 4541 •Fax: 011 717 4559 •E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Dear Parent,

My name is Anwynne Kern and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining my Doctorate of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand. The broader focus of my study will fall on the attitudes of Parents members of the School Governing Body (SGB) members and non-SGB parents towards inclusion and exclusion within South African schools. I would like to invite you to take part in the study.

Participation in the study would require you to complete a closed-ended questionnaire which should take no-longer than 20 minutes. In addition, should you indicate a willingness to participate in an individual semi-structured interview, you will be interviewed at a time and place that is convenient for you. During the interview questions regarding your conceptualisation of inclusion and exclusion, as well as your attitudes towards these and the manner in which it is fostered and hindered within the education system will be asked. With your informed consent, these interviews will be audio recorded. Participation in the study is voluntary and you will not be disadvantaged in anyway if you choose not to participate. There are no expected risks or benefits that would result from participation in the study. You may choose to leave out any questions that you are uncomfortable with answering. Although the questionnaire will be completed anonymously, anonymity cannot be

guaranteed within the individual interviews. However, within transcribing and reporting the data confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed as recordings will be transcribed in a private setting or with the use of headphones and participants will be coded so that no names will be included in the transcriptions or report. If direct quotes are used in the report, pseudonyms will be ascribed to all participants, with all identifying information removed. All gathered data will be securely stored on a password protected computer and will only be accessed by myself, my research assistants and my supervisor.

If you choose to participate in the study please complete the attached questionnaire and drop it into the sealed box in the office of your school. The return of the completed questionnaire will be taken as consent to participate.

Your participation in the study would be much appreciated.

Kind regards

Anwynne Kern (Researcher) Prof. Elizabeth Walton (Supervisor) Prof Sumaya Laher

0832567126

011717 4532

anwynne.kern@wits.ac.za elizawalton@yahoo.co.uk sumaya.laher@wits.ac.za

Appendix 6: Survey

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Code: AA1

Please answer the following questions by placing a tick in the appropriate box/column or by writing in the space provided.

Section A: Demographic Data

1. Gender:

Male	
Female	

2. Age: _____

3. What is your home language: _____

4. Please specify your race (for statistical/analytic purposes only).

Black	
White	
Indian	
Coloured	
Other	

5. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? *(If currently enrolled, highest degree received)*

No schooling completed	
Grade 1 to Grade 8	
Some high school	
Matric certificate	
Diploma	
Some college credit no degree	
Trade/technical/vocational training	
Bachelor's degree	
Honour's degree	
Master's degree	

Doctoral degree	

6. Which phase is your child/children currently in?

Grade	No. of children in each phase	Does your child/ren experience any learning difficulties?	What type of learning difficulty does your child experience?
Grade 0/R			
Foundation Phase Grade 1-3			
Intermediate Phase Grade 4-6			
Senior Phase Grade 7-9			
Grade 10 -12			
Not applicable			

7. Are you a member of the school governing body?

Yes	
No	

Section B

The purpose of this survey is to obtain a true reflection of issues related to inclusion and exclusion. Because there are no "right' or "wrong" answers to these items, please respond honestly.

What do you understand by inclusion in education?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What do you understand by exclusion in education?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please rate how much you personally agree or disagree with the following statements- how much they reflect how you feel or think personally, by placing a tick in the appropriate block.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

1	Children who have physical disabilities should be allowed in my child's class.					
2	Children who have emotional difficulties should be allowed in my child's class.					
3	Children who have special learning needs should be allowed in my child's class.					
4	Children who come from different ethnic groups should be allowed in my child's class.					
5	Children who come from different racial groups should be allowed in my child's class.					
6	Children who hold different spiritual beliefs should be allowed in my child's class.					
7	Children who have same sex parents should be allowed in my child's class.					
8	Children who are HIV positive should be allowed in my child's class.					
9	Children who come from poor backgrounds should be allowed in my child's class.					
10	Children who live in different areas should be allowed in my child's class.					
11	Children who come from different religious backgrounds are likely to create confusion in the classroom.					
12	Children who are continually aggressive towards classmates should not be in ordinary classrooms.					
13	Only children who can communicate clearly should attend this school.					
14	Children who do not speak English as a first language should go to a school that uses their first language					
15	Only children whose parents can pay school fees should attend my child's school.					
16	Children who are often aggressive towards school staff should not be in the same class with my child.					
17	Only children who can cope with the curriculum should be in the same class with my child.					
18	Children who need help communicating should attend a different school to this one.					

