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Blackie, Cara

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The perceptions of educators towards inclusive education in a sample of government primary schools

Cara Blackie

A research report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology) in the faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2010

DECLARATION

I, Cara Blackie, hereby declare that this research report is my own work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Masters of Education (Educational Psychology) at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other university.

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Cara Blackie

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Date

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education. The educators' perceptions of the barriers to learning, the skills required in an inclusive environment, the involvement of support in inclusive education and the training programmes required were all examined. Education White Paper 6 was introduced in 2001 by the South African Department of Education stipulating inclusive education policies and a long term goal of successful implementation of inclusive education country wide. The sample of this study consisted of forty educators from six government primary schools in the Johannesburg region. The questionnaire was created to look at educators perceptions of all aspects of inclusive education within their school. The results demonstrated an equal amount of positive and negative perceptions towards the implementation of inclusive education. The educators of this study reported perceiving themselves to be inadequately trained to assume the responsibilities of inclusive education. The perceived prevalent barriers to learning in the classroom were emotional and cognitive barriers to learning. Due to South Africa's diverse population language was also seen to be a prominent barrier to learning within these schools. Educators reported the need for parental support for the successful implementation of inclusive education; however, the reality of these educators is that parental support is minimal and often nonexistent. Finally the limitations of the study are discussed and suggestions for further research made.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
Declaration	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of contents	iv
List of tables and figures	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction to the study and literature review	
1.1.Introduction	1
1.2.Rationale for the study	3
1.3.Theoretical background	4
1.4.International perspective on inclusive education	5
1.5.Inclusive education policy in South Africa	8
1.5.1. Contextual factors to consider in the implementation of inclusive education	11
1.5.2. Conceptualisation of barriers to learning and development	12
Chapter 2: Educators perceptions of inclusive education	
2. Factors influencing educators' perceptions of inclusive education	17
2.1. Educator attitudes towards inclusive education	18
2.2. Educator stress	19
2.3. Curriculum related issues	20
2.4. Training issues	21
2.5. Support structures and systems	24

2.6. Educators personal characteristics 26

2.7. Class size 28

2.8. Conclusion 28

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Aims and Research Questions 30

3.2. Context of the study 30

3.3. Research Design 31

3.4. Sampling 32

3.5. Instruments 32

3.6. Procedure 35

3.7. Data Analysis 36

3.8. Ethical considerations 38

Chapter 4: Results

4.1. Educators' views and understanding of inclusive education within a sample of government primary schools 39

4.1.1. Educators understanding of inclusive education 39

4.1.2. Educators perceptions towards inclusive education 41

4.2. Educators perception of barriers to learning within the classroom 47

4.2.1. Barriers to learning in the classroom 47

4.3. The skills that educators think they need in order to implement inclusive education 51

4.4. Support structures used by educators to assist them in the implementation of inclusive education 55

4.5. Educators' participation in inclusive education training programmes and their perceptions of these programmes 56

4.6. Other inclusive education training programmes that educators would like to participate in 58

4.7. The relationship between the number of years teaching experience and the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education 59

Chapter 5: Discussion of results

5.1. Research Question 1: What are the educators' views and understanding of inclusive education within a sample of government primary schools? 60

5.2. Research Question 2: What do educators perceive to be barriers to learning within the classroom? 64

5.3. Research Question 3: What are the skills educators think they need in order to implement inclusive education? 69

5.4. Research Question 4: What are the support structures educators use to assist them in the implementation of inclusive education? 72

5.5. Research Question 5: What are the training programmes educators have participated in involving inclusive education and their perceptions of these training programmes? 73

5.6. Research Question 6: What are other training programmes educators would like to assist them in implementing inclusive education? 74

5.7. Research Question 7: Is there a relationship between the number of years teaching experience and the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education? 75

5.8. Limitations of the study 75

5.9. Directions for future research 77

5.10. Summary and Conclusion 78

REFERENCE LIST 80

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet 87

Appendix B: Inclusive Education Questionnaire 89

Appendix C: Principal Information Sheet 95

Appendix D: Principal Consent Form 97

Appendix E: School Survey Checklist 98

Appendix F: Ethical Clearance Certificate 99

Appendix G: Gauteng Department of Education Certificate 100

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 4.1: Statistical results of the T-test indicating no significant difference between the two variables

Figure 4.1: The distribution of participants' perceptions towards inclusive education

Figure 4.2: The distribution of participants' perceptions of the barriers to learning within the classroom

Figure 4.3: The distribution of participants' perceptions of the skills required in an inclusive classroom

Figure 4.4: The distribution of perceived supportive support structures present within the school system

Chapter 1: Introduction to the study and literature review

1.1. Introduction

Philosophies involving inclusive education have changed dramatically over the past two decades (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). In the past, segregation of special education needs students seemed an easy solution, however, it denied those students the right to develop their personality in a social and school environment (Koutrouba, Vamvakari & Steliou, 2006). Special education needs is described to include the view that learning and behaviour problems are the reciprocal product of individual and environmental interaction (Landsberg, 2005). Inclusive education should not just be about addressing a marginal part of the education system, it should rather constitute a framework that all educational development systems should follow (Booth, 1999).

Inclusive education is aimed at increasing the participation of students in the curricula, cultures and communities of governmental educational systems (Booth, 1999; Landsberg, 2005; Gross, 1996). Inclusion should involve creating an environment that allows all students to feel supported emotionally, while being given the appropriate accommodations in order to learn. Most importantly, those students need to be respected and appreciated for all their personal differences (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003; Gaad, 2004). Avramidis and Norwich (2002) proposed that integration can take on three forms. Locational integration, which allows special needs students to attend mainstream schools. Social integration, which is the integration of special needs students with mainstream peers. Finally functional integration, which is the participation of students with special education needs within the learning activities that occur in the classroom (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Engelbrecht (2006) states that inclusion is culturally determined and depends on the political values and processes of the country for it to become effective. Even taking this into consideration, it is extremely important to realise that there is not just one perspective on inclusion within a single country or even within a specific school (Engelbrecht, 2006).

In 2001, the South African Government promulgated Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System. This was intended to address the difficulties surrounding the inclusion of students with barriers to learning within the mainstream school (Engelbrecht, 2006). The only way to really determine if this policy has been effective is through the understanding and information gained from the one group of individuals who has constant contact with students with barriers to learning, namely the educators. This study is intended to focus on the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education. As Landsberg (2005) states perceptions are assumptions, beliefs and attitudes that are directly translated into actions and teaching practices and can be seen to inform decision making. The future success of inclusion policies in any country will ultimately depend on educators' perceptions towards inclusive education (Hammond et al., 2003; Burke & Sutherland, 2004). Educators have the ability to affect their students' emotional, social and intellectual development (Parasuram, 2006). Educators' perceptions, beliefs and attitudes influence their acceptance of the policy of inclusion and their commitment to implementing it (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Landsberg, 2005).

To fully understand the results of this study it is fundamental to understand the concept of a perception. Perceptions are the means by which we sense the world we live in and so it is the basis of our basic human functioning (Wylde, 2007). The way in which all individuals interpret the world is controlled by our unique perceptions (Wylde, 2007). In this research, perceptions will involve all aspects of how one senses the world, such as a person's personal attitudes, beliefs, behaviour and views.

When reviewing previous research done in this area, it is vital to see the importance of researching educators' perceptions towards inclusive education as perceptions have the ability to guide behaviour, attitudes and beliefs (Parasuram, 2006; Gaad, 2004). Hammond et al. (2003) highlighted the connection between educators' attitudes and the implementation of inclusion;

however, they state that there is very little research that exists on educators' attitudes and namely perceptions towards inclusive education. This study aims to understand the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education which would assist in informing inclusive educational practices in South African schools. Restructuring of mainstream schooling is vital in order for all schools to be able to accommodate every child, irrespective of their specific special learning needs (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Department of Education, 2001).

1.2.Rationale for study

The South African Education Department implemented Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) to address the rights of all South Africans regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, disease, culture or language to receive basic education and access to an education institution (Engelbrecht, 2006; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). It aimed at providing training programmes in inclusive educational policies and strategies in order for educators to successfully implement inclusive education within the school (Department of Education, 2001).

There is limited research in the field of inclusive education in South Africa (Schimper, 2004; Wylde, 2007; Hays, 2009; Gordon, 2000; Christie, 1998). Furthermore, only a few studies have been conducted on educators' attitudes towards inclusive education in this country. These studies have mainly focussed on research samples from independent schools (Wylde, 2007; Schimper, 2004). This current study aims to add insight into educators' perceptions towards inclusion using a sample of government schools within the Gauteng area. The School Survey Checklist (Appendix C) could also contribute to future research which looks at the link between resources of a school and educators' perceptions towards inclusive education.

South African research has stressed the importance for educators to attend training programmes involved in inclusive education practices (Amod, 2004; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). The

Department of Education (2001) stated the importance of training educators in order for inclusive education to become successful however, little to no research has been conducted in the last few years to assess the impact of these training programmes that have been implemented in South Africa. Research has not focused on educators' perceptions on the effectiveness of training programmes implemented within South Africa. The current study provides data on the training that has occurred within a sample of schools in Gauteng, and this could lead to further research being conducted within this area. It is extremely important for further research to be conducted on training programmes as they have a direct influence on educators who are the implementers of inclusive education.

Education White Paper 6 is intended to focus on recognising the needs of all learners and overcoming barriers that may hinder optimal learning (Department of Education, 2001). There are many factors that affect and create difficulties in fully implementing inclusive education policies within the South African context. This study aims to explore the factors that educators perceive to influence their ability to implement inclusive education policies. This is vital as this policy has a 20 year plan and this year it is almost mid-way through the implementation of inclusive education as outlined in Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001).

1.3.Theoretical background

Inclusive education means different things to different individuals in different contexts, however there are some commonalities. These being a commitment to building a more just society, a commitment to building a more equitable education system and a conviction that the extension of the responsiveness of mainstream schools to students' diverse barriers to learning can offer a means of translating these commitments into a reality (Engelbrecht, Green, Swart & Muthukrishna, 2001). Inclusive education is meant to not only offer individual students

educational equality, but also social, economic and political equality regardless of that student's intelligence, disability, gender, race, ethnicity and social background (Shongwe, 2005).

As this study focuses on educators' perceptions towards inclusive education it is necessary to look at those perceptions that they may bring into the classroom. According to Brofenbrenner's theory, people create perceptions based on reality as well as subjective experiences (Hays, 2009). This allows this current study to gain an understanding of the reality of educators' reality of teaching students with barriers to learning while taking into account their own subjective accounts. In terms of the barriers to learning that will be discussed in this study it is vital to define what 'Barriers to learning' involve. 'Barriers to learning' involve both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can either prevent optimal learning or that can lessen the extent to which learners can benefit from education (Amod, 2003). 'Barriers to learning' are seen to result from pervasive social conditions and attitudes, inappropriate education policies, unhelpful family or school conditions, or a classroom situation that does not match the learning needs of a particular student (Booth, 1999; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999). In the past 'disability' was one of the many factors that caused segregation within schools. Disability is referred to as an affliction from which a minority of individuals may suffer and is often attributed to physical and medical causes, however, different cultures and countries will have different views on disability (Engelbrecht et al., 1999).

1.4.International perspective on inclusive education

Inclusive education is not a newly formulated goal; it emerged many years ago on an international level. Inclusive education has become an important international policy issue of the past decade (Frederickson, Dunsmuir, Lang & Monsen, 2003). To fully understand inclusive education it is important to discuss the history of inclusive education found in the literature.

International United Nations' policies that affirm the right of all children to receive equal education without discrimination include the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), and the UNESCO Salamanca Statement (1994) (Florian, 1998). The most commonly discussed and fundamental policy was the Salamanca Statement, which will be discussed in more detail. At the Jomtiem Conference in 1990, the United Nation Organisations adopted the term "education for all" to dictate the growth and movement that is needed for universal rights in education (Booth, 1999). The most fundamental and revolutionary act towards inclusive education was formulated at the World Conference on Special Education. This occurred in 1994, where representatives from 92 countries signed the Salamanca Statement, which called on all Governments of those countries to adopt the principal of inclusive education (Frederickson et al., 2003). This statement requires governments to enrol all students in regular schools unless there are valid reasons for not doing so (Frederickson et al., 2003; Smith & Thomas, 2006). This statement describes inclusion as not only being about reconstructing provision for students with disabilities, but it also implies extending educational opportunities to a wide range of marginalised groups who may have historically had little to no access to schooling institutions (Gordon, 2000).

In many countries over the past decade, the inclusion of students with barriers to learning has become a key government policy objective due to the Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001 (Smith & Thomas, 2006). Internationally, most legislative frameworks have now included inclusion into their educational laws. In 1985, the Greek education system started to implement special classes within the schools, which allowed students with learning difficulties of a moderate to severe level to be incorporated when parental consent was obtained (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). In America in 2001, the 'No Child Left Behind Act' was formulated to guide educators in reconstructing the academic content for students with special education needs in line with local and state-wide grade level standards for students with no special education needs (Cushing, Clark,

Carter, & Kennedy, 2005). In 2004, the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA), was formed to make provisions for students with physical disabilities, cognitive difficulties and behavioural disorders to be taught in mainstream classrooms (Hays, 2009). In the UK, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act stated that students need to be educated in a mainstream school unless parental wishes differ or if fellow students' education gets compromised (Frederickson et al., 2003).

International studies have focussed on the inclusion of particular students within the mainstream schooling system. These studies particularly focussed on intellectual disabilities as being more 'serious' barriers to learning within the classroom (Gaad, 2004). In the United Arab Emirates this particular barrier to learning namely intellectual disabilities, were dealt with by placing those particular students into separate classes (Gaad, 2003). Intellectually disabled students were viewed as having different ability levels and therefore required different teaching methods and curriculum compared to other students. An international study conducted by Avramidis & Kalyva (2007), focused on the students' 'disability' as being the predominant barrier to learning. A study on Greek educators found that educators tended to have more negative attitudes towards students who were blind, deaf, had mild mental retardation or who had serious behavioural problems (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). In Cyprus, the two major factors that were seen to hinder inclusive education practices were the lack of infrastructure and a lack of knowledge, skill and confidence amongst their educators (Hays, 2009; Koutrouba et al., 2006). This resulted in Cyprus changing their legislation in order to adapt the attitudes of various role-players in the education system into accepting difference (Hays, 2009).

These countries mentioned above, all follow the Salamanca Statement however; even these countries that are committed to inclusive education face considerable difficulties, dilemmas and contradictions that often result in poor implementation (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). Through

assessing international literature in the field of inclusive education, it is interesting to note that developed countries where resources are not scarce, like the USA, Australia, UK, Cyprus and Spain to name a few, educators' perceptions of the ability to cope was not based on resources. Educators in these studies reported knowledge, skills and experience as being fundamental aspects to the implementation of inclusive education (Hays, 2009). International legislation on inclusion aims at creating multilevel shifts in attitudes of all participants involved in the successful implementation of inclusive education (Koutrouba et al., 2006).

1.5.Inclusive education policy in South Africa

It is fundamental for this research to take into consideration South Africa's past educational system and the changes that occurred that have resulted in the current revised educational policies. In 1948, the Apartheid Government come into power and this had an extreme impact on the South African education system (Engelbrecht, 2006). There were separate education departments in South Africa, which were all governed by specific legislation. This legislation was based along racial and disability lines and reinforced segregation and division among the people of South Africa (Engelbrecht, 2006).

When students were segregated in accordance with their abilities, that policy followed a more medical model approach of categorisation (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Engelbrecht, 2006; Hays, 2009). This model states that the source of the deficits are within the individual and justifies that social inequalities are due to biological inequalities (Engelbrecht, 2006; Hays, 2009; Moolla, 2005). This view of diversity within the education system of South Africa legitimized exclusionary practices while affirming the status and power of professionals. This created the belief among educators that teaching students with disabilities or barriers to learning is beyond their area of expertise (Engelbrecht, 2006). This medical model that focused on a deficit view of individuals still impacts on the current attitudes towards disability and difference that are experienced in South

Africa (Engelbrecht, 2006). Only in the 1990's with the reconceptualisation of 'special needs' were disabilities viewed as products of students' predispositions and the nature of the environment they were exposed to (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Moolla, 2005). This was described by the ecological framework, in which various systems namely the individual, family, school and organisations interact to result in that individual being at risk for mental health problems (Hays, 2009).

