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Exploring inclusive Practices, Successes and Challenges experienced by teachers in Implementation of Inclusive Education in one selected mainstream school in Ekurhuleni North district, South Africa

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Exploring inclusive Practices, Successes and Challenges experienced by teachers in Implementation of Inclusive Education in one selected mainstream school in Ekurhuleni North district, South Africa

Master's Research Project

A research project submitted to the Wits School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand in the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

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Supervisor

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February 2023

DECLARATION

I, *Amogelang Mamogobo* declare that the content of this Master's research project is purely original. I have included necessary acknowledgements and provided references, where applicable, for all the sources that I engaged with for the present research report.



5 March 2023

Amogelang Mamogobo

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this Masters Research report to my mom, sister, and myself for the continuous resilience and dedication shown in fulfilling the requirements of this degree. Most importantly, I would not have had the strength and courage to persevere if it had not been for the Almighty God's grace, mercy, and peace that surpass all human understanding.

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ABSTRACT

The realization of inclusive education in South African schools has been controversial. Despite numerous policies enacted, numerous studies have found low levels of implementation of inclusive education in schools. The study aimed to explore inclusive practices, successes, and challenges of inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school. In order to explore the study, three research questions were addressed, which inclusive practices are being implemented by teachers in the selected school? What are the successes of inclusive education implementation in mainstream primary schools in Gauteng? What are the challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream primary schools in Gauteng? Both the inclusive pedagogical method and the social model of disability approach served as the theoretical foundation for the current investigation. The present study was conducted using a qualitative research methodology with a case study as the chosen research design within an interpretivist research paradigm. The researcher used a non-probability sampling technique more specifically the purposive sampling approach, in which the researcher used their own judgment to sample the research participants. In relation to the data collection methods. The researcher used non-participant observations and semi- structured interviews to gather data. Interviews with just six individuals and one classroom observation were conducted. The study's conclusions reaffirmed the importance of inclusivity; there were many inclusive practices that were widely used in the study; and the school had achieved a number of successes, such as the purchase of infrastructure and the successful implementation of intervention programs to improve the learning experience of students who faced barriers. The challenges in the present study were vast and categorized into three sub-sections: teacher-related, school-related, and community-related challenges. The study's findings indicate that there have been major efforts to integrate inclusive policies, some of which have been successful, but that there are still many difficulties in schools. The report suggests that the Department of Education give priority to in-service teachers' initial and ongoing training in inclusive practices for a range of learner disabilities.

Key words: Inclusive education, inclusive practices, successes, challenges

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DBE:	DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION
DST:	DISTRICT SUPPORT TEAM
ESEA:	ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT
HIV:	HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS HEAD OF
HOD:	DEPARTMENT
IDEA:	INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT
IEP:	INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM
IQ:	INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT
NCLB:	NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND
NGO:	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
SASA:	SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT
SBST:	SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT TEAM
SIAS:	SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT
SMT:	SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM
SNA:	SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT
UDL:	UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING
UK:	UNITED KINGDOM
UNESCO:	UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
UNICEF:	UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S
USA:	FUND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CHAPTER ONE

1.0: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and background of the study

The Salamanca declaration pushed for the adoption of inclusive education, focusing on how to include students with disabilities in regular classrooms. "National goals for achieving education for all should include the practice of mainstreaming students with impairments." *(UNESCO, 1994, p.18).* This idea emphasizes the importance of making sure that the injustices of excluding students with disabilities are addressed and that students with disabilities are regarded as equally significant as students without disabilities. While there hasbeen tremendous investment in South Africa's transition from a segregated to a more diversified educational system, there are still opportunities for success and obstacles to overcome in the implementation of inclusive education. It is also critical to capitalize on SouthAfrica's progress towards inclusion. While it is clear that the movement towards inclusion is developing, there are still many obstacles standing in the way of a dynamic realization of inclusivity in South African schools.This realization of inclusive education has sparked a debate. According to Donohue and Bornman (2014), despite a sizable transition from a segregationist system in the past to a moreegalitarian system, a substantial percentage of learners with special needs are still not in school.As a result, it is difficult to realize the expanding inclusive education movement due to inequities.