19	Children who have same sex parents should attend a different school					
20	Children should go to a school close to their home.					
21	The extra-mural policy of the school makes it difficult for all children to participate.					
22	All children should be treated the same regardless of their financial status.					
23	Only children who have paid school fees should receive a school report.					
24	Immigrant children should go to a different school from this one.					
25	Children who are HIV positive should attend the same school as children who are not HIV positive					
26	Children who are HIV positive are welcome to come to this school but should not join in any sports					
27	Only children who bring material from home should join in art and cultural activities at school.					
28	Inclusion won't work at any schools that have too many children in a class.					
29	It is too much to expect teachers to teach children from different backgrounds.					
30	Teachers should not be expected to teach children with different academic abilities.					
31	Children with special needs can do the same work as normally developing children.					
32	Inclusion is expensive					
33	Children with learning difficulties will feel bad in an ordinary class.					
34	Teachers have the skills to cope with the needs of all children.					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
35	Children with physical disabilities should attend schools that are built for them.					
36	It is impossible to adjust the lessons to meet the					

	needs of all children at this school.					
37	When children mix with children who are different to them they develop acceptance and understanding,					
38	Children who struggle with their school work should stay in at break to catch up.					
39	Only children who are well behaved should take part in fun activities (such as casual day, cultural activities and sports).					
40	Children should only attend school if they have the school uniform.					
41	Children from single parent homes are badly behaved.					
42	It is impossible to adapt most materials in a classroom to truly meet the needs of all children.					
43	Teachers are adequately trained to meet the needs of all learners.					
44	This school should have a special class for children who struggle with their school work.					
45	I want my child/ren to mix with children of different religions.					
46	This school should have a separate class for children who are repeating a grade.					
47	Children who experience learning difficulties are likely to be bullied					
48	Children who struggle with their school work take too much of the teachers time.					
49	My child should not be expected to help children who are struggling with classwork.					
50	Children who are academically able are bored in this school.					
51	There is inadequate transport services to this school.					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
52	This school provides food for children who come to					

	school hungry.					
53	My child is encouraged to think out of the box in his/her class.					
54	Fear/Scare tactics are used to discipline children at this school.					
55	My child is valued for the uniqueness that they bring to the class.					
56	This school nurtures all children, not only the 'clever' children.					
57	My child should only play with children who have parents of the opposite sex.					
58	My child's school can cope with children with physical disabilities.					
59	Children need to fit in if they want to attend this school.					
60	My child will benefit from having children who are different in their class.					
61	I do not want my child to mix with children who are HIV positive.					

Please feel free to provide any further comments on inclusion and exclusion in education.

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CO-OPERATION

Please complete contact the researcher on Anwynne.kern@wits.ac.za or tel no. should you be willing to participate in an interview to explore your experiences and perceptions of inclusive education in more depth.

Appendix 7: Survey Consent Form

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4541 • Fax: 011 717 4559 • E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

SGB Member/Parent Consent Form

I, _____ consent to participating in Anwynne Kern's research with regards to inclusion and exclusion within South African schools.

I understand that:

- Participation in this study is complete voluntary.
- No participant will be advantaged or disadvantaged for choosing to participate in this study or not.
- Participants may withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions that they do not feel comfortable with.
- There are no foreseeable risks or benefits for partaking in this study.
- Anonymity and confidentiality will be guaranteed in the final research thesis and any publications of conference presentations that might arise from it.

Signed: Date:

_____ _____

Appendix 8: Interview Schedule

1. Could you comment on what you think inclusion and exclusion means? How do you see this playing out in the day to day running of the school?

2. Tell me about the groups/types of children who are included in the school and/or school activities? Why do you think that is? How does the school include children from the school in general or from day to day activities within the school? Why do you think that is the case? How do you feel about that?

3. When you think about your child's school, which groups/types of children are left out from the school and/or school activities? Why do you think that is? How does the school exclude children from the school in general or from day to day activities within the school? Why do you think that is the case? How do you feel about that?

4. If you could decide which groups of children should be allowed in your child's class, which children would you include? Why? Would you include them in certain activities and not others? How do you think including (the aforementioned) children into your child's class will affect the way the class works?

5. Based on what you said, what good do you think will come from including those children in this school, both for the school and for your child? What do you think the disadvantages would be of including all children in this school, both on the school and for your child?

6. If you could decide which groups of children should be prevented from being in your child's class, which children would you leave out? Why? Would you exclude them from certain activities and not others? How do you think excluding (the aforementioned) children into your child's class will affect the way the class works?