The South African education system has shifted from a policy that favoured one section of the population and the unequal distribution of resources, to what we have today where equitable state funding is expected (Booth, 1999; Moolla, 2005). In 1994, due to the changes in the constitution a democracy evolved that aimed at acknowledging the rights of all previously marginalised communities and individuals as complete members of society (Engelbrecht, 2006). This also involves the recognition and celebration of diversity which will be reflected in the attitudes of communities and institutions (Engelbrecht, 2006; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). This was finally formalised by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act of 1996, which also included the Bill of Rights (Engelbrecht, 2006). This act highlighted the rights of all South Africans regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, culture or language to be able to receive basic education and access to an education institution (Engelbrecht, 2006; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). The first move towards acknowledging the complexity of educational needs as well as the role that social and political processes play in excluding children from education systems was seen in the Report of the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) in 1997. This particular report focused on the shift from the predominant spotlight on students with special needs to a systemic approach that identifies and addresses the barriers to learning (Engelbrecht, 2006; Hays, 2009). Then in 1999, the Department of Education released the Green Paper on emerging policy on inclusive education. Responses by the public resulted in the

release of Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System in 2001 (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001).

Education White Paper 6 stipulated that inclusive education is based on an ideal of freedom and equality in which all individuals have the opportunity of becoming competent citizens in an ever changing and diverse world (Department of Education, 2001; Engelbrecht, 2006; Landsberg, 2005; Hays, 2009). Inclusive education within South Africa is more of a human rights approach, in which it transforms the human values of inclusion into the rights of many excluded learners (Engelbrecht, 2006). Inclusive education aimed at addressing the notion of a democratic society which is based on human dignity, freedom and equality which is entrenched in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Engelbrecht, Oswald, Swart & Eloff, 2003). These policies focus on the inter-related issues of health, social, psychological, academic and vocational development for special education needs students (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). The Department of Education (2001) stated in Education White Paper 6 that the vision for inclusive education is a long-term goal. Their short to medium-term goals provided a model for future system wide application. The short to medium-term goals would be able to provide information on capital, material and human resource development, funding requirements required to build a fully functional inclusive education and training system (Department of Education, 2001). Education White Paper 6 aims at providing support not only for the students that attend mainstream schools, but also for educators and learning institutions (Hays, 2009). District-based support teams (DBST) which comprise of staff from provisional and regional head offices as well as from special schools have been identified as a major resource to help provide training and capacity building for mainstream schools (Hays, 2009).

1.5.1. Contextual factors to consider in the implementation of inclusive education

South Africa's Department of Education has struggled to successfully implement inclusive education due to complex contextual influences (Engelbrecht, 2006). Even now in a post-apartheid society there are still large disparities between former advantaged schools for white children and former disadvantaged schools (Engelbrecht, 2006). The former disadvantaged schools, mainly in rural areas are still affected by poverty and all its manifestations (Amod, 2004; Engelbrecht, 2006; Department of Education, 2001). According to Engelbrecht (2006) these more disadvantaged schools still have a lack of resources and efficient administrative systems and suitable educators, despite the equitable allocation of resources that should have occurred. She adds that while there has been a shift towards more equitable allocation of resources across all schools the overall output of the school system is still seen to however, vary considerably. Many schools still seem to lack resources and the institutional capacity, namely administrative systems and trained educators, and this places constraints on the effective implementation of new educational policies.

In South Africa, the socio-economic situation can have a severe negative effect on the education system (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). Schools have the ability to determine their own school fees and depending on the location and community this can range drastically. Disadvantaged schools generally have a smaller budget that results in less money being set aside for helping educators to become more efficient in the necessary inclusion policies and training (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). In South African schools, the lack of resources and the overcrowded classrooms are predominantly due to financial constraints (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). Chronic illnesses are also barriers to learning for many students in South Africa, the most prevalent and severe illness to consider is HIV Aids (Booth, 1999). This disease does not just influence the students themselves, but their parents, community as well as the educators who have to deal with this disease on a day-to-day basis (Booth, 1999).

1.5.2. Conceptualisation of barriers to learning and development

According to the Department of Education (2001), the students that will be most vulnerable to barriers to learning and exclusion within South Africa are those who have historically been termed 'learners with special needs' or, as it is understood, students with disabilities and impairments. The barriers that will be discussed below can often prevent access to education or can limit participation within a school. As defined earlier in this chapter, 'Barriers to learning' are seen to result from pervasive social conditions and attitudes, inappropriate education policies, unhelpful family or school conditions and norms, or a classroom situation that does not match the learning needs of a particular student (Booth, 1999; Engelbrecht et al., 1999). General negative attitudes from educators, fellow students and the community can result in prejudice on the basis of race, gender, class, culture, language, religion and disability (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). These in turn can result in barriers to learning when they have been directed at special education needs students in an inclusive classroom (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001).

An important barrier to learning that needs to be considered is that of disability. Individuals who are viewed as being disabled are seen as different from their peers and in need of medical treatment, as stated in the description of the medical model (Hays, 2009; Engelbrecht et al., 2001). The disabilities found in schools can include physical, neurological, psycho-neurological and sensory impairment as well as moderate to mild learning difficulties involved in reading, writing, maths, and speech and language problems (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Hays, 2009). A study conducted in 1994 in private schools in Johannesburg found that educators only mentioned the barriers to learning that were previously referred to as a disability (Schimper, 2004). These mainly included more physical and mental abnormalities that are more noticeable in the community, for example Down Syndrome and blindness. Inclusion, however, involves more aspects than just disability, including cognitive barriers, emotional barriers, physical and environmental barriers as

well as external barriers to learning for example factors such as the teacher-pupil ratio, curriculum and language.

Physical barriers to learning include the physical structure of the school and the physical deficits students may experience. Some schools may not be able to accept all students with physical and sensory disabilities due to limitations relating to the physical infrastructure of the school such ramps for wheel chairs (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Thomas, Walker & Webb, 1998). Avramidis et al. (2000) reported that sixty five percent of the participants in their study stressed the importance of the classroom layout and the physical restructuring of the school to accommodate those students with physical disabilities. Functional adaptations of the classroom are fundamental to the students' safety and wellness (Hays, 2009).

According to the medical model, students were normally categorised according to their intellectual functioning in order to assess their cognitive ability (Hays, 2009). A more general, exploratory definition states that students with an intellectual or cognitive impairment are described as having difficulty with the processing of information through their senses which as a result will impact on their ability to learn (Hays, 2009). Avramidis & Norwich (2002) reported that students with mild physical and mild intellectual disabilities should be on a part time basis rather than on a full time basis.

Language is an important factor to take into consideration as there are twelve official languages in South Africa and often schools have one medium of instruction and this is not often the first language of the students (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Booth, 1999). Pearson and Chambers (2005) highlighted that student educators were optimistic towards educating students with language differences, as they seeked strategies, approaches and support to facilitate them in the classroom. However, according to this research, student educators reported the unavailability of

applicable resources necessary for dealing with language as a barrier to learning. The majority of mainstream schools can promote the linguistic, social and academic development of second language learners in English; however, general educators have not been trained to address the educational needs of these learners in a classroom setting (Salend & Dorney, 1997). This could be rectified by cooperative teaching arrangements between bilingual special education teachers and general education teachers (Salend & Dorney, 1997). This is seen to remedy the problem as many general educators are not always adequately trained and equipped to cater specifically for the needs of the students who are learning in their second, third or even sometimes forth language (Landsberg, 2005; Salend & Dorney, 1997; Wylde, 2007). However, in South African schools the joining of bilingual special educators and general educators has been limited (Salend & Dorney, 1997).

Emotional barriers to learning are seen to include students who have been affected by divorce, disintegration of family life, single parent households or lack of support structures. In South Africa, many students are exposed to violence and crime which affects students' emotional wellbeing; this can include deprivation, neglect and abuse. According to Hays (2009), socio-economic and challenging behaviour is seen to fall under the category of emotional barriers to learning. In South African schools, behaviour control among the students can be a challenging and often unsuccessful endeavour taken on by educators. This difficult behaviour could include negative attitudes, oppositional behaviour, aggression and lack of respect for fellow students and educators (Hays, 2009). Salend & Dorney (1997) stated that the behaviour of a student is seen to be related to that individual's cultural perspective and language background, this may then cause conflicts as the behaviour of the students may not be the same as the expectations educators may have within the classroom (Salend & Dorney, 1997). These cultural conflicts may lead educators to view the student negatively and as having a 'deficit', this then often results in educators

believing that specialised educational services are the only way to assist that student (Salend & Dorney, 1997).

Studies have shown a common uncertainty about the suitability of including children with profound sensory deficits, low cognitive ability, mild intellectual disability and hyperactivity in mainstream schools (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). However, contradictory studies found that educators ranked emotional and behavioural difficulties as being the most challenging to include within the classroom (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Avramidis, Baylis, Burden, 2000; Hays, 2009). Engelbrecht et al. (2003) indicated that apart from learners with behavioural or emotional difficulties, students with intellectual disabilities seem to provoke the most disagreement over the efficacy of inclusive education (Avramidis et al., 2000). Lifshits et al. (2004), believes that the inclusion of students with mild or moderate physical, sensory or medical handicaps do not need as much assistance compared to students with severe behavioural, intellectual or physical difficulties. Like Avramidis et al. (2000) they also found that some educators favoured the inclusion of students with hearing impairments or physical handicaps rather than students who experienced academic or behavioural problems. These factors have resulted in negative attitudes towards inclusion being formed when educators were placed in classrooms with these students, as also noted by Burke & Sutherland (2004).

Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) stipulates the establishment of three different types of schools that should provide the structures to accommodate students who experience barriers to learning and development. This includes special schools as resource centres for students that need high intensity support. These schools are aimed at providing professional support for neighbouring schools (Landsberg, 2005). Another level of school is the full service school, where medium intensity support students are integrated. The third level is the ordinary schools or mainstream schools, where students that need low intensity support are included

(Landsberg, 2005; Hays, 2009). Research has indicated that in developing countries like South Africa, special needs education requires more financial and human resources than mainstream education. Due to the lack of these resources to these resource centre schools, the majority of them are not highly considered by the community which results in students attending mainstream schools where their barriers to learning may not be optimally addressed (Hays, 2009).

Past research has involved educators' attitudes towards students with intellectual disabilities (Gaad, 2004; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007), however, there appears to be more limited research involving educators' perceptions towards students with emotional and behavioural problems even though these were ranked as the hardest to include (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Avramidis et al., 2000; Hays, 2009). This current research aims at exploring educators' perceptions towards all the barriers to learning which they may experience within the classroom and not just particularly intellectual functioning.

Chapter 2: Educators perceptions of inclusive education

2. Factors that may influence educators' perceptions towards inclusive education

Educators need to ensure that students with barriers to learning are provided with opportunities, just like other students, to construct and engage with knowledge necessary for living in society (Chappell, 2008). Many educators feel that teaching children with barriers to learning is beyond their area of expertise and so they should not be expected to teach those students without assistance (Engelbrecht, 2006; Gaad, 2004; Fox, 2003). Educators have reported several obstacles that prevent the successful inclusion of all learners in the classroom; namely class size, lack of resources and teacher training (Lifshitz, Glaubman & Issawi, 2004). Past research has shown that regular educators lack the appropriate knowledge, support and assistance needed to effectively meet all the needs of their students (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). Engelbrecht et al. (2003), identified five areas that are proposed to be the most stressful to eduactors, namely administrative issues, lack of appropriate support, issues relating to students behaviour, educators self percieved competence and a lack of interaction with parents of students. O'Rourke & Houghton (2008), found that the percieved lack of teaching expertise, limited allocated planning time and a limitation of resources were the most frequently raised concerns in relation to the implementaion of inclusive education.

The perceived needs of educators who are seen to accommodate a diversity of learner needs in mainstream classes needs to be addressed (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). The failure to address the educators' needs and concerns may result in difficulties with the implementation of inclusive education as well as contribute to educator stress. Inclusive education aims to eliminate barriers to learning which are inherent in the system itself, which may consist of physical barriers to access, curriculum barriers or barriers that are created by the climate of the learning environment, to name

a few (Engelbrecht et al., 2001). The barriers educators experience in implementing inclusive education practices will be discussed in detail as it often affects perceptions towards inclusion.

2.1. Teacher attitudes towards inclusive education

Landsberg (2005) states that assumptions, beliefs and attitudes are directly translated into actions and teaching practices and can also then inform decision making. Attitudes are defined as educators' positive or negative perceptions of what is happening within their classroom with regard to the students who have barriers to learning (Cross, Traub, Hutter-Pishgahi & Shelton, 2004) 2009). It is fundamental to look at educators attitudes towards inclusive education and students with barriers to learning as it influences their perceptions as well as their behaviour, actions and as a result their teaching practices that will inform their decision making (Engelbrecht et al., 2001; Moolla, 2005). Attitudes are seen to be set once they are formed and are experienced to be very difficult to change, therefore if educators develop positive attitudes towards inclusion before they start teaching, then their attitudes towards implementing inclusive education will become more positive (Lambe & Bones, 2007). Research has indicated that educators often have very different definitions of inclusion and inclusive education, and the definition that they believe in is seen to affect the way educators implement inclusive practices in the classroom (Hays, 2009).

A limited number of studies have been conducted on the attitudes of educators towards inclusion in South Africa (Schimper, 2004; Wylde, 2007; Hays, 2009; Gordon, 2000; Christie, 1998). Research conducted by Schimper (2004) and Wylde (2007) reported that the majority of their respondents were positive towards inclusive education, and this indicated the educators dedication to the underlying rationale for the practice of inclusive education. Studies that have been done on educators attitudes towards inclusive education have suggested that attitudes are strongly influenced by the nature of the students disabilities. Educators were seen to be more positive towards including learners with barriers to learning do not require extra instructional or

management skills on the part of the educator (Engelbrecht et al., 2003; Hays, 2009). There is evidence that suggests that educators' improved positive self-evaluation regarding their ability to teach students with barriers to learning was associated with higher positive attitudes towards inclusive education (Lifshitz et al., 2004).

Another possible reason why inclusion has struggled in South Africa is due to the African culture and beliefs on disabilities (Gaad, 2004). Many Africans associate disabilities with witchcraft, juju or as a phenomenon of God mediated forces. Many negative attitudes towards disabilities stem from these previously held misconceptions and the lack of proper understanding towards the medical side of disabilities (Gaad, 2004). These perceptions may filter down into the community, school and the educators whose attitudes and perceptions could hinder the effective implementation of inclusive education (Gaad, 2004).

2.2. Educator Stress

Educator stress is best described as a complex process that involves an interaction between the educator and the environment that includes a stressor(s) and a response (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). This is seen to involve unpleasant emotions such as tension, frustration, anxiety, anger as well as depression (Engelbrecht et al., 2003; Moolla, 2005). Educators are seen to experience four types of stress in terms of their profession. These being namely, difficulties with learners, time pressures, poor ethos due to poor staff relations and poor working conditions (Engelbrecht et al., 2003; Engelbrecht, 2006; Moolla, 2005). The implementation of inclusive education could be seen to place additional demands on educators, potentialy causing stress. It is assumed that educator stress will be reduced if there are minimal discrepancies between educators' perceptions of the availability of resources and support and their perceived need for those resources and support that are seen to be used in an inclusive educational environment (Engelbrecht et al., 2003).