It is of great significance to synthesize inclusive education implementation on a more global scale to Africa and lastly mention experiences of teachers in South Africa. This overview is paramount as it will contribute towards the narrative of the significance of understanding that although inclusive education is paramount it is of importance to note that there are dynamic challenges that continue to prohibit inclusive education, however if various stakeholders work collaboratively, progress towards inclusive education becomes a reality rather than an illusion. These insights will also prove that while successes of inclusive education are eminent, successes are also coupled with challenges. It is of importance to capture a more global perspective of inclusive education implementation by mainly giving an overview of developed countries such as China. The study by Charema (2010) explored the progress of inclusive education from a more global scale by stipulating that China as a developing country has made great progress as inclusive education in China is receiving a strong backing of the government. The government in China has implemented numerous legislations that have emphasized the significance of inclusive education as mandatory, this includes allowing learners with disabilities to enjoy their full benefit of rights in regular

mainstream schools. However, it is of great importance to note that although China has made significant progress, challenges in inclusive education remain inevitable, for example Yu et al., (2011) conducted a study that focused on teacher attitudes towards learners with disabilities and other barriers to learning.

The study also explored teacher attitudes towards the mandatory implementation of the LRC and studies proved that while in some school's primary school educators were quiet accepting the learners with challenges to learners, while other educators felt that accommodating learners with various abilities was a bit challenging as it exerted a lot of pressure on them. In addition, Yu et al., (2011) stated that in about 7 schools, the school general administrators did not want to have learners with severe challenges in the regular school. This also meant that educators lacked the competence to teach diversified learners within the same space. This global narrative proved that despite the recognition and progress towards successful inclusive education implementation, the successes of inclusive education remained coupled with the challenges.

Not just South Africa is having difficulties implementing inclusivity. Ethiopia, Ghana, and other sub-Saharan African nations face enormous difficulties in accommodating students who have barriers (UNESCO,2020). In South Africa various studies across literature have proved that educators have had similar experiences in inclusive education implementation, as various regions in South Africa are confronted with similar challenges such as, under-resourced schools and, inexperienced teachers in teaching inclusively, lack of professional development and educator support. Such challenges have made it difficult for ensuring a holistic approach in inclusion. To support this view Engelbrecht (2020) argues that despite South Africa's progress in enactment of Inclusive education by making primary education accessible, educators have also proven to support the justification of inclusive education on social grounds.

However, challenges such as the lack of adequate human, technical and infrastructural resources continue to be a constant barrier in implementing inclusive education and developing a positive attitude towards inclusion. While there is vast literature based on the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa, it is worth noting that Ghana has faced and continues to face similar challenges as South Africa. Alhassan (2014) explored the implementation of inclusive education in Ghana and argued that although educators in the selected schools showed a general positive attitude towards inclusivity, it was discovered that educators found it challenging to include learners with barriers in mainstream settings, as a result of overcrowding in the classrooms. This generally affected teacher's efficacy towards teaching inclusively. Thus, one can deduce that successes of inclusive education are usually coupled

with challenges. On a much lighter note, A study by Charema (2010) in developing Sub-Saharan Africa was conducted and it generally echoed a significant progress in inclusive education implementation access Africa despite challenges, Charema (2010) argued that Lesotho as one of the poorest Sub-Saharan countries has made progress as the government has prioritized education, 10 rural schools were said to have accommodated children with disabilities in mainstream schools. This shows that despite Lesotho's poor economic growth and development, inclusive education remains a cornerstone of a socially just and equitable society.

It is of vital significance to refer to the implementation of inclusive education within the vicinity of Gauteng , while this study aimed at focusing on inclusive education implementation in Ekurhuleni North district , it is of importance to refer to a neighboring district and expand on the teachers experiences in implementing inclusive education in primary schools in the Johannesburg East District , the study by Ngulani (2020) revealed that although some of the educators had an understanding of the concept of inclusive education , however had very little or no knowledge of the policies of inclusive education. In addition, the educators expressed their challenges of teaching inclusively in a diverse class and this is because teachers felt they received no support from the department of education. They also expressed some of the challenges as a result of lack of resources.

The issue of lack of resources was echoed as one of the most complex challenges that made it difficult for educators to teach inclusively. Based on observation, it was alluded that educators were unable to cater for learners with differentiated needs and thus were neglected. In essence, the studies explored above mainly echoed the notion of understanding inclusive education as a need however, also understanding that inclusive education is quite complex as one cannot explore successes and inclusive practices without understanding the challenges rooted in inclusive education implementation. Therefore, one can deduce that successes of inclusive education implementation co-exist with challenges of inclusive education implementation.