7. What good do you think it would do to not include the children that you just mentioned in this school, both for the school and for your child? What do you think the disadvantages would be of excluding some children from this school, both on the

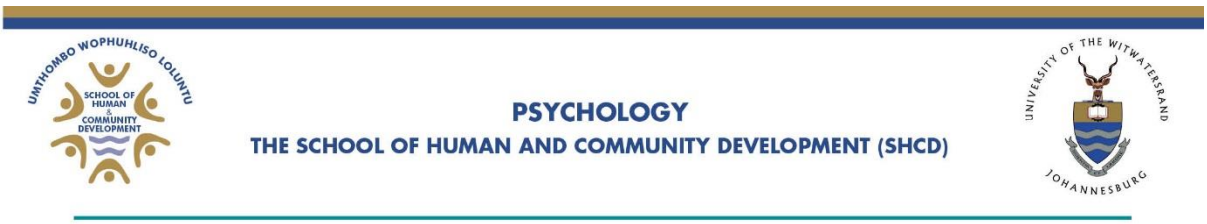
school and for your child?

8. When you think about the diversity of our society, what do you think needs to be done to include all children into the classroom in such a manner that they can access the curriculum?

9. Do you think that the SGB members would agree/disagree with the opinion you have just given me (about inclusion/exclusion)? Do you think that the parent body would agree/disagree with the opinion you have just given me (about inclusion/exclusion)?

10. Do you have any further thoughts on the practice of inclusion and exclusion?

Appendix 9: Interview Consent form



Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4541 • Fax: 011 717 4559 • E-mail: psych.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Title of Research:

SGB parent members' and other parents' attitudes towards inclusion and exclusion in primary schools

Researchers*: Anwynne Kern*

I, ……., voluntarily agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I am aware of what my consent to participate will entail. By consenting to this research, I am agreeing for my interview to be audio recorded.

I understand that

- My name and identity will not be linked to any recordings.
- The recordings will be transcribed and used for the research
- Secure copies of the audio-recordings and transcriptions will be kept on a password protected computer.
- Only the researcher, research assistants and her supervisor will have access to the recordings.

Signed: Date:

_____ _____

Appendix 10: South African parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education in primary schools

Research Article

AUTHOR:
Mrs A.C. Kern[1]

AFFILIATION:
[1]University of the Witwatersrand

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e-ISSN 2519-593X

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04 December 2020

SOUTH AFRICAN PARENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

ABSTRACT

Inclusive education has featured strongly in the South African education landscape since it was first incorporated into policy in 2001. Although parents are key stakeholders in the successful implementation of inclusive education, there has not been much research exploring parents' understanding within this space. Therefore, this study aimed to explore parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion in education from seven primary schools in the Johannesburg area. This paper is based on the qualitative data drawn from a larger mixed methods study where 559 written responses exploring parents of primary school learners' understanding were analysed and 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the results. Four core themes were identified, namely, inclusion/exclusion criteria, levels of inclusion and exclusion, effects of exclusion and the effects of inclusion. Sub-themes of interpersonal and extra-personal characteristics emerged for the theme of inclusion/exclusion criteria, while further analysis of levels of inclusion/exclusion resulted in the sub-themes of formal and epistemological access. It was clear that parents' understanding of inclusion and exclusion was grounded more in the practices of inclusion/exclusion as opposed to a more abstract, theoretical understanding. These results are discussed within the context of the SASA and Education White Paper 6 policy within South Africa, as well as literature around the types of educational access.

Keywords: *parents, inclusion, exclusion, education, South Africa, barriers to learning*

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OPEN ACCESS

1. INTRODUCTION

Parental participation in the schooling of learners with and without barriers to learning is an important factor in the successful implementation of inclusion (De Boer, Pijl & Minnaert, 2010; Lui *et al.*, 2015). This is recognised locally and internationally, with new legislation calling for the enhancement of parental involvement (Srivastava, De Boer & Pijl, 2015). Involvement empowers parents and provides a sense of autonomy as it allows parents to take responsibility for decisions regarding the educational placement of their