2.3. Curriculum related issues

The curriculum within a school reflects the economic, social and cultural conditions of the community and gives all members of society a voice (Chappell, 2008). However, this is not always that easy to achieve. Educators were expected to shift their teaching to Outcomes Based Education (OBE), this resulted in many educators feeling overwhelmed, frustrated and helpless due to the changes that occurred (Engelbrecht et al., 2001). OBE is 'inclusive' by nature and focuses on students learning at their own pace, and takes into consideration the barriers to learning found in the classroom (Hays, 2009; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). Educators became concerned and worried about meeting governmental standards that the Educational Department emphasised and then also meeting the individualised goals for each special needs student (Cushing et al., 2005). The governmental standards educators need to meet involves the adapting of the Government Curriculum as well as their teaching styles in order for inclusion to become successful (Burke & Sutherland, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 1999). Research has indicated that educators are generally too inexperienced to be able to handle the demands of the new curriculum (Curriculum 2005), and this could result in educators being reluctant to introduce new concepts and approaches to their teaching (Hays, 2009). Recently, Curriculum 2005 has changed and this may require educators to once again adapt themselves to further changes. This is due to many educators perceiving themselves as incapable of managing diverse classrooms (Hays, 2009).

The curriculum is classified as an inflexible standard, which results in the lack of relevance of subject content to all students. This could result in high levels of failures and drop outs (Department of Education, 2001; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). The curriculum is seen to be an external barrier to learning and it therefore obliges educators to use different teaching methods to address these concerns (Hays, 2009). Therefore, curriculum differentiation is a vitally important aspect to assist in the effective implementation of inclusive education (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). Ghesquiere, Moors, Maes and Vanddenberghe (2002) indicated that educators differentiated

teaching methods in the hope of differentiating the curriculum; however, the educators in their study did not adapt the goals, content and evaluation methods to each individual need. Avramidis et al. (2000), reported that educators perceived material resources as vital components in adapting the curriculum to students with different barriers to learning. Changes to existing educational aids are fundamental to enable students to participate in classroom activities and routines (Hays, 2009; Wylde, 2007).

O'Rourke & Houghton (2008) and Moolla (2005) mentioned mechanisms or skills that are effective in the implementation of inclusive education, these being co-operative learning, explicit and indivualised instruction, peer support, curriculum differentiation and instructional strategies as well as teacher collaboration. Shongwe (2005) reported the following effective strategies for teaching in an inclusive classroom, namely group work, which provides support for students with barriers to learning from their educators and their peers in the classroom. Group work may also create a better understanding of cooperative learning and is beneficial to effective classroom management (Shongwe, 2005). Fox (2003) stated that if educators used a structured teaching style, and appropriate support was provided, then the successful inclusion of students, irrespective of the type or severity of their barrier to learning is possible.

2.4. Training issues

In South Africa, teacher education has been characterised by fragmentation and involves deep disparities in both duration and quality (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). Many educators are seen to be disadvantaged due to their poor quality of their training within the field (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). Research has indicated the need for professional development including initial teacher training and continued professional development as being central to the effective development of inclusive practices (Avramidis et al., 2000; Pearson & Chambers, 2005).

In the past, in-service training was predominantly provided by universities, teacher training colleges and non-governmental or private organisations (Logan, 2002). These were generally uncoordinated with no clear overall policy guidelines formulated by government education departments (Logan, 2002). This resulted in educators determining their own development programmes to be able to meet the needs and knowledge necessary (Logan, 2002). The problems found with these in-service training programmes were that they were predominantly inaccessible to all educators in South Africa; this was due to their cost, entry criteria and qualifications, language proficiency of the educators, travelling costs as well as the workload (Logan, 2002). All of these factors mentioned created barriers that prevented educators from benefiting from theses training services.

Internationally funded government programmes within South Africa like The Danish Development Agency (DANIDA project) and the South African-Finnish Co-operation Programme in the Education Sector (SCOPE) funded various in-service programmes in which a cascade model was used to introduce and support inclusive education in several South African provinces (Amod, 2004; Logan, 2002). The cascade model was designed for one or two representatives from each school to attend the programmes and then relate the knowledge and skills they learnt to their fellow colleagues (Engelbrecht, 2006). Problems occurred when representatives had to transfer their knowledge and skills to their colleagues, who often seemed disinterested in the activity or time constraints made it impossible to relay all the information (Engelbrecht, 2006). Another cause for the poor outcomes of training programmes in South Africa has been poor teacher collaboration, which has resulted in educators working in isolation (Logan, 2002). The absence of a team or whole school approach in many school districts results in external professional development courses being restricted to individual educators and classrooms; this resulted in small pockets of students benefiting (Logan, 2002).

Studies have shown that professional development courses on inclusive education have resulted in less resistance towards inclusive practices by educators and a reduction in educators stress levels when coping with inclusion (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). Educators' prior knowledge of inclusive education from pre-service training, as well as in-service training were found to have more positive attitudes towards inclusion than teachers who had not gained that knowledge (Downing & Williams, 1997; Hays, 2009; Logan, 2002; Wylde, 2007). Training that involves administrative issues surrounding inclusive education, exposure to the best inclusive practices, collaboration with colleagues and parents, as well as the availability of support structures are viewed as fundamental aspects of educator training in inclusive education (Amod, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 2003). Engelbrecht et al. (2003) stated that educators should be provided with extensive training in managing emotional and behavioural problems of students in the classroom in an attempt to address barriers to learning within the classroom.

Educators that were trained to teach students with barriers to learning expressed more positive attitudes towards inclusion compared to educators that had not had any previous training (Lambe & Bones, 2007; Lifshitz et al., 2004). Research has suggested that students who complete a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course have very different school experiences and are often exposed to different levels of barriers to learning in the classroom, which has resulted those universities to assess their training course to allow all educators to be exposed to the same teaching experiences (Pearson & Chambers, 2005). The researchers of this study found that students were largely positive about the principle of inclusion, however, challenged by the implementation of the policies. Emotional and behavioural changes were seen to occur when educators were informed and exposed to practical experiences involving disabilities and barriers to learning (Lifshitz et al., 2004). A study conducted by Lambe and Bones (2006) found that positive attitudes are seen in student educators at the start of their pre-service training, it concluded that educators attitudes

should be nurtured during that period and this could be done by the provision of high quality training.

Research conducted by Engelbrecht (2006) found that in-service training for South African educators was fragmented and short term and often lacked in-depth content and knowledge. These training programmes often do not take into consideration the unique contextual influences of each school. The National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) criticised the trainers of many of these programmes for discouraging educators from being critical and asking questions within the training programmes (Logan, 2002). Inclusive education would be a difficult task if there is no future education and training for educators. This is due to the proven fact that educators' perceptions or attitudes become more favourable and positive with more training in the inclusive policies and skills (Amod, 2004; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Thomas et al., 1998). A study completed by Scott (2006), reflected the frustration educators felt towards promised classroom support and curriculum training by the government. As these studies mentioned above purely focused on educators perceptions of the training courses, this study needs to take into consideration that perceptions represent subjective experiences and not always reality. Educators may have had excellent training in reality but they may have perceived it to be insufficient and unhelpful (Hays, 2009; Logan, 2002). The researcher reiterates the views of others such as Logan (2002) and Moolla (2005) on how possible training in South Africa can become given the large amount of educators needing training with the limited financial resources available.

2.5. Support structures and systems

In the past, the inadequate resources provided to mainstream education was seen to be the cause of educational stress for educators interested in helping students with special needs (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). The active involvement of parents is a central factor in the child's effective learning and

development (Amod, 2004; Burke & Sutherland, 2004; Hammond et al., 2003; Engelbrecht et al., 2003). The South African Schools Act mentions the recognition of parents as the primary caregivers of their children and therefore they are the central resource to the education system. This however, does not occur frequently in government schools and educators report the increase of stress surrounding the limited contact with parents of students especially with intellectual disabilities. The socio-economic status of the parents was seen to be the main contributor of parents' lack of involvement with their child's education (Amod, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 2003). The reasons for this may be due to the difficulty for parents to attend after school meetings, parents who work long distances away from home as well as poor health affecting their ability to get involved in school activities. In poorer communities, educators need to take initiative to reach out to parents to make them a part of the school community (Engelbrecht et al., 2003).

The support provided to educators, namely from parents, principals, colleagues and special needs educators is often lacking in schools or just ineffective in helping the educators deal with the pressures of inclusive education (Hammond et al., 2003; Burke & Sutherland, 2004). Educators have reported the need for consultation with other professionals namely psychologists, speech and language therapists to name a few (Moolla, 2005; Shongwe, 2005). Engelbrecht et al. (2001) and Amod (2004) mentioned the enabling structures and mechanisms that could be put into place to help support educators. These include the establishment of school-based support teams (SBST), district support teams (DST), special schools as resources, School Governing Body (SGB), School-Based Staff Development Programmes (SBSDT) as well as the use of local community resources, and learner-to-learner support. A study completed by Avramidis et al. (2000), reported that 56% of educators stated they needed more support with students with barriers to learning, this was not just more people in the class (extra teachers) but a stronger Special Educational Needs Department and Learning Support Team.

Students with barriers to learning are often seen to require social support in an inclusive classroom. This is broadly viewed as the process by which individuals feel valued, cared for, and connected to a group of people which as a result will shape that individuals values, belief systems and thought processes (Pavri & Monda-Amaya, 2001). The sense of belonging and membership at school, recieving instrumental assistance and emotional support from key members in ones social network, impacts positively on the social well being of students with barriers to learning (Pavri & Monda-Amaya, 2001; Wylde, 2007). Research indicates that inclusive classrooms promote reciprocal friendships between students with learning difficulties and their peers, and this then enhances students social satisfaction at school (Pavri & Monda-Amaya, 2001; Shongwe, 2005). However, there is conflicting research that indicates that inclusive education could be disasterous to disabled peers, detrimental to students with no barriers to learning and students with barriers to learning may suffer from peer rejection and inferiority complexes (Shongwe, 2005; Wylde, 2007).

Studies have reported that students without any particular barriers to learning become more accepting, understanding and acknowledge similarities with students with special educational needs when they are exposed to them in the classroom (Downing & Williams, 1997). These students become more aware of other children's needs, more comfortable around people with disabilities, more accepting of differences as well as an improved social and emotional development (Downing & Williams, 1997; Hays, 2009). However, even though inclusive education can be a positive factor to students with no barriers to learning, it is also reported to be detrimental to these students at times (Shongwe, 2005). This can be due to parents reporting educators' lack of time spent assisting all learners in the class (Shongwe, 2005).

2.6. Educators personal characteristics

Research has shown mixed views on the relationship between educators' age and gender and their views towards inclusive education. Avramidis et al. (2000) stated that none of those variables were

found to be significantly related to educators' attitudes. Research conducted in South Africa did not produce any significant relationships between the age of the educator and their attitudes towards inclusive education (Wylde, 2007). In contrast Parasuram (2006) reported that educators in the age range of 20-30 years had more positive attitudes towards inclusion compared to 40-50 year olds (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Christie, 1998). This could be due to the younger generation being exposed to changes such as globalisation, information technology and internet growth (Parasuram, 2006). Some studies found that woman tend to have more positive attitudes towards people with disabilities (Parasuram, 2006; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002), while others reported that gender was not related to attitudes towards inclusive education (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002).

Research has also shown mixed views on the relationship between the number of years of teaching experience and educators' views towards inclusive education. According to a study reported by Parasuram (2006), educators who had 5-10 years experience had more favourable or positive attitudes compared to those with 10 to 12 years experience. A recent study conducted in South Africa showed that educators who had been teaching for 12 years or more really struggled to change their perceptions towards effective teaching methods (Scott, 2006). The inability to adapt their teaching methods can result in added stress for educators which could possibly result in negative perceptions towards inclusive education (Scott, 2006; Lambe & Bones, 2007). The amount of years educators have been in contact with special education needs students is also an important factor to consider (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Lambe & Bones, 2007; Avramidis, et al., 2000; Hays, 2009). Avramindis & Norwich (2002), found that the more experience educators had with special needs students the more favourable their attitudes towards inclusion tended to be and the more confident the educators became. However, according to a study conducted by Moolla (2005), the majority of educators reported limited experience working with students with barriers to learning and this resulted in educators' lack of confidence to teaching in new situations.

2.7. Class size

A very commonly reported barrier to effective learning in an inclusive classroom is class size (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Shongwe, 2005; Wylde, 2007). The more students with barriers to learning in a class, the less time is given to all the other students as majority of special education needs students need more one-on-one time from the educators (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Avramidis et al. (2000) reported that educators agreed that class size should be reduced to 20 students per class, in order to allow for the effective implementation of inclusive education. Educators also may struggle with too many students as the discipline and behaviour issues become more of a problem. Many of the barriers to learning mentioned above relate to the insufficient allocated time educators have in order to fully address inclusive education practices, namely time to plan the following day and time to adapt the curriculum in order to address the students with barriers to learning (Avramidis, et al., 2000).

Due to all these barriers to learning mentioned above, it can be seen that it is vital to take into account the unique context of the school when planning and developing inclusive educational programmes (Engelbrecht, 2006). Research has indicated that while educators support inclusive education on the whole, many have concerns regarding its implementation (Amod, 2004; Hays, 2009). Salisbury (2006, pg. 70) states "The capacity of schools to address the diverse needs of students who differ in their ability, language, culture and socio-economic standing will require that schools alter not only their structures, policies and practices, but the underlying philosophy of the school and the attitudes and beliefs of school personnel".

2.8. Conclusion

In some international government schools where inclusive education is a law, there are many examples where students with barriers to learning are fully included and successful. However,

most of the time the implementation of these policies is the real challenge (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). Without a strong view on the development of an inclusive education and training system for educators, the goal of implementing inclusive education throughout South Africa will not become a reality (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Hays, 2009). Education White paper 6 defined one aspect of inclusive education and training that is vitally important in this research. This is the ability to change perceptions, attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and the environment in order to meet the needs for all students (Department of Education, 2001). This study aims to research the perceptions of educators as perceptions can only be changed if you know what they are to begin with and by changing people's perceptions often their behaviour can be changed as well. The way that inclusion is perceived by educators is seen to impact significantly on the way students' barriers to learning are perceived and addressed.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology used within the research study. It begins by describing the aims and methods used for the investigation and then describe the methodology used in the study.

3.1 Aims and Research Questions

The aim of this research study was: To explore educators' perceptions towards inclusive education.

The specific research questions in relation to the above aim of the study were:

i) What are the educators' views and understanding of inclusive education within a sample of government primary schools?

ii) What do educators perceive to be barriers to learning within the classroom?

iii) What are the skills educators think they need in order to implement inclusive education?

iv) What are the support structures educators use to assist them in the implementation of inclusive education?

v) What are the training programmes educators have participated in involving inclusive education and their perceptions of these training programmes?

vi) What are other training programmes educators would like to assist them in implementing inclusive education?

vii) Is there a relationship between the number of years of teaching experience and the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education?

3.2. Context of the study

In the current study six government primary schools in the Gauteng region participated in the research. Government schools were used within this study as they follow the policy of Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of education,

2001). These six schools selected were from the Johannesburg East District and were all located in the northern suburbs of Gauteng. These schools had different numbers of educators who taught from Grade 0 to Grade 9 in a co-ed environment. According to the School Survey Checklist, all the schools fall within a similar socio-economic bracket in terms of resources present at each school. Many of the schools in this current study do not have specialised professionals at the school, however, they stated that they have professionals to whom they refer students and with whom they communicate with on a regular basis. All the schools in this study indicated that they had no ramps for wheelchairs, and this will be discussed in terms of barriers to learning within the discussion section. The schools were not consistent with the relation of the number of students per educator within a class, and as a result this fluctuated between less than 30 students to one educator to 40 students per one educator, the average being in the range of one educator per 30 to 35 students. The results of the ratio of students per class teacher will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

3.3. Research Design

As the aim of this study was to explore educators' perceptions towards inclusive education, a qualitative research design approach appeared to be the appropriate strategy to use. The aim of a qualitative research design is to understand experiences as they are 'lived' or 'felt' according to each individual (Sherman & Webb, 1988). The research was a non-experimental, descriptive study that used a survey approach to explore the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education. The non-experimental design described by Terre Blanche & Durrheim (2002) was used to meet the descriptive nature and aims of the study.

3.4. Sampling

A non-probability sampling method of convenience sampling (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002) was used and the sample was chosen according to their geographic location. This is due to the studies aim to focus on a wide range of government primary schools in the Gauteng region. The sample size of this study was aimed at approximately 100 educators in total, from the selected ten government primary schools in Gauteng. However, after all questionnaires were collected from the schools only six schools had collected completed the Inclusive Education Questionnaires (Appendix B) while the other four schools responded that the educators were too busy and none had responded. After collecting all the completed forms from the six schools, only forty Inclusive Education Questionnaires (Appendix B) were collected in total.