While establishing policies that advocate for inclusion has been an exceptional success, it is vital to note that ensuring that learners with disabilities are placed in schools is still a major predicament. Learners with disabilities are still out of school, facing severe barriers to access (UNESCO, 2020). Inclusive education is deemed an imperative driving force behind a more equitable and just system of education (Saleh, 2014), cited in (Ainscow, et al., 2019). South Africa has suffered a gruesome past of an unjust system of apartheid, an imbalance in the allocation of resources, as well as other prejudice and discriminatory practices towards black people. Such challenges are seemingly apparent in our current system of education, despite various efforts by the government to try to eradicate all forms of inequalities from the past. It is crucial to understand that during the Apartheid era, the

system of education was based on racial and discriminatory practices that forced black people to be on the receiving end (Tomlin, 2016). Hence, the struggle against poverty is still an immense challenge that is inevitable. During apartheid, black people were bound under the shackles of the Bantu education system, which denied them a fair and equitable education (Tomlin, 2016). Bantu education was meant to suppress the black people from "enlightenment", which means black people were meant to be servants of the superior race, hence they were forced to be taught in a foreign language, specifically Afrikaans, as a medium of instruction. To support the argument, "The Bantu must be loyal and well-trained servants, and Bantu education was designed to create this type of citizen." (Tomlin, 2016, p.3). Thus, it is evident that poverty and social injustice were the pinnacle of the apartheid system. In addition, the disabled were among the most disadvantaged because they were excluded from the educational system.

However, once South Africa was declared a democratic country in 1994, the system of education experienced a dynamic shift and became a more inclusive system. The government that was democratically elected attempted to close the gaps of the past by ensuring that education is equally accessible, and that education is deemed a basic right (Naicker, 2014). In addition, the government ensured that no learner was left behind and that even a disabled learner was welcomed. This mainly justifies why inclusive education is encompassed as a prerequisite of social justice and equitability. While challenges that relate to inclusive education are apparent, it is crucial to note that there has been a growing demand towards an inclusive system of education and inclusive practices that have been set in place, which this research proposed to dissect.

By exploring the inclusive practices, successes, and challenges of inclusive education implementation, it is of great importance to examine one local school located at Benoni Ekurhuleni North district. This school has significantly echoed the growing movement of implementing inclusive education as a government effort, which exposes the successes of inclusive education implementation and the inclusive practices implemented in mainstream primary schools. However, within the school, challenges remain apparent, and some of the challenges that this study sought to engage with are attributed to South Africa's atrocious past. By the government to try to eradicate all forms of inequalities from the past. It is crucial to understand that during the Apartheid era, the system of education was based on racial and discriminatory practices that forced black people to be on the receiving end (Tomlin, 2016).

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While challenges that relate to inclusive education are apparent, it is crucial to note that there has been a growing demand towards an inclusive system of education and inclusive practices that have been set in place, which this research proposes to dissect. By exploring the inclusive practices, successes, and challenges of inclusive education implementation, it is of great importance to examine one local school located at Benoni Ekurhuleni North district. This school has significantly echoed the growing movement of implementing inclusive education as a government effort, which exposes the successes of inclusive education implementation and the inclusive practices implemented in mainstream primary schools. However, within theschool, challenges remain apparent, and some of the challenges that this study sought to engagewith are attributed to South Africa's atrocious past.

1.2 Problem statement

On a global scale the progress towards successful inclusive education has been quiet concerning, Jordan and Ramaswamy (2014) argued that despite the rhetoric pertaining inclusive education in the United States and abroad it is in essence, prevalent that many learners continue to be excluded based on their differences and special needs. Inclusive education in developed continues remains a challenging task in implementation. Sander (2021) explored a study on the benefits of inclusive education and noted good practices implemented by educators across Europe, however, further alluded that nowhere is a system ever fully inclusive and that there is still a long way to go. Sander (2021) argued that in Europe there is still a vast gap between policy and practice. This simply means the realization of inclusive education continues to be slightly complex.

On the other hand, the educational landscape in South Africa has undergone a series of rapid changes. Although Apartheid's legacy is still clearly visible, it is important to recognize that there have been effective structural and political improvements that have led to a paradigm shift in education that seems to be less widely acknowledged. The transformation of Bantu education into one that is more inclusive is one of the most important improvements to the educational system. The accessibility of education has increased as a result of this revolutionary change. Black African, colored, and Indian demographic groups have shown notable gains since 1950 across the whole school system, according to the 2016 Stats South Africa Education series. These three groups were deemed to be previously disadvantaged groups in the past. Thus, this echoes the growing success of the current education system in South Africa as the government has tried to ensure that all learners have access within the system of education.

The main issue is that, despite the above-mentioned positive advances, the obstacles of successful inclusion in the educational system still outweigh the positive effects. As a result, there is relatively little literature based on South Africa's experience with inclusiveness and its

benefits. The controversy that the South African educational system appears to be facing is thereby amplified by this. According to an argument made in favor of this point of view, despite legislative changes to the education system proposed by the government in 1994, "the vision of a truly inclusive education system in South Africa has been difficult to achieve and results regarding the implementation of inclusive education remain questionable" (Engelbrecht et al., 2016, p. 520).