Appendix 11: Who is in and who is out: parents' views on barriers to learning

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2020.1853254

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Check for updates

Who is in and who is out: parents' views on barriers to learning

Anwynne Kern

University of the Witwatersrand

ABSTRACT

South Africa, a country that suffered from discriminatory practices in the past, is still feeling the impact of these practices currently. One of these practices limited access to educational institutions, particularly for children experiencing barriers to learning. The focus of this article is on parents' perceptions of barriers to learning as they aid or constrain learners' access to education. In addition, the article explores how the notion of value, as it is expressed in the capability approach, influences support for formal and epistemological access. Four hundred and six parents of children without barriers to learning completed a self-report questionnaire from seven mainstream primary schools in Gauteng, while two hundred and twenty-two parents responded to the open-ended questions. The questionnaire comprised a demographic section and 61 item Likert-type scale and two open-ended questions which explored parents' perceptions of barriers to learning. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the responses to the open-ended questions, while responses to the scale were analysed using SPSS. The results clustered around the themes of behaviour, school climate/environment, learning ability, discrimination and teachers, which indicate that parents assign greater value to the functioning of education than to inclusivity. The general stance however was in favour of formal access over epistemological access.

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KEYWORDS
Barriers to learning; capability approach; epistemological access; formal access; inclusion

Introduction

Access to quality education has been a pressing issue in South Africa since the abolition of apartheid in 1994. While access to educational institutions has been legislated through numerous policy documents, it is still elusive for many children, for a number of reasons. The role of parents and other stakeholders in the implementation of Inclusive Education (IE) is espoused in these policy documents. However, little is understood about how parents in South Africa view various barriers to learning (BTL), which is central to the way inclusion is understood. Given that barriers include 'mental barriers' (Horsthemke 2017, 23), which present the preconceptions and prejudices of individuals without barriers towards those experiencing barriers, parents could present as barriers, instead of facilitators, to inclusion. An understanding of parents' perceptions towards BTL will

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Appendix 12: Using a combined bio-ecological and capability perspective to understand inclusive education in South Africa

Prospects
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CASES/TRENDS

Using a combined bio-ecological and capability perspective to understand inclusive education in South Africa

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Abstract Inclusive educational practices have been adopted worldwide to address inequalities endemic to education systems. In South Africa, the process toward inclusion commenced in October 1996 and was realized in 2001 with the Education White Paper 6. However, the implementation of inclusion in South Africa has been marred by challenges. These challenges have largely been examined through an ecosystemic theoretical lens offering insight into the contextual challenges facing inclusion but does not adequately explore the role that the person involved in the implementation and their specific dispositions play in the enactment of inclusion. This article argues that, to better understand the challenges individuals face with implementing inclusion, a broader lens integrating bio-ecological theory and the capability approach is needed. This integration highlights the need to look at a complexity of issues to understand what is valued, as competing values, and the choices between these will influence the implementation of inclusion.

Keywords Bio-ecological theory · Capability approach · Education · Inclusion

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2015), 20 percent of children in any schooling system could be considered to be experiencing some form of barrier to learning such as poverty, abuse, language, and disability. In South Africa, it is reported that, of the 5.8 percent of children identified as having disabilities, only 1.01 percent of these children are enrolled in mainstream education, with a total of 1.3 percent of children enrolled in

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Appendix 13: Survey questions in themes

Barrier to learning			Item	Statement
Behaviour			2	Children who have emotional difficulties should be allowed in my child's class.
			12	Children who are continually aggressive towards class mates should not be in ordinary classrooms
			16	Children who are often aggressive towards school staff should not be in the same class with my child.
			37	When children mix with children who are different to them they develop acceptance and understanding,
			39	Only children who are well behaved should take part in fun activities (such as casual day, cultural activities and sports).
			41	Children from single parent homes are badly behaved.
Communication			13	Only children who can communicate clearly should attend this school.
			14	Children who do not speak English as a first language should go to a school that uses their first language
			18	Children who need help communicating should attend a different school to this one.
Learning ability			3	Children who have special learning needs should be allowed into my child's class.
			17	Only children who can cope with the curriculum should be in the same class with my child.
			33	Children with learning difficulties will feel bad in an ordinary class.
			31	Children with special needs can do the same work as normally developing children.
			38	Children who struggle with their school work should stay in at break to catch up.
			44	This school should have a special class for children who struggle with their school work.
			47	Children who experience learning difficulties are likely to be bullied
			49	My child should not be expected to help children who are struggling with classwork.
			50	Children who are academically able are bored in this school.
School climate/environment	Transport		10	Children who live in different areas should be allowed in my child's class.
			20	Children should go to a school close to their