In relation to sample description, there were equal amounts of educators from the ages of 20 – 30 years as there were educators above the age of 30 years. The majority of the sample (53%) of the sample had less than 5 years of teaching experience and had been teaching at their current school for less than 5 years (70%).

3.5. Instruments

The principals of the government primary schools that participated in the study completed the School Survey Checklist, which involved a checklist of resources available in the school and the demographic data of each school (Appendix E). Each Checklist was allocated a unique two digit code that was then placed on the Inclusive Education Surveys that the educators completed. This was used to maintain the confidentiality of the participants as no identifying information was required. The School Survey Checklists took approximately five minutes to complete by each principal. The questions included the number of learners in the school, the teacher-pupil ratio,

physical resources, teaching materials and human resources that are present in the school. This helped form part of the demographic data for each school that participated in this research study.

The educators who participated in this study completed the Inclusive Education Questionnaire, which was a self adapted questionnaire that involved different aspects related to the implementation of inclusive education. Internal consistency of the questionnaire was measured using Cronbach Alpha coefficient (Huck, 2004). Initially the result of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.65 which is a weak result according to the reliability of the test. The researcher removed Question i and j from the analysis which related to the perception of inclusive education being successful at different schools. The therapist then reran the reliability which yielded a more positive Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.8. The questionnaire consisted of three biographical questions to describe the sample: the number of years the participants had been teaching, the number of years they had been teaching at their current school and their age range. Each Inclusive Education Questionnaire that was administered was given a unique two digit code (same as the one used on the School Survey Checklist) and a unique number that gave each questionnaire a separate coding system. The questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire was based on previous questionnaires developed by Schimper (2004) and subsequently used by Wylde (2007). The questionnaire originally devised by Schimper (2004) consisted of a 44 questions based on a Likert type scale. The quantitative type questions (question 5 of the Inclusive Education Questionnaire) were adapted from Wyldes' (2007) Inclusion Questionnaire. Fifteen questions from Wylde's (2007) questionnaire were chosen as they aimed at addressing necessary perceptions towards inclusive education. Question 5 of the Inclusive Education Questionnaire is broken up into 15 questions (from a to o). These questions are Likert type questions on a five point rating scale going from strongly agree (which indicates negative perceptions) to strongly disagree (which indicates positive perceptions). Three of these questions,

namely question c, h, and i are of a reverse scoring nature and will relate strongly agree to more positive perceptions and vice versa. The reverse scoring questions will be reversed when they are analysed, to prevent any misunderstandings.

The qualitative questions devised involved the educators' perceptions of inclusive education, barriers to learning, skills necessary for inclusive educational practices as well as perceptions on the training programmes educators have attended. In Section B of the Inclusive Education Questionnaire open ended questions were formulated in order to gain a better understanding of educators' perceptions towards inclusive education. Question 1, 2 and 5 addressed Research Question 1 in order to gain information on the views and understanding educators had towards inclusive education. Question 3 and 4 addressed Research Question 2 which gained insight into the educators' perceived barriers to learning that they find within the classroom. Question 6 and 7 addressed Research Question 3 as it looked at the skills necessary for inclusive education to be successful. Question 8 addressed Research Question 4 which looked at the support structures of the school, Question 9 and 10 addressed Research Question 5 and Question 11 addressed Research Question 6 which both looked at the training programmes on inclusive education. Research Question 7 looked at the demographic data obtained from each participant and then analysed the results to educators' perceptions towards inclusive education.

Pilot testing was completed on a sample of six educators from government primary schools that were not part of the sample used in the study. The pilot testing assisted the researcher to make modifications to the questionnaire based on the educators' written and verbal comments. Pilot testing of the questionnaire indicated that the questions were fairly easy to understand and no modifications to the language were necessary. The sample used in the pilot testing were all recently qualified educators and as a result reported pre-service training was received in the past year. However, after data analysis the researcher realised that Question 9a should have been

adapted to include any training done and not just in the past year. The pilot study also indicated the need to allocate the participants more time to complete the questionnaire as many of the educators responded that it took them longer than 30 minutes to complete. Participants of this study were then allocated two weeks to complete the questionnaire, as the educators did not have 30 minutes or more to complete the questionnaire with the researcher present.

3.6. Procedure

The procedure for the study was:

(i) An open ended questionnaire (with a quantitative question) was designed to investigate the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education. (See Appendix B)

(ii) Written permission to conduct the study was gained from the Gauteng Department of Education research officials. (See Appendix G)

(iii) The principals of the schools selected for the sample were approached telephonically to determine whether they were willing to allow their educators to participate in the study.

(iv) Once permission was obtained from the principals, they were handed the Principal Information Sheet (See Appendix C) and requested to sign the Principal Consent Form (See Appendix D) and complete the School Survey Checklist. (See Appendix E)

(v) Each School Survey Checklist was given a two digit coding system that assisted the researcher in identifying each school and the relevant data that was obtained from the educators.

(vi) Once consent was obtained from the principals, a meeting was held with the educators of each school. In this meeting an overview of the research study was presented to the educators by the researcher. Request for participation in the study was strictly on a volunteer basis.

(vii) Educators that wished to partake in the study were handed the Participant Information Sheet (See Appendix A) as well as the Inclusive Education Questionnaire. (See Appendix B)

(viii) Due to school time constraints the researcher was allocated 30 minutes with the educators to discuss the study and allow the educators to fill in the Inclusive Education Questionnaire. Educators took the questionnaires with them and were requested to place them in the sealed box that was placed in each staff room. Consent for educators' participation in the study was obtained by them completing the Inclusive Education Questionnaire (Appendix B).

(ix) Completed questionnaires were placed in the allocated box and collected by the researcher two week later. All completed questionnaires were then allocated a code to correlate with the School Survey Checklist (Appendix E) completed by the principals. The coding system was assigned to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

(x) Once all of the data was collected it was analysed and all information obtained was kept confidential and only seen by the researcher and the supervisor.

3.7. Data Analysis

The final results of this study were analysed using qualitative analysis and a number of appropriate statistical tests. The open ended questions of the Inclusive Education Questionnaire were analysed qualitatively by examining and categorising the results into themes for further description and analysis. Thematic content analysis was used as it emphasises both the commonalities and the differences found in the educators' responses and relates them to the dominant themes found within the research (Breakwell, Hammond, Fife-Schaw & Smith, 2006). Thematic content analysis was used to identify, analyse and report patterns or themes within a set of data. It is able to minimally organise and describe the data set in rich detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In order to increase the validity and reliability of the results, data was analysed by reading and re-reading the

questionnaire responses, assigning codes to portions of the data and then identifying emerging themes (Maxwell, 1992). The researcher reached theoretical saturation when no more new themes emerged from the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The quantitative section was analysed using a variety of statistical tests. For analysis of the descriptive statistics, Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used. Descriptive statistics, as outlined in Howell (2002), was used to describe the set of data that had been obtained from the results of the questionnaire. Question 5 of the questionnaire comprised of Likert-Type questions in which educators rated their perceptions of certain aspects of inclusive education from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Before responses from the Likert-Type scale could be analysed, all items that were negatively phrased were reversed, for example, "strongly disagree" was changed to 1, "disagree" to 2, "agree" to 4 and "strongly agree" to 5. Only the "neutral" rating did not change. With this reversal, any score that is above 3.5 is considered to be a positive response whereas a score below 2.5 is considered to be a negative response.

When comparing the number of years teaching, number of years teaching at the present school and age of the educators with educators overall perceptions towards inclusive education, a parametric test (t-test) was used. A t- test was run, as the data was interval data, and a test for normality was checked as well as a test for homogeneity in variance was tested which all indicated that a parametric test should be utilised. The categories for the number of years teaching was compressed to two categories, namely less than 10 years and 11 years and above. The categories for the number of years teaching at the present school were also compressed to two categories, namely less than 5 years and more than 6 years. Then finally the categories for the ages of the participants were compressed to two categories, namely below 30 years of age and above 30 years of age. Each of these categories described above became the independent variable for the analysis.

3.8. Ethical considerations

The researcher adhered to the ethical standards laid down by the University of the Witwatersrand Ethics Committee (Non-medical) for research involving human subjects.

Written permission was obtained from the principals of the schools to conduct the research, and an information letter was handed to all principals (Appendix C). The educators were also given information letters (Appendix A) and then invited to participate in the study. Consent was assumed from the participants once completion of the Inclusive Education Questionnaire was achieved. Participation within the study was voluntary, and there would be no benefit or disadvantage for participating in the study. The participants could withdrawal from the study at any point without any negative consequences such as victimisation. Participants were informed that they could refuse to answer any questions they were uncomfortable with, as many questions require participants' personal experiences and perceptions which they may find difficult to divulge honestly. Confidentiality and anonymity were respected since identifying information was not asked for from the participants. A coding system was used to identify each returned questionnaire with the School Survey Checklist that was completed by the principal. The Inclusive Education Questionnaires were placed by the participants into a sealed box, and were only accessed by the researcher and the supervisor. The raw data was kept in a locked drawer by the researcher and destroyed post-qualification. A final summary of the research report will be forwarded to the principals involved in the study at their request.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter aims to present the results of the research study based on an analysis of qualitative as well as quantitative data obtained. The following research questions will be addressed:

i. What are the educators' views and understanding of inclusive education within a sample of government primary schools?
ii. What do educators perceive to be barriers to learning within the classroom?
iii. What are the skills educators think they need in order to implement inclusive education?
iv. What are the support structures educators use to assist them in the implementation of inclusive education?
v. What are the training programmes educators have participated in involving inclusive education and their perceptions of these training programmes?
vi. What are other training programmes educators would like to assist them in implementing inclusive education?
vii. Is there a relationship between the number of years of teaching experience and the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education?

4.1. Educators' views and understanding of inclusive education

4.1.1. Educators understanding of inclusive education

Participants were asked to express their understanding of inclusive education, and to give a simplified definition of what this approach meant to them. The results indicate that the participants saw inclusive education falling under the following four categories or themes. Namely, viewing inclusive education being based on an individual's basis of ability or disability, being a right of all children, policy perspective of inclusive education and the school being an extension of society.

The majority of the responses given (75%; n=30) indicated the basis of inclusive education involved students with different ability levels and different forms of disability. This was seen to occur in mainstream schools and required the teaching ability on the educators' behalf in order to effectively teach these students with barriers to learning. For example a respondent said that inclusive education was: *"Incorporating all learners into one learning environment despite their abilities or disabilities".* Some participants (15%; n=6) felt that inclusive education is a right for all children and all children should receive the same education. It involves the principles of equality, quality, fairness that involves students' "background, religion, gender, race, nationality or even disability". A participant stressed the need to not deny students education in the following quotation, *"You are not allowed to deny anyone education. May not discriminate against anyone. Everyone is equal and are allowed to be educated in the way they choose".*

Only three participants (8%) mentioned the inclusive educational policies, for example Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) and the curriculum change that is necessary for inclusive education to be successfully implemented. One of the responses that indicated policy perspectives was, *"I understand it is a system that came into existence because of what is contained in our S.A constitution. i.e. Human rights, dignity and celebrating our diversity and similarities. It is an education that includes all learners irrespective of their barrier status. Curriculum adaptation is allowed to cater/make provisions for learners with special needs. It is a system that needs to eradicate labelling of learners with special needs. According to White Paper 6 – systems in schools should be transformed to accommodate the full range of learning needs and establish a caring and humane/ubuntu society".* Only one participant reported the benefits of inclusive education to the community and society of that individual. This stressed the role of the community, parents and education departments in the implementation of inclusive education in schools.

4.1.2. Educators' perceptions towards inclusive education

Even though the participants had a fairly good understanding of inclusive education, their perceptions and feelings towards inclusive education were mixed. Fifty percent of the respondents (n=20) reported positive perceptions towards inclusion including the feeling that inclusive education promotes student inclusion in the classroom. However, fifty percent of the respondents (n=20) reported negative perceptions towards inclusive education. The issues raised from the Inclusive Education Questionnaire included training, unrealistic expectations, resources, feelings of student exclusion, lack of ability to supply special attention, educators' personal negative views and class size. Figure 4.1 below summarizes participants' perceptions of inclusive education.

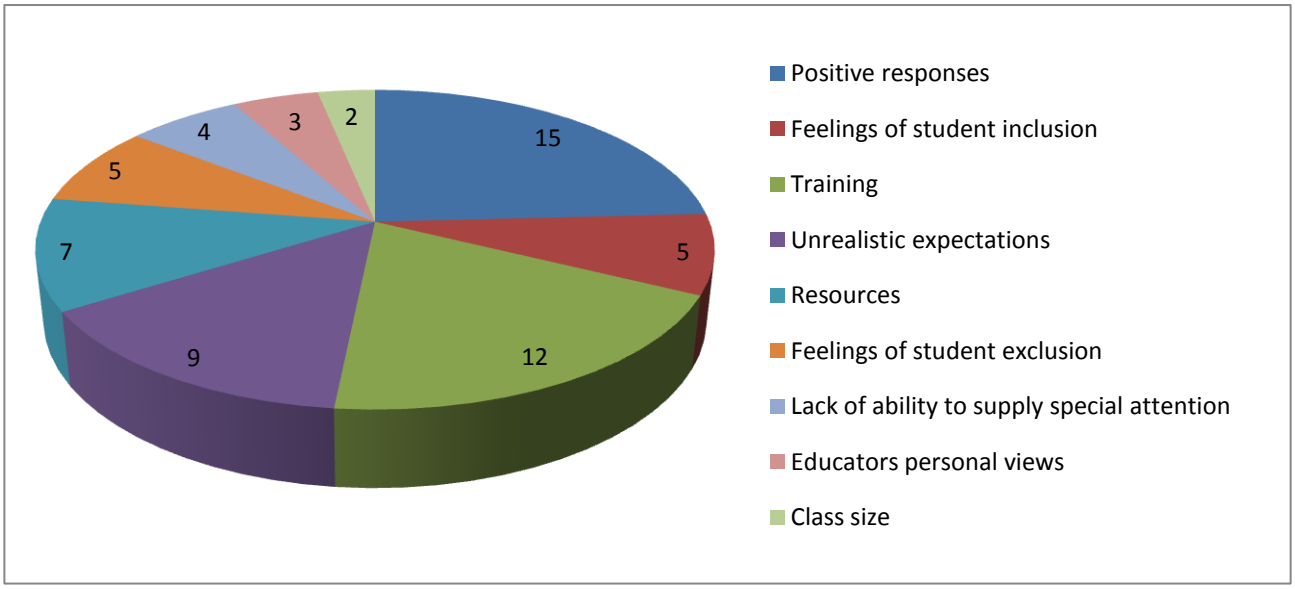


Figure 4.1: A summary of participants' perceptions towards inclusive education

Positive Responses

Fifty percent (n=20) of the responses were reported to be positive towards inclusive education. Some of the positive responses given in relation to inclusive education were very short, with little or no explanation for example *"Really good", "Support it"* and *"Positive"*. These responses seemed to lack any detail on what exactly the participants perception towards and what the benefits of inclusive education were. It seemed as though it was a politically correct type of

response, and what they have heard teachers should feel about inclusive education. The majority of the positive responses conclude with a "but" and then a reason or explanation why it may not work. This seems to indicate that educators' perception towards inclusive education is positive according to the theory of inclusive education, however, the participants seemed to doubt the thoughts and skills they encompass. Some of the responses included: *"I feel that it is important that children's needs are taken into consideration and as an educator I try my best, but in some cases learning difficulties and barriers are so severe, specialised education is necessary". "I agree with the fact that you must be able to choose where you want to be educated. But it's not always practical or possible to give enough attention to these learners".*

Another factor that was expressed by the participants as a positive outcome or perception towards inclusive education was the idea of the students feeling more included in the classroom and school environment. This indicates that the participants (13%; n=5) were able to express the benefit of inclusive education not only from a personal point of view, but also from the students' point of view. This can be seen in a response given by one of the participants, *"I think it is good because learners are integrated with the rest of the so called normal society and therefore society learns to accept differences and vice versa".* The descriptive statistics for Question c and h of the Inclusive Education Questionnaire (Appendix B) gave a detailed understanding of the participants' perceptions towards the benefit of including students into a mainstream classroom. Twenty eight percent of the participants (n=11) responded 'agree' and 'disagree' to the question "Learners who require specialise academic support gain in confidence and emotional security in a mainstream environment", while thirty percent (n=12) had a neutral response. This indicates that equal numbers of participants seem to have positive and negative perceptions towards the emotional benefit of inclusive education. While sixty two percent (n=24) of the participants agreed with the statement "I feel that inclusion provides an opportunity for learners to become accustomed to a

variety of people in a situation that is similar to the outside world", which indicates a more positive perception towards inclusive education.