It is worth mentioning that the real situation in inclusive education implementation in Ekurhuleni North District Benoni is as a result of systemic issues that continue to hinder the progress towards an inclusive system of education. Various stakeholders have neglected their responsibility and have shown very little understanding of inclusive education implementation as a collective effort. Learners with barriers are deemed as the problem, this is evident in how special schools within the district are poorly developed and maintained. This study is of importance and relevance to various stakeholders as it echoes significant inclusive practices that educators continue to implement despite other challenges. This is significant as such efforts are vital towards shaping and developing an inclusive culture in schools. To develop a fair and socially just community, it is of importance that discrimination and exclusionary practices are alienated at school level. This study mainly explores a positive narrative of inclusive education as a reality than an illusion.

1.3 Rationale of study

The significance of this research was to dissect the challenges, successes, and practices that are prevalent in our system of education. This study attempted to interact with the indicated local school. The primary part of this school is situated in the Benoni township of Daveyton. Although the school is only referred to as a mainstream institution, it is clear from observation that it has some roots in inclusive education ideals. Concepts that are primarily pertinent to the social model are based on concepts of independence and liberty, as well as assuring the eradication of the mythology surrounding special education. It is crucial to describe the main driving force behind this investigation, along with a succinct description of its main objective. The motivation behind embarking on this research is that, based on observation, I discovered that predominantly white schools are still more privileged than predominantly black schools.

I chose this public school mentioned above to primarily investigate that, while our democratically elected government has rectified past injustices, it is important to note that the legacies of apartheid are still visible and that successes in the implementation of inclusive education co-exist with challenges in inclusive education. Inclusion cannot be discussed in isolation from exclusion. While the school is rooted in the principles of inclusion, it is structured in such a way that it accommodates learners with disabilities; however, the educators

are not adequately trained to teach inclusively. Learners with mild mental challenges are excluded within the school because of a lack of understanding of inclusive teaching. This shows how the legacies of apartheid are inevitable, and the growing movement towards inclusion is indeed not an easy movement to navigate due to the dynamic challenges of the past. I was struck when I noticed that the school is set in the heart of a township area in which poverty is at its peak, but their plight still requires equal provision of resources and funds as well as means of feeding the learners to ensure they are well nourished, as poverty is a serious barrier to accessing education.

1.4 Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to examine the inclusive practices, challenges, and successes experienced by teachers in the implementation of inclusive education in one selected mainstream school in the Ekurhuleni North district, South Africa.

1.5 Research objectives

The objectives of the study were:

(i) To examine the inclusive practices adopted by teachers in the selected mainstream school

(ii) To establish the success of inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school

(iii) To explore the challenges affecting inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school

1.6 Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

i. Which inclusive practices are being implemented by teachers in the selected mainstream primary school in Gauteng?

ii. What are the successes of inclusive education implementation in mainstream primary schools in Gauteng?

iii. What are the challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream primary schools in Gauteng?

1.7 Clarification of Key Concepts

The following terms have been defined as used in the study:

Inclusive education - Inclusive education refers to securing and guaranteeing the right of all children to access, presence, participation, and success in their local regular school. In the present study, inclusive education means understanding that inclusion is not synonymous with special needs education, but that inclusion relates to understanding the importance of including all learners that may experience other barriers apart from disability as a barrier. Thus, inclusive education means ensuring that any barrier that may hinder an individual's access to education is eradicated to ensure that no learner is left behind.

Social model -The social model aims to change society to accommodate people living with impairments. It supports the view that people with disabilities have a right to be fully participating citizens on an equal basis with others. In the present study, the social education model refers to the understanding that a learner with a disability must be fully accommodated rather than seen as a problem. In this instance, it relates to ensuring that the social model advocates that mainstream schools be transformed to accommodate a learner who is handicapped, which relates to the transformations of the school chosen that this research aimed to expose.

Inclusive practices - Inclusive practices refer to the use of inclusionary measures such as diverse teaching practices to ensure that all learners are included in the classroom. Inclusionary practices revert to a diverse pedagogy. In the present study, inclusive practices refer to understanding various ways of cultivating inclusivity such as improving the quality of teaching and using diverse teaching strategies. The use of inclusive practices in this study reverts to educators' ways of recognizing differences amongst learners and responding to learner differences in multiple effective ways to alleviate exclusionary practices.

Successes - Successes in inclusion relate to the growing movement towards creating a socially just and equitable education system. In the present study, successes refer to various successful methods that were set in place by various inclusive education stakeholders to ensure that the realization of inclusion in South Africa continues to grow. Thus, successes in the present study dissect the various measures that have been implemented to ensure that learner needs are met.