				home.
			51	There is inadequate transport services to this school.
	Capacity/Environment	Barriers develop from the environment (DoE, 2001)	28	Inclusion won't work at any schools that have too many children in a class.
			32	Inclusion is expensive
			52	This school provides food for children who come to school hungry.
			58	My child's school can cope with children with physical disabilities.
			21	The extra-mural policy of the school makes it difficult for all children to participate.
			46	This school should have a separate class for children who are repeating a grade.
	Treatment of individual children		53	My child is encouraged to think out of the box in his/her class.
			55	My child is valued for the uniqueness that they bring to the class.
			56	This school nurtures all children, not only the 'clever' children.
			59	Children need to fit in if they want to attend this school.
Discrimination	Sexual Orientation		19	Children who have same sex parents should attend a different school
			57	My child should only play with children who have parents of the opposite sex.
			7	Children who have same sex parents should be allowed in my child's class .
	HIV		25	Children who are HIV positive should attend the same school as children who are not HIV positive
			26	Children who are HIV positive are welcome to come to this school but should not join in any sports
			61	I do not want my child to mix with children who are HIV positive.
			8	Children who are HIV positive should be allowed in my child's class.
	Religion		6	Children who hold different spiritual beliefs should be allowed in my child's class.
			11	Children who come from different religious backgrounds are likely to create confusion in the classroom.
			45	I want my child/ren to mix with children of different religions.
	Disability		35	Children with physical disabilities should attend schools that are built for them.
			1	Children who have physical disabilities should be allowed in my child's class.
	Culture		24	Immigrant children should go to a different

				school from this one.
			4	Children who come from different ethnic groups should be allowed in my child's class.
			5	Children who come from different racial groups should be allowed in my child's class.
			60	My child will benefit from having children who are different in their class.
	SES		9	Children who come from poor backgrounds should be allowed into my child's class.
			15	Only children whose parents can pay school fees should attend my child's school.
			40	Children should only attend school if they have the school uniform.
			22	All children should be treated the same regardless of their financial status.
			23	Only children who have paid school fees should receive a school report.
			27	Only children who bring material from home should join in art and cultural activities at school.
Teachers	Capacity		29	It is too much to expect teachers to teach children from different backgrounds.
			30	Teachers should not be expected to teach children with different academic abilities.
			36	It is impossible to adjust the lessons to meet the needs of all children at this school.
			42	It is impossible to adapt most materials in a classroom to truly meet the needs of all children.
			48	Children who struggle with their schoolwork take too much of the teachers time.
	Training/Skills		34	Teachers have the skills to cope with the needs of all children.
			43	Teachers are adequately trained to meet the needs of all learners.
			54	Fear/Scare tactics are used to discipline children at this school.

Appendix 14: Interview questions drawn from themes emerging from survey responses

		Themes from survey data	Research questions
1	Could you comment on what you think inclusion and exclusion means? How do you see this playing out in the day to day running of the school?		What are the perceptions of parent members of the SGB towards issues of inclusion and exclusion? What are the perceptions of parent members of the SGB towards issues of inclusion and exclusion? What do parent members of the SGB and others parents understand by the terms 'inclusion' and 'exclusion'?
2	When you think about your child's school, which groups/types of children are left out from the school and/or school activities? Why do you think that is? How does the school exclude children from the school in general or from day to day activities within the school? Why do you think that is the case? How do you feel about that?	Inclusionary/Exclusionary Criteria Spaces of inclusion/exclusion	What characteristics do parent members of the SGB and other parents use to include and exclude learners from school and or school activities?
3	If you could decide which groups of children should be allowed in your child's class, which children would you include? Why? Would you include them in certain activities and not others? How do you think including (the aforementioned) children into your child's class will affect the way the class works?	Inclusionary/Exclusionary Criteria Spaces of inclusion/exclusion	What characteristics do parent members of the SGB and other parents use to include and exclude learners from school and or school activities?
4	Based on what you said, what good do you think will come from including those children in this school, both for the school and for your child? What do you think the disadvantages would be of including all children in this school, both on the school and for your child?	Effects of inclusion/exclusion	
5	If you could decide which groups of children should be prevented from being	Spaces of inclusion/exclusion	What characteristics do parent members

	in your child's class, which children would you leave out? Why? Would you exclude them from certain activities and not others? How do you think excluding (the aforementioned) children into your child's class will affect the way the class works?		of the SGB and other parents use to include and exclude learners from school and or school activities?
6	What good do you think it would do to not include the children that you just mentioned in this school, both for the school and for your child? What do you think the disadvantages would be of excluding some children from this school, both on the school and for your child?	Effects of inclusion/exclusion	
7	When you think about the diversity of our society, what do you think needs to be done to include all children into the classroom in such a manner that they can access the curriculum?		
8	Do you think that the SGB members would agree/disagree with the opinion you have just given me (about inclusion/exclusion)? Do you think that the parent body would agree/disagree with the opinion you have just given me (about inclusion/exclusion)?		
9	Do you have any further thoughts on the practice of inclusion and exclusion?		