Negative Responses

One participant responded positively towards the theory of inclusive education, "*In theory, and in the ideal world inclusion is the logical route for a progressive, enlightening democratic society, which has an abundance of diligent, well trained staff....".* However, this ideal view of inclusion seems to be followed by the negative realities of the education system. In this study fifty percent of the responses (n=20) were negative and despondent towards the system. Forty eight percent of the participants (n=19) 'agreed' with the statement "I think that some barriers to learning are just too difficult to overcome in the classroom" and this could indicate why the participants were reported to have negative perceptions towards inclusive education. The themes that emerged in terms of the negative perceptions towards inclusive education included inadequate training, unrealistic expectations of educators, inadequate resources, feelings of student exclusion, lack of ability to supply attention, and finally big class size. These themes will be discussed below in terms of the qualitative responses obtained from the participants as well as the descriptive statistics obtained from the Likert-type scale.

Inadequate training

Thirty percent of the participants (n=12) reported a negative perception towards inclusive education due to the lack of effective training programmes. The participants felt despondent towards their own lack of training in terms of the theory of inclusive education as well as the skills required to become an effective educator when dealing with barriers to learning. This was suggested in the following response: "*Schools cannot cope with it as ordinary educators often have no training in inclusive teaching. As a result they feel frustrated, helpless and*

disempowered". In terms of the responses, a sense of desperation was sensed according to what the participants felt they could handle. For example, a participant stated: *"How can you teach all learners when you were trained for a particular learner?".* According to the responses training is seen to be a 'cure' for many of the concerns and worries the participants felt towards inclusive education.

Unrealistic expectations of resources

Nine of the participants (23%) expressed their concerns over the unrealistic and often negative expectations that inclusive education is seen to require. Some of the responses included: *"Inclusion presumes a highly integrated and efficient education system and set of service providers. One needs to ask is this the case in South Africa?"* and *"It is frustrating because there is no such thing in the world".*

Lack of resources

The resources of the schools and of the community within which the school falls is expressed to have an impact on the participants views on inclusive education. Some participants (18%; n=7) felt that money, assistant teachers, remedial facilities, equipment and physical resources would be necessary to alleviate the difficulties with teaching students with barriers to learning. Two participants' reflected this concern about resources in these responses: *"Could work if the existing school were equipped with ramps and had the human and physical resources to assist these learners"* and *"It would be very difficult as our old school buildings do not lend themselves to inclusive education and they do not leave the capital to employ assistant educators".* The qualitative data indicated that money was an important resource, and according to Question k of the Inclusive Education Questionnaire (Appendix B) "I feel that inclusion is expensive" thirty three percent of the respondents (n=13) agreed with this statement. According to Question g (See

Appendix B), thirty percent (n=12) responded ‘disagree’ to the following statement “I feel that learners who require specialised academic support should remain in specialised or remedial schooling”, this indicates that those participants held a positive perception of inclusive education. However forty three percent of the participants (n=17) responded ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ which indicates that more negative perceptions towards inclusive education were seen in response to this question.

Feelings of student exclusion

Five participants mentioned the negative experiences of the students and how these students could possibly be disadvantaged. The comments involved students with barriers to learning as well as students with no special educational needs. This indicates that participants perceived that students education was being hindered due to inclusive education, as reflected in the following statements: *“...but equally could be disruptive to other children”. “These children I think feel out in a normal class, because the children are always looking at them. If they are in a school together you will not have this problem...”*. According to Question e, “I feel that learners who require specialised academic support are less capable intellectually than their mainstream peers” (See Appendix B), fifty six percent of the participants (n=22) responded ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’. This indicates that the participants do not perceive intellectual difficulties to be the difference between students with barriers to learning and students with no barriers to learning.

Lack of ability to supply special attention

Four participants in this study mentioned the difficulty in finding or creating time for students with barriers to learning. The participants stressed the importance of allocating students with barriers to learning special attention; however, according to the responses this is an extremely difficult task. According to the descriptive statistics ninety percent of the participants (n=36) responded ‘strongly

agree' and 'agree' to the statement "learners who require specialised academic support are demanding and require greater input". This indicates that the majority of the participants agree that these students require special attention and require greater input. Another finding of this study was that thirty eight percent of the participants (n=15) 'agreed' with the statement "I demand less of learners who require specialised academic support", however, thirty three percent of the participants 'disagreed' with this statement. This indicates that the participants have mixed perceptions towards demanding more from students with barriers to learning. One of the participants stated: *"I feel that some learners have special needs and benefit more from the more individual core they get in 'special' class"*. However forty five percent of the participants (n=18) disagreed with the statement "learners should be removed from the class to receive any specialised academic support". Only thirty three percent of the participants (n=13) agreed with this statement which indicates that some participants feel the need for special classes but the majority feel that students should be included within the mainstream class.

Class size

Only two participants stated that class size does affect the ability for inclusive education to be effective, as seen in the following quotation: *"When classes are large (over 40) it becomes difficult for children with no barriers to cope – those with difficulties have no choice".* However, seventy percent of the respondents (n=28) cumulatively 'strongly agreed' and 'agreed' with the statement "I feel that inclusion won't work at any schools that have too many learners in a class". This suggests that even though only a few participants mentioned class size, the majority agree that it is a barrier to learning.

4.2. Educators perceptions of barriers to learning within the classroom

The participants stressed the academic disadvantages of students with barriers to learning in an inclusive classroom. This was seen to result in students academic functioning and results becoming compromised. Most of the participants (84%; n=33) mentioned school performance being the main area where students with barriers to learning were seen to struggle. One of the responses that illustrated this view was: *"Barriers to learning will be all those things that hamper the learning process and prevent the learner from succeeding at school".* Two participants mentioned barriers to learning in a boarder aspect, reflecting on the child ability to perform outside of school. This is reflected in the following statement, *"The difficulties children have, which they must overcome in which to learn a sufficient amount in order to partake in society".*

4.2.1. Barriers to learning in the classroom

This question within the questionnaire required the participants to list the barriers to learning they encounter within the classroom and in the school itself. Originally twenty-one different themes emerged, and were condensed to six separate and broad themes. The themes mentioned will be ranked according to the number of participants who mentioned each theme. The six main themes identified to be barriers in the classroom were emotional barriers to learning, cognitive barriers to learning, language, physical barriers to learning, school and government regulations and cultural factors. Figure 4.2 indicates the distribution of responses according to the barrier to learning identified.

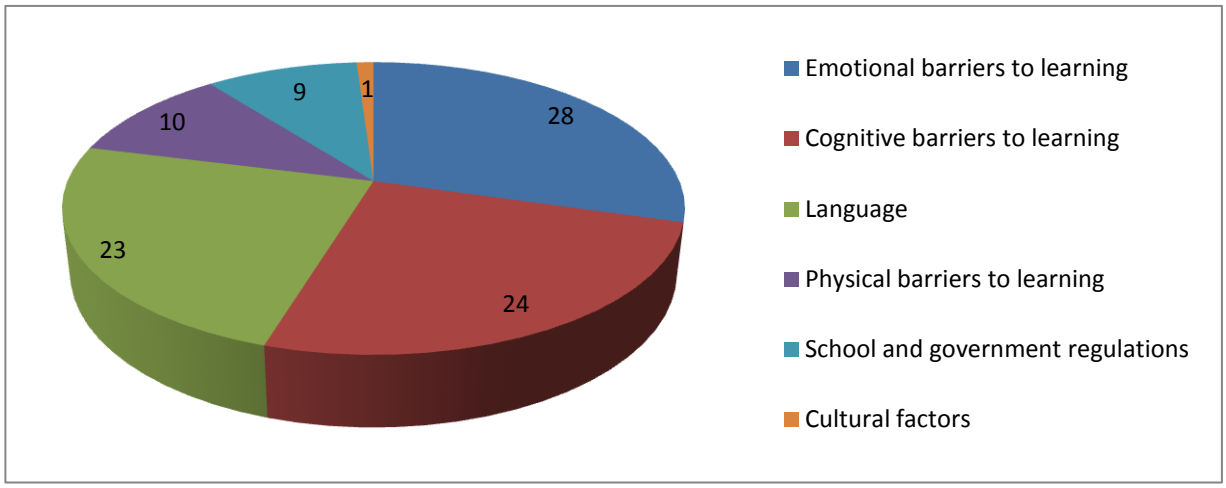


Figure 4.2: The distribution of participants' perceptions of the barriers to learning experienced within the classroom

Emotional barriers to learning

The majority of the participants (70%; n=28) mentioned that emotional barriers to learning prevent learning from taking place effectively within the classroom. These included family structure, socio-economic status of the students and psychological factors.

The students' family structure is expressed as a serious concern according to fifty six percent of the participants (n=22), as they relate to how these structures can become barriers to learning within the classroom. The participants mentioned the lack of parental support, and how this resulted in fewer students attaining support at home and this is seen to impact on educators' ability to teach these students. A participant expressed the need for parental support as it was stated that, "*Lack of parental support (HUGE!!)".* The participants mentioned family dynamics of the students having an influencing on their ability to learn. This was then seen to impact on the students' focus on education as the family structure and dynamics hindered development. Two participants stressed this point by stating: *"Parental/family and society neglect or abdication of responsibilities"* and *"Parental environment (many older siblings substitute as parents)".* Another barrier to learning involved the safety of the students' family. The concerns mentioned by the participants included divorce, neglect, abuse, substance abuse and violence. These factors impact

on students' ability to function adequately within a 'mainstream' classroom, and are seen to be barriers to learning. This can be seen by the following statement by one of the participants: *"Domestic abuse – father batters mother regularly. Neglect – physical, emotional and intellectual".*

The socio-economic status of the students and their families was seen to be a barrier to learning, as it was reported by fifty three percent (n=21) of the participants. This was discussed in terms of the family's ability to support the child financially in terms of what is physically required for effective learning to take place. One of the responses stated *"Poor families – child has no stationery and can't go on outings".* "*Poverty"* was seen to be a commonly used term to describe this barrier to learning.

Psychological factors like emotional problems and behavioural problems were expressed to be a barrier to leaning within the classroom by eleven of the participants. The behavioural problems were described to be "*Disruptive behaviour (yelling out in class, no manners)"* and this was seen to impact on all learners in the classroom. Forty five percent of the respondents (n=18) 'agreed' to the statement "Learners who require specialised academic support disrupt the flow of the normal lesson". This indicates that the participants felt that disruptive behaviour and behavioural problems are barriers to learning can prevent effective learning from taking place. However, a contradictory finding indicated that half of the respondents (50%; n= 20) disagreed to the statement "learners who require specialised academic support are more difficult to discipline" (Appendix B). This indicates that the participants perceive behaviour problems to be barriers to learning, but do not feel that these students are difficult to discipline. The emotional problems that the participants mentioned involved the emotional turmoil from family situations like divorce, bereavement as well as students' personal psychological disorders like anger and depression. A negative attitude towards learning was also expressed to be a barrier to learning by one participant.

Cognitive barriers to learning

Only a small number of participants (5 participants) mentioned cognitive deficits as a barrier to learning within the classroom. This is expressed by one participant's statement: *"One boy has the learning age of 3 in a class of 6 year olds. A few struggle to even listen for two minutes".* Fifty three percent of the participants (n=21) reported that the learning difficulties were barriers to learning in their classrooms. This is due to participants viewing learning difficulties as a cognitive deficit and resulting in cognitive barriers to learning. The learning difficulties that were expressed to be barriers to learning within the classroom were dyslexia, Attention-Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), auditory problems, visual problems, speech problems, Aspergers, literacy barriers (reading and writing) and general learning difficulties.

Language

Twenty three participants (n=58) mentioned that language was a barrier to learning. This indicates that language is seen to be one of the most prevalent barrier to learning within the classroom. This involved not only the language of the students but also the language of instruction of the school. Some of the responses included: *"Language of teaching and learning is not the home language"* and *"Learners with a 4th language trying to learn a 5th".*

Physical disabilities

The physical disabilities that were expressed to be barriers to learning involved physical limitations of the students, motor control problems, developmental delays and neurological deficits. All of these factors were stated to require specialised attention or remediation. One participant stated, "*Physical: being in wheelchairs (not easy to access to classroom)".*

School and government regulations

The rules and regulations involved in teaching and education were expressed to be a barrier to learning by a small number of participants (23%; n=9). This incorporated the lack of training on the skills required to become an effective educator, the lack of human resources like remedial teachers and specialised practitioners, curriculum confusion (unable to adapt the curriculum to all students) and finally the policy of passing students to higher grades (results in gaps within the student's knowledge). One of the responses indicated the passing of students from grade to grade: *"Ineffective schooling system has created learners poor in a grade (having passed in order to get to the next grade) but not fit and able to do the work expected of them. An example they are required to have basic math skills in order to do and solve basic math problems, unfortunately they (the majority) are lacking those skills and they cannot cope on the required level. A problem created by the countries needs resulted in an unliterate (illiterate) generation".*

Cultural factors

Only one participant mentioned cultural factors as being a barrier to learning within the classroom: *"Nationality e.g.: being from a certain country/place with different beliefs. Religion: which cannot tolerate other religions (holy wars?)"*.

4.3. The skills educators think they need in order to implement inclusive education?

The participants responded to two questions from the questionnaire that involved the skills educators think are necessary for the effective implementation of inclusive education. The skills that the participants utilize within the classroom will be discussed under the themes that emerged under the skills educators think are necessary. This will reflect the skills that are needed and the skills that are utilised within the classroom to illustrate which skills are lacking according to the

participants perceptions. Figure 4.3 indicates the themes that emerged and depicts the skills required to successfully implement inclusive education.

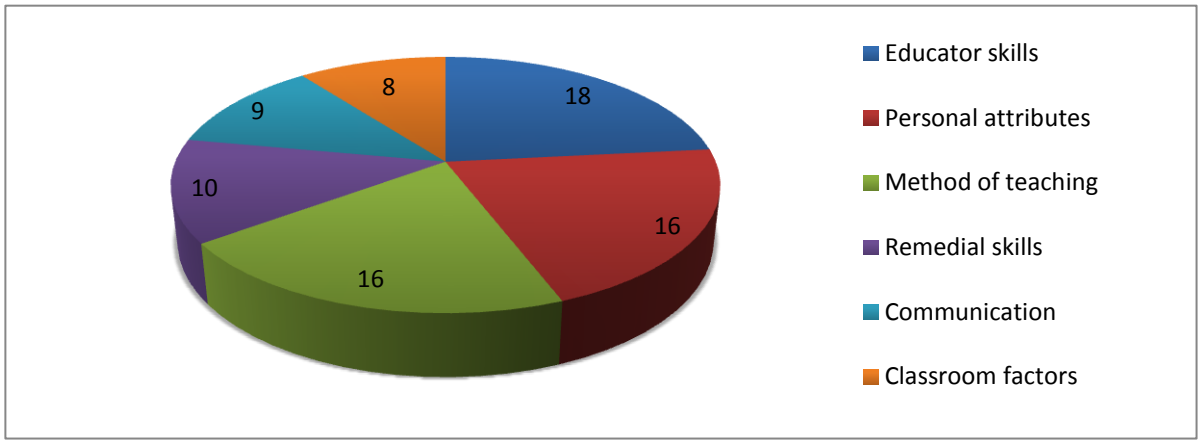


Figure 4.3: The distribution of participants perceptions of the skills required in an inclusive education classroom

Educators' skills

Forty five percent of the participants (n=18) reported skills that educators needed when dealing with barriers to learning. The broad theme involved training and workshops that are expressed to be necessary for educators to attend. Participants stressed the importance for training to include the curriculum, inclusive education and barriers to learning. Participants stressed the importance of training courses in order to allow educators to become more knowledgeable and informed in the theory and practices necessary for the effective implementation of inclusive education. As noted by one of the participants: "*They need first to be good teachers in terms of curriculum delivery"* and *"An awareness of what inclusive education entails. A course on how to address barriers to learners and an awareness of the different barriers that you may encounter".*

Personal attributes

Sixteen participants (40%) stressed the need for psychological skills or understanding of children's emotional well being. This skill of understanding the emotional well being of students was

expressed to influence the educators' personal interactions with the students. The personal qualities reported by the participants involved being patient, compassionate, flexible, empathetic, understanding, determined and caring. A participant stated the need to understand the students as seen in *"You must understand how these children work and think. You must put yourself in their shoes".* The skills employed within the classroom that assists in the emotional well being of the students were reported to involve emotional support and putting aside time for extra lessons and tuition. The participants reported skills involve offering forms of counselling and using positive reinforcement to increase students with barriers to learning to stay motivated. Ten percent of the participants (n=4) mentioned offering extra lessons after school or during breaks as they indicated students with barriers to learning required extra one-on-one attention. This was expressed by one participant who stated: *"I spent 1 afternoon a week doing free extra lessons for any students struggling. I often gave up my personal breaks to help individual children complete their work or attend to the problems they may be facing".*

Methods of teaching

The way the educators teach within the classroom is seen to be an important skill that will assist inclusive education, namely the use of a flexible time table, differentiating lessons, use of different languages, Outcomes Based Education (OBE), pacing of lessons, practical activities and ability to be observant of all students just to name a few. This was seen to be depicted in the following statement: "*The educator would have to be well-organised, super-efficient, patient, empathetic – how about a plaster cast saint!".* The participants then stated that teaching techniques, extra time/attention and worksheets are the skills that they employ in the classroom on a daily basis. Sixty five percent of the participants (n=26) in this study mentioned the importance of adapting lesson plans and utilising aids in order to assist an effectively teach students who experience barriers to learning. Participants reported the use of baseline assessments and group and individual work are effective ways to assist inclusive education within the classroom. Thirty percent of the

participants (n=12) reported the importance of extra time and attention to students who may have barriers to learning. The skill of allocating extra time educators is seen to result in students receiving extra support to achieve academically. Finally, under a quarter of the participants (28%; n=11) stressed the importance of differentiating worksheets to allocate simplified worksheets to students with barriers to learning. The differentiation of worksheets was reported to include assisting fast learners in the class, so more time can be allocated to the students with barriers to learning. For example one of the participants said, *"I organised extra worksheets on the work they were presently working on as well as extra work that was revision for students of previous years work".*

Remedial skills

Remedial skills were reported to accommodate all barriers to learning however, the participants expressed their perception that educators that do not have that type of qualification are unable to effectively employ inclusive educational practices within the classroom. A few participants (25%; n=10) stated that many educators are not remedially qualified and as a result may be ineffective with the remedial work offered to students.

Communication

Nine participants (23%) stated that the ability to communicate effectively with educators, parents and health care professionals is an important skill that needs to be enhanced in an inclusive education setting. Participants also stressed the communication between the educator and the students as being an important skill to acquire. This skill is already being implemented according to the participants in this research. For example a participant stated, *"This year, I have a speech therapist helping me and some post-graduate psychology students who have promised to help the school through an organisation called 'Ububele' ".*

Classroom factors

Eight participants (20%) mentioned factors not skills that are perceived to be effective in the implementation of inclusive education. The participants mentioned the following factors, namely class size, time, resources, space, apparatus and money. The following statements reflect the classroom factors mentioned by the participants: *"School hours are short and inclusion would place a considerable burden on the teachers, who resources are already stretched"* and *"You cannot rule out proper incentives".*

Negative responses

A few educators (10%; n=4) expressed the view that the ability to cater for all students' needs within the classroom was an impossible task. They felt that the ability to cater for all students needs was difficult due to standards that require files to be kept up to date which is difficult due to limited time. This was expressed in the following statements: *"I do not because when the district officials come, they only care about the neat files and the quantity of work not the quality. Even the national times do not permit for such learners"* and *"There is so much to do and so little time in the day".*

4.4. Support structures used by educators to assist them in the implementation of inclusive education

The presence of the principal (78%; n=31) and School-Based Teacher Assistance Team (SBTAT) (75%; n=30) were the most commonly seen support structures present within the schools in this study. More than half of the participants felt that the School Governing Body (SGB) (60%; n=24), District Support Team (DST) (55%; n=22) and the Learning Support Specialist (LSS) (60%; n=24) were vital components. The use of psychologists' (45%, n=18), speech therapists (48%; n=19), parents (45%, n=18) and occupational therapists (35%; n=14) were reported to be less important.

In a previous question it was seen that parental support was vital to inclusive education, however, the reality of this study shows that there is insufficient parental support in schools (45%; n=18). The educators reported that the support obtained from speech therapists, occupational therapists as well as psychologists does not always come from these specialists being enrolled at the school, but rather external contacts that teachers use for support. Figure 4.4 indicates the supportive support structures which exist within the sample of schools.

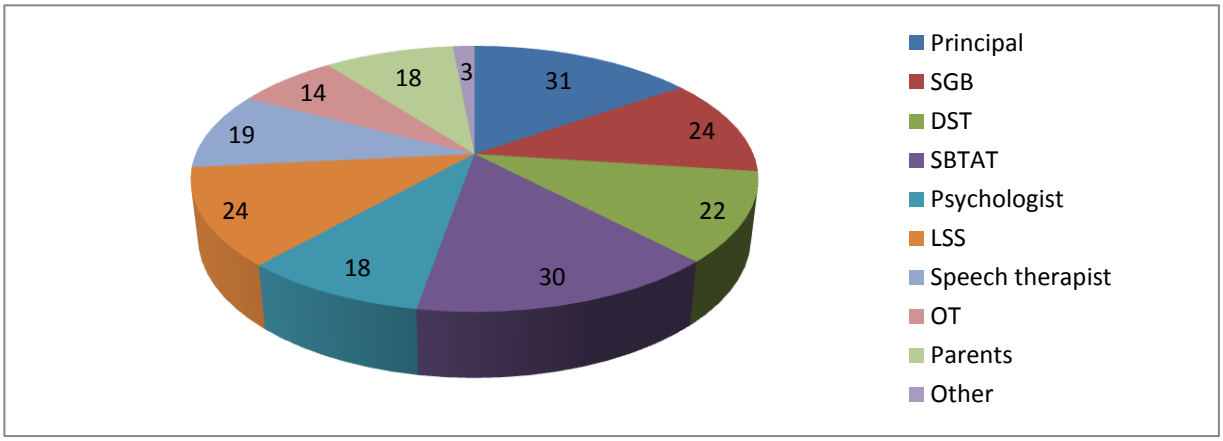


Figure 4.4: The distribution of perceived helpful support structures present within the school system

4.5. Training programmes that educators have participated in and their perceptions of these programmes

Only thirty percent of the participants (n=12) responded that they had attended training programmes on inclusive education in the past year. Out of these participants, five participants (13%) stated that these training programmes were completed during their professional training. These included the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course, Management and Leadership course and Honours degrees in Education. These courses were seen to only offer the very basic understanding of inclusive education and barriers to learning as reflected in the following statement: *"Only basic of what inclusion is, but how can you involve it in the classroom".* As well as a few practical examples of how to adapt the curriculum and how to

develop Individualised Educational Programmes (IEP's). Only eight participants (20%) reported to have received in-service training during the school year, either during the school holidays or during the school term. One participant responded that the training had not occurred in the past year but rather two years ago. The topics that were stated to have been covered in these courses included a basic understanding of inclusive education, practical tips to assess barriers to learning in the classroom, skills to help students concentrate in class (ADHD learners, learning disabilities), ways to assess muscle strength and brain dominance, cognitive, social and emotional theories of support in a classroom, ways to make learning more interesting in a class, ways to adapt lesson plans and the process of referral procedures.

Of the twelve participants (30%) that stated that they had received training, all of them reported that the training programmes attended were effective and that learning took place. All of the participants reported having learnt practical skills on how to deal with barriers to learning. The skills learnt from training programmes attended were curriculum adaptation and teaching strategies, including Blooms taxonomy (ways to set out questions) and assessment differentiation techniques. Practical skills addressing certain barriers to learning were reported to be helpful. These included ways to help students concentrate in class, how to apply concessions for students' not coping, ways to create games and activities and ways to address cognitive developmental deficits within the classroom. Finally, participants mentioned the remediation skills learnt from the training programmes that were seen to be important for educators teaching students with barriers to learning. However, the barriers to learning found in the classroom are perceived to be too diverse that remediation skills are often not effective, for example: *"Some basic practical elements of how to remediate – but not really enough to make big changes".*

4.6. Other training programmes educators would like to assist them in implementing inclusive education

The participants expressed their perceptions on the training programmes they feel would assist them in the successful implementation of inclusive education. The themes that emerged involved training on learning difficulties, government policy, behaviour problems and other factors like communication skills. Thirty percent of the participants (n=12) expressed the need to attend training on specific learning problems and difficulties, like ADHD, dyslexia, hyperactivity and language barriers. For example in the following participant's statement, frustration towards the lack of training was noted: *"I would like to be trained on how to deal with specific cases as I sometimes feel helpless and frustrated. Sometimes that would help to answer my questions on what I'm doing or saying or even feeling. Most days I just teach them what I know or feel he can cope with, just blind guessing – I hate that, I didn't spend a fortune on university to feel ill equipped".* Twenty three percent of the participants (n=9) perceived the curriculum and policy of inclusive education to be vital topics for training programmes. This is seen to be an important topic that educators need extensive training in. The responses seemed positive in terms of wanting to attend training involving these theories, and one participant expressed the need to study further to increase his/her knowledge and skills. Training programmes involving information on students with behavioural barriers to learning was reported by four participants (10%). The lack of support from specialists in behavioural problems (psychologist) was seen to relate to the participants needs to be trained in that area.

Other topics of training programmes that the participants expressed a need for included effective communication skills, emotional barriers to learning, ideas on how to produce resources on a limited budget, training of the testing for sight and hearing and how to assess students' cognitive ability. However, three participants (7%) mentioned the need for no training, while another participant stressed the impact of class size and not training in relation to the successful

implementation of inclusive education, for example: *"I think I have enough training the problem lies with a large number of learners in the classroom. The fewer the learners the challenge becomes less".*

4.7. The relationship between the number of years of teaching experience and the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education

According to the t-test results (See Table 4.1), no significant difference was reported between the years of teaching experience and the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education. The years of teaching experience was categorised according to two categories, namely less than ten years and more than ten years teaching experience.

Table 4.1: Statistical results of the T-test indicating no significant difference between the numbers of years teaching experience and the perceptions towards inclusive education

Method	Variances	DF	t Value	Pr > |t|
Pooled	Equal	38	1.30	0.2022
Satterthwaite	Unequal	30.068	1.27	0.2131

Chapter 5: Discussion of results

Within this chapter the research findings in relation to the aims of the study will be discussed, followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

5.1. Research question 1: What are the educators' views and understanding of inclusive education within a sample of government primary schools?

Inclusive education means different things to different individuals in different contexts, however there are some commonalities. Within this study the researcher indentified four broad themes or categories that were common among the educators in the study. This included, inclusive education being based on an individual's basis of ability or disability, the rights of all children, policy perspectives and the school being an extension of society.

The majority of the educators viewed inclusive education on the basis of a child's ability or disability. According to a medical model, students with barriers to learning are viewed as having a deficit or disability and are therefore unable to perform like 'normal' students (Hays, 2009; Engelbrecht, 2006). However, in this study educators did not view these students as having a 'disability' but rather being unable to cope appropriately to the demands of a mainstream class. Inclusive education within South Africa is a human rights approach, in which it transforms the human values of inclusion into the rights of many excluded learners (Engelbrecht, 2006). Inclusive education is meant to not only offer individual students educational equality, but also social, economic and political equality regardless of that student's intelligence, disability, gender, race, ethnicity and social background (Shongwe, 2005). These terminologies and understandings of inclusive education by Engelbrecht (2006) and Shongwe (2005) resemble the definitions reported by a small portion of the educators in this study.

Educators in this study did not stress the understanding of educational policies and the extension of the school being a basis for society, and many did not reflect accurate understandings of inclusive education. These findings are in line with Moolla (2005) who indicated that educators do not have a clear understanding of inclusive education as they do not hold a strong theoretical understanding of the move towards inclusion and educators were uncertain on how their roles and responsibilities should be adapted accordingly. Research has indicated that educators often have very different definitions of inclusion and inclusive education, and the definition that they believe in is seen to affect the way they implement inclusive practices in their classroom (Hays, 2009). This highlights the need to understand educators' perceptions and understandings of inclusive education in order to ultimately impact on policy implementation in South Africa.

According to this study, there were equal numbers of educators who reported positive responses towards inclusive education compared to negative responses. This is seen to link to the educators perceptions towards inclusive education and if they ultimately have positive or negative perceptions towards the implementation of this policy. Research conducted by Schimper (2004) and Wylde (2007) reported that the majority of their respondents were positive towards inclusive education, however in this study this is not the case. As a result this study highlighted that government school educators seem to have more negative perceptions towards inclusive education compared to independent school educators who constituted the samples of the Schimper (2004) and Wylde (2007) studies.

The majority of positive responses that were reported in this study lacked detail on why the educators favoured or agreed with the inclusive education policies. It appeared as if educators reported more socially acceptable responses, and may have not stated their true perceptions towards inclusive education. Inclusive education was perceived in a positive light, however, educators concluded with reasons why the implantation of inclusive education in South Africa

may struggle. This current study highlighted educators' positive view of inclusion which involves the inclusion of students with barriers to learning into mainstream classes. According to research by Pavri & Monda-Amaya (2001), Wylde (2007) and Shongwe (2005) inclusive education can lead to a sense of belonging and membership and it impacts positively on the social well being of students with barriers to learning. This study reported educators perception that inclusion provides opportunities for students with no barriers to learning to get accustomed to the outside world. These findings are inline with Downing and Williams (1997) who reported that all students in an inclusive environment become more aware of other peoples' needs and become more comfortable around people with disabilities. However in this study there were equal numbers of educators agreeing and disaggreeing with this idea. This then relates to a number of educators viewing the inclusion of students with barriers to learning as being negative and detrimental to all students within the classroom. These finding are inline with Shongwe (2005) as the inclusion of students who experience barriers to learning are viewed as both positive and beneficial as well as negative and disasterous.

The negative responses reported by the educators were linked to negative perceptions towards inclusive education and the result of training, unrealistic expectations, resources, lack of ability to supply attention, educators personal views and finally class size. The majority of the educators also percieve the level or severity of the barrier to learning as being a cause for inclusion to be unsucessessful and the cause for the development of negative perceptions. Educators reported negative perceptions towards inclusive education due to the lack or insufficient training avaliable. This finding is in line with past research that indicates that educators attitudes and perceptions bacome more favourable and positive with training on inclusive policies (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Thomas, Walker & Webb, 1998). Educators reported getting frustrated at the lack of training and the lack of skills acquired to effectively implement inclusive education, this is in line with

Scott's (2006) study who reflected the frustration educators felt towards promised classroom support and training.