Appendix 15: Examples of text, codes and themes

The colours used in the text column correlates with the code identified in the code column.

Text	Code	Theme
"I would not allow a situation where my child is the same classroom with a learner who is a bully or one who is foul-mouthed." Children should not mistreat/bully other children I think children that bully other children should be dealt with because they make life/ school very difficult for our children I do not want my child to attend with learners who break the school's code of rules. I do not like children who are violent because they make others afraid of going to school. And having a don't care attitude towards that teacher and whatever she teaches not taking notes in class I believe that exclusion is brought by one's lack of finances Children have a right to an education regardless of culture, background, finance When a child has a certain disability and not treated like other children. Inclusion secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in general education Children that are disabled cannot be joining children that are fresh in the same class All children must get educated, even those that have learning	Integration, disability, Finances, Background, school fees, uniforms, Slow learners, health, bullying, behaviour, language	Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

difficulties That struggling learners should be helped specially with extra classes All children should the same education even if they come from a poor background because they will grow only to be poor. Coming from a poor background may cause a child to be distant Children must not be integrated because educators are trained to teach those with no disabilities I have no problem if there isn't integration, children go to school to learn and these other issues are not school related. A problem arises when the educator teaches in a language children do not understand e.g., educators must not use English. Our children struggle with reading and writing their home languages According to my understanding by exclusion we are talking about denying a person the opportunity to learn in their native language or not allowing them to talk in a different language from that of teaching and learning e.g. IsiZulu. Education should not only be for those who can afford for education Unable to pay entrance fees and tuition fees. Is to obtain education whether you are able to pay or not for your education When it comes to those kids who have no uniform I think inclusion is things that has been implemented by school like new school uniform		

So long has children do not any post any health risk to others they should be allowed to interact, study together Children should be allowed to interact so long as there is no health and physical risks.		
Every child should be given the opportunity to go to school Admittance of various students Inclusion is attending school to get education The era we live in has no space for exclusion; hence we can now attend with white in the same school Being able to read and write, and just being independent Taking part in all activities that may be beneficial to their studies To add him in every school activity at the school like sports and education Children usually get separated in classrooms Children getting along in their classrooms. There shouldn't be a division in classrooms Educators should be able to teach in different ways as this may learners to easily understand. Including certain subjects in the learning area. Thing that must be in the curriculum (information) All students attend and are welcome by their neighbourhood schools It means all students/learners must be welcomed by their neighbouring schools Children who live far from the learning area Right to access to good education Inclusion in education is for	School, class, access, separation Activities, teaching and learning, participation, curriculum, neighbourhood	Spaces of Inclusion and exclusion

everyone to have access to good education It is when a child is being removed from the school Separation of pupils from class or PT. Inclusion means all children are to be involved in educational activities unable continuously pay participation to continuously pay for participation		
Children should be treated the same regardless of their background. Not giving children the same care Exclusion is wrong and it's also the cause of why kids drop out of school. Lot of young stars they did leave a school and them end up in bad things even in jail. They lose confidence in themselves and their abilities Without confidence In a child he/ she will never enjoy the love of education Education that is inclusive forges a friendship between children. Integration of children creates friendships and makes teaching easy Develop friendships with a wide variety of other children each with their won individual needs and abilities Children learn to respect other cultures and ethnic groups and learn other languages too. It is where children are separated from their class mates Some children will feel isolated To be accepted in a group or large amount of pupils To be accepted in a larger amount of pupils or group Is where by children is accepted for who they are	Tolerance, Acceptance, Friendship, drop out, treatment, Confidence, respect, seperation, bullying, communication	Effects of Inclusion and exclusion

Children need to mix with other children who might appear to be different from them so as for them to be able to live and understand and also to accept that as people we may not be the same. My child should also help the children that don't if she understand Inclusion reduces bullying when typical children are around children with special needs, understanding will go far to reduce bullying I would love my children to learn different languages, especially English, so they communicate with other people It is helps children to communicate with each other even when they play.		