In this study educators stressed the lack of resources in schools and the impact these resources have on the implementation of inclusive education. Money is reported to be an important resource as many educators felt that inclusive education is an expensive venture. The availability of human resources like remedial educators and resource centre schools was reported to be lacking. This seems to link to the educators' perceptions of students with barriers to learning attending special schools, where majority agree they should attend those schools while a large amount of educators disagree. The perceived lack of resources was also the case in the study by O'Rourke & Houghton (2008), Lifshitz, Glaubman & Issawi (2004) and Engelbrecht et al. (2003) who identified that limited resources was a common concern with regard to the successful implementaion of inclusive education. Engelbrecht et al. (2003) mentioned that in the past inadequate resources provided to educators was the cause for educational stress. However, educator stress would be reduced if there were minimal discrpencies between the availabilty of resources and educators' perceived needs for those resources. In this study the educators did not overtly stress the need for more resources, this may be due to educators learning and beginning to implement inclusive education without all resources available, however, these resources would just aid in improving educators' perceptions towards inclusive education.

Educators indicated the lack of time and abilty to supply special attention to students with special education needs. This was also the case identified by Avramidis, et al. (2000) who related many of the barriers to learning to the insufficient allocated time educators have to fully address all inclusive educational practices. In this study educators reported that students were demanding and required greater input from their educators. However, educators seemed split on their views of demanding more from students with special education needs. A third of the educators reported to

feel the need for students with barriers to learning to be removed from class to receive further support. This may be due to their perception of the inability to give one-one-one attention in the class as the lack of time available was reported to hinder the successful implementation of inclusive education in this study.

The majority of the educators in the current study reported to have more negative perceptions towards inclusive education due to the class size. According to the School Survey Checklist (Appendix E), schools were seen to have an average of one educator per thirty to thirty five students. This is a large amount of students per class and will have an impact on the educators' perceptions towards inclusive education. This finding is reflected in the studies by Avramidis & Norwich (2002), Shongwe (2005) and Wylde (2007) who reported that the more students with barriers to learning within the class, the less time is allocated to other students. The large class size was also seen to increase behaviour issues within the classroom, which can result in educators forming negative perceptions towards inclusive education.

5.2. Research question 2: What do educators perceive to be barriers to learning within the classroom?

'Barriers to learning' involve both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can either prevent optimal learning or that can lessen the extent to which students can benefit from education (Amod, 2003). In this study the educators stressed the impact of barriers to learning within the classroom, and could relate students' barriers to learning to their school performance. A few educators were able to relate the students' performance at school to their overall functioning in society. This indicated that educators were aware that some barriers to learning if not addressed in a classroom situation may hinder a child's ability to achieve to their full potential when they leave school.

Hays (2009) separated barriers to learning into four main themes, namely cognitive barriers, physical barriers, emotional barriers and environmental barriers. For this study the participants mentioned and stressed certain barriers to learning that were then seen to be important factors that should not be included into the four major themes mentioned. 'Barriers to learning' are seen to result from pervasive social conditions and attitudes, inappropriate education policies, unhelpful family or school conditions, or a classroom situation that does not match the learning needs of a particular student (Booth, 1999; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999). In this research however, the main barriers to learning were emotional barriers to learning, cognitive barriers to learning, language, physical barriers to learning, school and government regulations and cultural factors.

Emotional barriers to learning

As a result of this study the emotional barriers to learning were seen to be the most prevalent and most difficult barriers to learning in the classroom. This is parallel to research in this area that indicates that educators ranked emotional and behavioural difficulties as being the most challenging to include within the classroom (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Avramidis et al., 2000; Hays, 2009).

In the South African Schools Act parents are described to be central resources in the educational system (Engelbrecht et al., 2003) According to Engelbrecht et al. (2003) the active participation and involvement of parents is seen to be key factor in the child's learning and development. However, as seen in the results educators stated the lack of parental involvement and how this can cause a barrier to learning. This reflected the results of research conducted on students with intellectual disabilities and the noticeable lack of parental involvement that impact on those students ability to learn at an optimal level (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). This research was conducted in government schools where the majority or students come from low socio-economic

backgrounds. Prior research relates the lack of parental involvement to transportation difficulties as these families are seen to lack the financial means to get physically involved in their child's education. The poor health care of low socioeconomic status families is seen to impact on families' involvement as many parents are too ill to actively help children complete work at home (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). The socio-economic status of the students and their families was seen to be a prominent barrier to learning within this study, as was often referred to as 'poverty'.

Hays (2009) indicated that students' negative attitudes, oppositional behaviour, aggression and lack of respect for fellow students and educators created barriers to learning in the classroom. Educators in this study felt that students with barriers to learning disrupt the flow of the normal lesson. This could be due to many educators not being trained to deal with oppositional and aggressive behaviour in the classroom, and as a result the students' ability to learn is hindered. In this research the main behavioural problem reported was disruptive behaviour in class that resulted in the educator being unable to teach effectively. Educators in this study stressed the emotional disorders, like anger, depression, emotional outbursts, negative attitudes which was then stated to impact on the students' ability to learn. However, educators in this study did not feel that students who have barriers to learning were most difficult to discipline than students with no special education needs. This is fairly contradictory as they state students with barriers to learning disrupt the flow of the lessons and hinder learning, however, these students are not seen to be difficult to discipline.

Cognitive barriers to learning

In this research, educators did not report cognitive deficits (intellectual functioning) as being the most prevalent barrier to learning within the classroom. However, according to Hays (2009) learning difficulties like ADHD would fall under cognitive barriers to learning. As a result in this study educators perceived learning difficulties as including dyslexia, ADD, ADHD, auditory

problems, visual problems, speech problems, Aspergers, literacy barriers (reading and writing) and general learning difficulties. This then resulted in educators perceiving cognitive barriers to learning to be prevalent within the classroom. This links to past research that indicates that educators feel uncertain about including students with low cognitive delay, mild intellectual functioning and hyperactivity in mainstream schools (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Avramidis et al., 2000; Engelbrecht et al., 2003).

In South Africa, there are 12 official languages which often causes a problem when children reach school going age as often students attend schools that have a different language of instruction to their home language (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Booth, 1999). The results of the research stressed that language is a predominant barrier to learning, due to the cultural diversity of South Africa. This is then seen to cause the students to be disadvantaged as many educators are not trained to educate students whose language is not that of the language of instruction (Salend & Dorney, 1997).

Physical barriers to learning

In previous research, physical barriers to learning referred to the physical structure of the school and the physical deficits students may suffer from (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Thomas et al., 1998). This was reflected in this study as the educators expressed that physical disabilities involved physical limitations (being in a wheelchair), motor control problems, developmental delays and neurological deficits. A limited number of respondents reported these factors as being a barrier to learning and this is seen to link to Lifshits et al. (2004) study that believed the inclusion of students with mild or moderate physical, sensory or medical handicaps do not need as much assisstance compared to students with severe behavioural or intellectual physical problems. Physical limitations were reported to be a concern for educators and this may be due to schools being unable to physically restructure the school and classroom to accommodate students with

physical disabilities. In the School Survey Checklists (Appendix E) completed by the principals no schools reported to have ramps for wheelchair access within the school. Avramidis et al. (2000) stressed the importance of the classroom layout and the physical restructuring of the school in order to accommodate those students with physical disabilities.

School and government regulations

Previous research indicated that educators were concerned and worried about meeting governmental standards and adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all individuals (Cushing et al., 2005; Engelbrecht et al., 2001). This was seen to be a concern for educators in this study as curriculum confusion was described to occur in which educators' struggles to adapt it effectively. The willingness and capability of adapting government curriculum and teaching styles is fundamental for inclusive education to take place (Burke & Sutherland, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 1999; Hays, 2009). The educators in this study mentioned the training of educators as being a barrier to learning, as many educators were described as not skilled and trained enough to be educators in an inclusive classroom. Engelbrecht (2006) reported the lack of trained educators within South Africa. The training of educators will be discussed in more detail under the discussion of Research Question 5. This study also highlighted some other disparities in the education department and policies, which was the passing of incapable students to higher grades which resulted in gaps within the student's knowledge. This is seen to be a barrier to learning as the teachers are unsure of what level that student may be functioning at, and has to teach that learner grade appropriate work.

5.3. Research question 3: What are the skills educators think they need in order to implement inclusive education?

Teaching as a profession is not a simple, straightforward endeavour; rather it is one of the most complex occupations to master (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). Educators require certain skills that make teaching more positive and effective. In this study educators linked the skills they needed to implement inclusive education to training courses and workshops. It was as if theses educators did not feel they had these skills already but that they needed to acquire them. According to Engelbrecht et al. (2003) training should involve administrative issues surrounding inclusive education, exposure to the best inclusive practices as well as practical skills necessary for teaching students with barriers to learning. This study reflected the similar needs of training to involve the curriculum, inclusive education and barriers to learning. These types of training courses were seen to assist educators in an inclusive classroom as they would be more knowledgeable and informed in terms of theory and practical examples.

Engelbrecht et al. (2003) stated that educators should be provided with extensive training in managing emotional and behavioural problems of students in the classroom. This current study highlighted the need for psychological and counselling skills in order to understand students' emotional and behavioural problems. This is vitally important as emotional barriers to learning were prevalent within this study and past research as they are perceived to be more difficult barriers to include (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Avramidis et al., 2000; Hays, 2009; Engelbrecht et al., 2003). The personal qualities that educators felt were vital skills in the implementation of inclusive education were patience, compassion, flexibility, empathy, understanding, perseverance and caring. These personal qualities could be learnt and nurtured through the use of psychological and counselling training. This study highlighted that educators in Gauteng are offering forms of counselling in and out of the classroom to assist students who may be suffering from emotional barriers to learning. This includes educators

offering extra lessons after school to assist students who were struggling; this is seen to be very individual characteristics of educators as not all educators in this study mentioned these activities being conducted.

The way educators teach within the classroom is seen to be an important skill that assists in the successful implementation of inclusive education. The educators in this study indicated the use of flexible time tables, lesson differentiation, as well as the use of different languages, Outcomes Based Education (OBE), pacing of lessons, practical activities and the ability to be observant of all students all the time. However, these educators did not report to have implemented many of these skills within the classroom to date. Educators mentioned the use of adapting lesson plans and aids, baseline assessments, group and individual work, extra time and attention and the differentiation of worksheets in order to assist students with barriers to learning.

According to Engelbrecht et al. (2003) the differentiation of lessons and worksheets is vitally important as educators can assess each learner individually and assist them at their own level. The ability of educators to pace the lessons is seen to be a more challenging endeavour as often students experiencing barriers to learning fall behind. This could be why educators in this study stress the importance of pacing lessons but have not acquired the skills necessary to do so. Educators in this study highlighted the need to use different languages within the classroom for second language students; however this is seen to be a very difficult task to achieve. Salend & Dorney (1997) found that mainstream educators can promote the linguistic, social and academic development of second language learners in English; however, general educators have not been trained to address the educational needs of these learners in a classroom setting.

Research has reported educators' need for consultation with professionals namely psychologists, speech and language therapists, remedial therapists to name a few (Moolla, 2005; Shongwe, 2005).

These specialists acquire particular skills that educators lack that facilitate teaching students with barriers to learning. In this study educators stressed the need for remedial skills in order to effectively accommodate all students. Remedial skills were seen to successfully cater for all students' needs within the classroom, however, this study showed that many educators may not be remedially qualified and may then be perceived to be doing inaccurate remedial work with students. This indicates that educators within this study see remedial skills not as beneficial as remedial qualifications.

The capability of educators to communicate effectively with fellow educators, parents and health care professionals is seen to be a skill that needs to be enhanced in an inclusive educational school as it results in an overall understanding among the parties involved. A study conducted by Avramidis et al. (2000), reported 56% of educators needed more support from extra teachers as well as stronger Special Educational Needs Departments and Learning Support Teams. Previous research has indicated that support provided to educators, namely from parents, principals, colleagues and special needs educators can be extremely beneficial, however it is often non-existent or ineffective in helping the educators deal with the pressures that inclusive education has created (Hammond et al., 2003; Burke & Sutherland, 2004). In this current study educators reported communicating to professionals, parents and colleagues; however, the effectiveness of this communication is fairly unknown. Educators need to be capable to communicate effectively with students, and this relates to educators personal attributes and prior experience with psychological and counselling tools. This results in educators developing an accepting school climate and forming healthy rapport with their students which will facilitate learning (Pavri & Monda-Amaya, 2001).

Finally, educators in this study reported factors that help in the successful implementation of inclusive education, these being class size, time, resources, space, apparatus and money. A very

commonly reported barrier to effective learning in an inclusive classroom is class size (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Shongwe, 2005; Wylde, 2007). Research has indicated that the more students with barriers to learning in a class, the less time is given to all the other students as majority of the students require more one-on-one time from the educators (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Many of the barriers to learning mentioned in Research Question 2 relate to the insufficient allocated time educators have in order to fully address inclusive education practices. This involves the time to plan the following day, adapt the curriculum in order to address the students with barriers to learning (Avramidis, et al., 2000). This links to the results as educators perceived the ability to cater for all students needs as a difficult task mainly due to the limited time available.

5.4. Research question 4: What are the support structures educators use to assist them in the implementation of inclusive education?

In this current research the presence of the principal and School-Based Teacher Assistance Team (SBTAT) were seen as the most common support structures within the school. Research has focused on the role of the principal, however, educators perceive them to often be ineffective in supporting them with inclusive education practices (Hammond et al., 2003; Burke & Sutherland, 2004). The role of the District Support Team (DST) according to Education White paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) is to provide training as well as build on the capacity for the school to accommodate students with barriers to learning. In this research educators perceived the District Support Team (DST) to be supportive, however according to Research Question 5 many educators have not attended training on inclusive education. The parental support is seen to be limited according to the educators of this study, and this relates to the lack of parental support being a predominant perceived barrier to learning. The support from speech therapists, occupational therapists as well as psychologists in this study highlights the results of studies conducted by Moolla (2005) and Shongwe (2005). These professionals were described to be

external contacts of the school and not full time staff and this could be why the educators reported less support from these professionals.

5.5. Research Question 5: What are the training programmes educators have participated in involving inclusive education and their perceptions of these training programmes?

According to Engelbrecht et al. (2003) the training of educators have been characterised by fragmentation and many educators are disadvantaged due to the lack of training within the field of inclusive education. This study relates to previous research as under a third of the educators recieved training in the past year or two, and then this was divided into pre-service and in-service training. Research has indicted that in the past, in-service training was generally uncoordinated with no clear overall policy guidelines formulated by government education departments (Logan, 2002). This resulted in educators determining their own development programmes in order to meet their needs and knowledge they perceived to be lacking (Logan, 2002). A possible reason why so few educators have received in-service training is that these programmes can be expensive, have specific entry criteria or qualifications, language obstacles and a heavy workload. The schools in this study were all government schools and educators may not have the financial resources to attend training programmes. The main areas that were reported to have been covered in the training programmes were providing a basic understanding of inclusive education, practical tips to assess the barriers to learning in the classroom, skills to help students concentrate in class (ADHD learners, learning disabilities) just to name a few. According to Engelbrecht et al. (2003) training that involves these topics listed above are fundamental to the training of educators to successfully implement inclusive education.

Research has indicated that in-service training for South African educators is short term and lacks in-depth content and knowledge (Engelbrecht, 2006). However, according to this study, all of the educators that stated they had received training on inclusive education stated that the training was

effective and helpful. This indicates that once educators receive training they learn from the programmes and adapt their teaching methods accordingly. Research has indicated that training can result in less resistance towards inclusive education practices as well as in a reduction of educators' stress levels in an inclusive classroom (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). Educators that gain a knowledge of inclusive education and barriers to learning are seen to have more positive attitudes and perceptions towards inclusion compared to educators that have not acquired that knowledge (Downing & Williams, 1997; Hays, 2009; Logan, 2002; Wylde, 2007). However in this research the educators who received training perceived the barriers to learning to be too diverse that training and remediation skills are seen to be ineffective.

5.6. Research question 6: What are other training programmes educators would like to assist them in implementing inclusive education?

This current study indicated that educators are positive towards attending training and perceive the benefits of training to be worthwhile. The majority of the educators stressed the need for training on particular learning difficulties, like ADHD, dyslexia and hyperactivity. Cognitive barriers to learning were reported as the second most prominent barriers to learning in this study and as a result educators identified the need for training and education to be based on these barriers to learning. According to Engelbrecht et al. (2003) training should involve administrative issues surrounding inclusive education and the curriculum. This was the perceived need of almost a quarter of participants in this study. They stressed the importance of support from specialists such as psychologists in terms of assistance with behavioural problems amongst their learners. This was then linked to the need to be trained in communication skills and emotional barriers to learning that would facilitate educators when teaching students with behaviour problems. This relates to research conducted by Engelbrecht et al. (2003) who stated that training educators in managing

emotional and behavioural problems of students is fundamental to the successful implementation of inclusive education.

5.7. Research question 7: Is there a relationship between the number of years teaching experience and the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education?

Research in the field has indicated mixed views on educators' perceptions of inclusive education and the number of years teaching. As reported in Chapter 2 of this research study the longer an educator had been teaching yielded more negative perceptions towards inclusive education as they struggled to change their teaching methods which is paramount to the successful implementation of inclusive education (Parasuram, 2006; Scott, 2006). However, according to Avramidis et al. (2000) the number of years teaching was not significantly related to educators' attitudes. This current research agrees with the study by Avramidis et al. (2000) as there was no significant difference between educators' perceptions of inclusive education and the number of years of teaching.

5.8. Limitations of the study

The size of the sample was adequate for statistical purposes, however it cannot be generalised to larger populations. Due to the predominant qualitative nature of the data, the researcher cannot generalise the findings to a broader context as qualitative data has low external validity (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005). This research is only applicable to the specific population of educators in Gauteng, namely government primary school educators based in urban locations. Therefore, the research findings cannot be generalised to other countries and other parts of South Africa.

Another limitation of the study was the subjectivity of the researcher in collecting and interpreting the data obtained (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). According to Murphy (in Hays, 2009) no valid conclusions about inclusive education can be drawn until more objective and rigorous studies are undertaken. The researcher in order to lower the subjectivity of the research consulted a supervisor who was not familiar with the participants or the schools involved.

The principals of the schools could only allocate a short amount of time for the research to discuss the study with the participants. This resulted in the participants taking the questionnaires away with them, expecting interested participants to return the questionnaires completed to the sealed box in the staff room. However, due to school timetable constraints and the looming exams, educators struggled to complete the questionnaires due to the little available time. In future studies, the researcher should set up a 30 minute meeting with all the participants in order for the participants to fill in the questionnaires during that time, and this would result in a higher return rate.

The educators had time between being invited to participate in the study and returning the Inclusive education Questionnaire to the researcher. This may have resulted in educators discussing the questions, and as a result may have reported similar perceptions due to group discussions that may have occurred.

According to the Likert-Type scale it may not have reflected the participants' true feeling but rather socially acceptable responses. The Hawthorn effect which is the distortion in behaviour that occurs when people are aware they are being watched may be applicable to this study. This could be seen as the participants may have revealed socially desirable responses to the qualitative questions instead of being completely honest.

5.9. Directions for future research

The instrument used to investigate the perceptions of educators should be examined carefully in terms of adopting a more qualitative or quantitative stance in order to generate more depth into participants' feelings and perceptions. The instrument may take participants too long to complete, which may have resulted in less completed forms. This was also noted in the pilot study, in which educators reported that the questionnaires took longer than 30 minutes to complete. By simplifying the questions and shortening the questionnaire the less time would be allocated for the completion of the instrument, and this may result in a higher return rate.

The sample of the study was drawn from urban mainstream government primary schools in Gauteng. Further research could include respondents from township areas, or socio-economically diverse schools and from other provinces within South Africa. Studies of educator perceptions towards inclusive education and training programmes in different regions of the country are necessary, and with which the findings of the present study can be compared.

The lack of training for educators was identified as an area of concern in this study. Research could focus on educators' perceptions towards training programmes, as training was seen to be a way to address the inconsistencies of inclusive educational practice. Further research should be done regarding the training required to assist educators with dealing with various barriers to learning and development.

Research into different perceptions between educators at mainstream, inclusive schools and special schools as resource centres could be an interesting area of further study. This could identify common perceptions towards inclusive education and the possible strategies used to implement inclusive education successfully.

A controlled research study can be implemented on an inclusive education programme by using a controlled pre-test and post-test study. This type of research will be able to evaluate a training programme to gauge its efficacy for educators in an inclusive environment.

5.10. Summary and conclusion

This study was conducted with the aim of identifying the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education. In the past decade, South African education has undergone many changes. These changes have resulted in the inclusion of students experiencing barriers to learning within the mainstream school and this has impacted on educators' methods of teaching. This study investigated government primary school educators' perspective of inclusive education, barriers to learning, required skills, the support structures and the training programmes within an inclusive setting.

The results of this study indicated that there were equal amounts of positive and negative perspectives towards inclusive education. The prominent negative perceptions towards inclusive education involved the lack of training, unrealistic expectations, resources, time and class size. On the basis of the results of this study it seems that South African educators do not feel adequately trained to assume the responsibilities of inclusive education. The educators that reported receiving training perceived the training programmes to be effective and successful in improving their knowledge and skills. This study resulted in highlighting areas of training that are needed in the Johannesburg East District, Gauteng. These areas include learning difficulties, inclusion administration and policy, curriculum adaptation and psychological training to improve communication skills of educators and ways to deal with emotional barriers to learning.

This study highlighted the perceptions of educators towards the barriers to learning that are experienced within the classroom. The results indicated that educators perceived emotional barriers to learning as the most prevalent barriers to learning, then cognitive barriers to learning. Language was created as a separate barrier to learning as South Africa has many different languages which results in more students being exposed to education not in their native language. The other barriers to learning stated in this study were physical barriers to learning and school and government regulations. This then indicated that the majority of educators felt they do not possess the necessary skills and resources that are needed in order to cope with the demands of teaching students experiencing these barriers to learning.

The educators highlighted the support from the District Support Team (DST), which are aimed at providing training for educators and provide capacity for the school to accommodate students with barriers to learning. However, this seems to be contradictory to the results that were obtained on training, as educators reported being frustrated at the sparse training which should be supplied from the DST. Parental support was highlighted as being fundamental to the implementation of inclusive education; however, educators reported having minimal support and contact with parents. Without comprehensive support for educators who deliver education, inclusive education cannot promise that all students will benefit from the system. This suggests that the inclusion goals of Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) and the South African education department may be reachable, however many factors and obstacles need to be addressed and overcome before inclusion for all can become a reality in South Africa.

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APPENDIX A: Participant Information Sheet

Dear Educator,

Good day, my name is Cara Blackie and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Masters degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. The area of research in this study is the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education. I would like to invite you to take part in this study, which will look at the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education, their perceptions towards barriers to learning, perceptions of educators' own skills needed to deal with a variety of learners' needs and the training programmes attended.

For participation in this study, you will be required to complete the attached Inclusive Education Questionnaire. Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes of your time. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you will not be disadvantaged for choosing not to participate in this study in any way. There are no foreseeable risks or benefits for participants taking part in this study. You do not have to answer any of the questions that may arise in the Questionnaire if you do not wish to. Responses are kept anonymous as no identifying information is asked for on the questionnaire. A coding system will be used to keep track of all the completed surveys from one particular school. The results of this study will only be processed by myself as the researcher and my supervisor, so confidentiality is ensured. If direct quotes are used from the final set of questions at the end of the questionnaire, no identifying information will be included in the quote. All data gathered from this study will be stored in a locked cupboard in a safe place and will only be accessed by myself. All questionnaires will be destroyed after being stored for the allocated time set out by the University.

If you choose to participate in this study, please fill in the attached Inclusive Education Questionnaire. Once completed, please return the questionnaire in the sealed box provided that is placed in the staffroom. This box will be collected by the end of the day by myself and all data will be stored in a locked cupboard in a secure place. Your completion and return of the survey will be considered consent to participate in the study.

General feedback from the results of the study will be presented in a summary which will be put up in each school's staff room once the research is completed in November this year. A copy of the final research report will also be sent to each principal on request. Results may also be reported in a journal article.

Your participation would be much appreciated.

Kind regards

Cara Blackie

Please feel free to contact me with any queries or feedback,

Researcher: Cara Blackie

Cell phone: 072 620 5466

Email: carablackie@yahoo.com

Supervisor: Dr. Zaytoon Amod

Contact number: (011) 717 8326

Email: Zaytoonisha.Amod@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX B: Inclusive Education Questionnaire

Instruction:

Please answer the following questions by writing in the space provided or by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. **Number of years teaching experience:**

Less than 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
More than 15 years	

2. **Number of years teaching at this school:**

Less than 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
More than 15 years	

3. **Age group:**

20 – 30 years	
31 – 40 years	
41 – 50 years	
Over 50 years	

SECTION B:

1) What is your understanding of inclusive education?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2) How do you feel about inclusive education?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3) What is your understanding of "barriers to learning"?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4) List the barriers to learning that you encounter in the classroom and within your school.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5) Please place a tick in the box that best represents your perceptions on inclusion.

SA = Strongly agree **A** = Agree **N** = Neutral **D** = Disagree **SD** = Strongly disagree

STATEMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. I feel that inclusion won't work at any schools that have too many learners in a class.					
b. I feel that inclusion increases my workload.					
c. Learners who require specialised academic support gain in confidence and emotional security in a mainstream environment.					
d. Learners who require specialised academic support are demanding and require greater input.					
e. I feel that learners who require specialised academic support are less capable intellectually than their mainstream peers.					
f. Learners who require specialised academic support disrupt the flow of the normal lesson.					
g. I feel that learners who require specialised academic support should remain in specialised or remedial schooling.					
h. I feel that inclusion provides an opportunity for learners to become accustomed to a variety of people in a situation that is similar to the outside world.					
i. If I changed to another school I would look for a school not practicing inclusion.					
j. I feel inclusion can work at all schools.					
k. I feel that inclusion is expensive.					
l. I think that some barriers to learning are just too difficult to overcome in the classroom.					
m. I demand less of learners who require specialised academic support.					
n. Learners who require specialised academic support are more difficult to discipline.					
o. Learners should be removed from the class to receive any specialised academic support.					

6. What do you think are important skills that are necessary for teachers to have to implement inclusive education?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. How do you personally cater for the needs of all the learners in your class?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Tick the appropriate boxes of the support structures that support inclusive education in your school. Please tick all options that apply.

Principal	
School Governing Body	
District support team	
School – based teacher assistance team	
Psychologist	
Learning support specialist (Remedial teacher)	
Speech and language therapist	
Occupational therapist	
Parents	
Other (please specify)	

9a. Have you attended any training programmes related to inclusion practices in the past year?

Yes	
No	

b. If yes, when did you attend them (school holidays/ school term)?

_____

_____

c. What did those training programmes involve? Please elaborate.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10a. If you answer to 9a is "Yes", were any of the training programmes that you attended effective (did you learn something from them)?

Yes	
No	

b. If yes, what skills did you learn from the training programmes that you are able to use in the classroom?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Is there any specific training in inclusive education that you would like? Please elaborate.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Please feel free to provide any further comments on inclusive education:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX C: Principal Information Sheet

Dear Principal,

Good day, my name is Cara Blackie and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Masters degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. The area of research in this study is the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education. I would like to invite you to take part in this study, which will look at the perceptions of educators towards inclusive education, their perceptions towards barriers to learning, perceptions of educators' own skills needed to deal with a variety of learners' needs and the training programmes attended. This study wants to look at educators' personal understanding of inclusive education and barriers to learning. Therefore this study is exploring inclusive education from the viewpoint of educators at this school in order to gather data towards establishing the effects inclusive education has on education in Gauteng's Government Primary schools.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would consider participating in this study, and this would require you to fill in the School Survey Checklist once the Consent form has been signed by yourself. Completion of the School Survey Checklist that will be completed by you will take no longer than five minutes. The Inclusive Education Survey that will be completed by you staff will take approximately 30 minutes of their time and will not intrude on their teaching time. Participation of your staff in the study is entirely voluntary and no-one will be disadvantaged for choosing not to participate in this study. There are no foreseeable risks or benefits for your staff taking part in this study. Anonymity of the data will be ensured as no identifying information is asked for on the Inclusive Education Questionnaire and the use of a coding system will be used to keep track of all the completed questionnaires from one particular school. The results of this study will only be processed by myself as the researcher and my supervisor, so confidentiality is ensured. If direct quotes are used from the final set of questions at the end of the questionnaire, no identifying information will be included in the quote. All data gathered from this study will be stored in a locked cupboard in a safe place and will only be accessed by myself. All questionnaires will be destroyed after being stored for the allocated time set out by the University.

If you choose to allow your educators to participate in this study, please sign the Principal Consent form and fill in the attached School Survey checklist. Once completed, please return the survey back to myself as soon as you have completed it.

General feedback from the results of the study will be presented in a summary which will be put up in each school's staff room once the research is completed in November this year. A copy of the final research report will also be sent to each school on request. Results may also be reported in a journal article.

Your participation would be much appreciated.

Kind regards

Cara Blackie

Please feel free to contact me with any queries or feedback,

Researcher: Cara Blackie

Cell phone: 072 620 5466

Email: carablackie@yahoo.com

Supervisor: Dr. Zaytoon Amod

Contact number: (011) 717 8326

Email: Zaytoonisha.Amod@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX D: Principal Consent Form

I _____ consent to this study being conducted by Cara Blackie to explore the perceptions of the educators at this school towards inclusive education.

I understand that I will also be requested to fill in a School Survey Checklist, which involves questions about the number of learners in the school, the teacher-pupil ratio, physical resources of the school, teaching materials used and the human resources that are present in the school at the present moment. If I choose to complete this form, I will return it directly to the researcher when I am finished.

Signed _____

Date _____

APPENDIX E: School Survey Checklist

INDENTIFYING INFORMATION

School name: _____

Number of learners in the school: _____

Teacher pupil ratio:

Below 1 : 30	1: 30 – 1 : 35	1 : 35 – 1 : 40	1 : 40 – 1 : 45	Above 1 : 45

* Please check next to the features that are present in your school at this present time.

Blackboards		Parent involvement in school	
Overhead projectors		School Governing Body	
White boards		Supportive district support team	
Smart boards		Sporting equipment	
Library		External sport coaches	
Computer centre		Swimming pool	
Computer per student in class		Tennis court/ netball court	
Printers		Cricket/soccer field	
Internet access		Textbooks	
Fax machines		School readers	
Photocopy machine		Workbooks supplied to students	
Scanner		Tuckshop	
School based support team		Classroom per teacher	
learning support specialist		Substitute teachers	
Psychologist		School hall	
Speech therapist		Bathrooms per 3 grades	
Occupational therapist		Ramps for wheelchairs	

APPENDIX F: Ethical clearance certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: MEDP/10/001 IH**
PROJECT TITLE:	Inclusive education
INVESTIGATORS	Cara Blackie
DEPARTMENT	Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	23/03/10
DECISION OF COMMITTEE*	Approved

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application

DATE: 01 June 2010

CHAIRPERSON K. Cockcroft
(Professor K. Cockcroft)

cc Supervisor:

Dr. Zaytoon Amod
Psychology

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR (S)

To be completed in duplicate and **one copy** returned to the Secretary, Room 100015, 10th floor, Senate House, University.

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 be contemplated from the research procedure, as approved, I/we undertake to submit a revised protocol to the Committee.

This ethical clearance will expire on 31 December 2012

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX G: Gauteng Department of Education certificate

UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

Enquiries: Nomvula Ubisi (011)3550488

Date:	21 April 2010
Name of Researcher:	Blackie Cara
Address of Researcher:	93 East Avenue
	Athol
	Johannesburg
Telephone Number:	0726205466
Fax Number:	N/A
Research Topic:	The Perceptions of Educators towards Inclusive Education in a Sample of Government Primary Schools
Number and type of schools:	18 Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg East

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*

Office of the Chief Director: Information and Knowledge Management
Room 501, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2000 P.O.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: (011) 355-0809 Fax: (011) 355-0734

4. *A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.*
5. *The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.*
6. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
7. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.*
8. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
9. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.*
10. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.*
11. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.*
12. *On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and one Ring bound copy of the final, approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research abstract/summary and/or annotation.*
13. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.*
14. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

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

Kind regards

Martha Mashego
ACTING DIRECTOR: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH

The contents of this letter has been read and understood by the researcher.	
Signature of Researcher:	
Date:	12/09/2010