Challenges: Challenges refer to the struggles of implementing inclusion. In relation to this study, challenges are encompassed and attributed to South Africa's gruesome past under the Apartheid system. In the present study, challenges refer to problems that the education system continues to face, such as barriers to access.

Transformative approach: The transformative paradigm views knowledge as a social construction, and the assumptions of the approach provide a framework for addressing inequality and injustices of the past. In the present study, transformative approach is part of the theoretical framework and relates to the immense demand for transforming structural barriers to ensure that inclusivity is implemented for greater access. In the present study, barriers are not deemed from a medical deficit perspective, in which the learner is seen as a problem. Rather, the transformative approach understands barriers to access as structural imbalances and other societal challenges that are beyond the learner's capacity.

Mainstream education: Refers to education for all types of students in regular classes, regardless of their abilities. In the present study, mainstream education is a system in which learners with and without disabilities learn together in the same classrooms and school environments.

1.8: Organization of the research project

The research project is organized as follows:

Chapter One

Chapter one presents a brief background of the study, a problem statement, the rationale for the study, the aim of the study, the research questions that guided the study, and finally, the clarification of concepts relevant to the study.

Chapter Two

Chapter two consists of literature in relation to the study. The review of literature was based on studies from all over the world, including Africa and South Africa. This chapter also discussed the two theoretical frameworks that are significant for the present study.

Chapter Three

Chapter three consists of the research design and methodology that guided this study. The chapter also presents the ethical considerations observed for the present study.

Chapter Four

Chapter four presents the findings of the present study. The themes of the results have been presented in line with the research questions of the study.

Chapter Five

Chapter five presents the summary of findings, a discussion of the results in relation to the literature, conclusions, recommendations, suggestions for future research as well as limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0: LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1: Introduction

This chapter presents the literature and theoretical framework, of the study. Thus, the chapter begins with a presentation of previous studies, after which the theoretical frameworks namely the inclusive pedagogical approach and social model of disability, are presented.

2.2: Inclusive education

The concept of inclusive education has many facets and is not just restricted to focusing on students with impairments. At its most basic level, inclusive education comprises teaching students with special needs in conventional educational settings (Mitchell, 2015). This idea of inclusive education is based on an ontological view of inclusion from a limited perspective that only concentrates on providing accommodations for students with impairments. Instead of viewing inclusion through the lens of disability, it's interesting to consider inclusion from a socially just perspective, such as understanding inclusion from a normative perspective, which is primarily defined as a way to combat exclusion and aims to create the ideal conditions for inclusion and equal learning opportunities (Weiner, 2003), cited in (Mitchell, 2015).The idea that every student is included in some learning environments while being excluded from others is being moved towards through inclusive education, which is a form of social justice, democratic initiative, and movement (Ainscow and Booth, 2006). This theory primarily uses the terms inclusion and exclusion interchangeably and contends that they are more closely related than previously thought.

One can strongly deduce that these diverse conceptions of inclusion are all imperative, as each conception is informed by various paradigms, either from a special education perspective or from a social model spectrum. Thus, it is vital to note that across all the various views of inclusion, one cannot attest to and advocate for a single conception of inclusion to be universally accepted. Another interesting notion of inclusion explored by proponents of inclusion who envision it as “The deliberate and self-conscious structuring of whole-school and classroom environments so that they are accessible and congenial not only to students with impairments, but also to those who can face exclusion or disempowerment due to their ethnicity, social class, gender, culture, religion, immigration history or other attributes.”

(Kirschner, 2015, p. 2). This intriguing conception of inclusion is based on understanding inclusion as a social construct. Another crucial insight based on the previously mentioned conception of

inclusion is that there are numerous barriers to implementing inclusion other than disability. Thus, one of the most significant mediatory measures is to ensure that all learning environments are safe, and that each environment cultivates learner development. Still on the notion of inclusion, from an international perspective, inclusion is a principle that supports and welcomes diversity amongst all learners (UNESCO, 2017). This intriguing viewpoint argues for viewing inclusion as recognizing and celebrating learner differences. The afore-mentioned views of inclusion are equally significant; despite the variance in meaning, each of the above-mentioned conceptions share a common ground of eradicating injustices and other exclusionary practices and encouraging learner centeredness. Each conception places a learner's needs at the pinnacle and argues that no learner should be left behind.

It is crucial to examine how inclusion is construed considering different international policies, including the Salamanca statement. The Salamanca statement demands that the conventional school undergo significant transformation (UNESCO, 1994). According to the Salamanca Declaration, "Regular schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes." It calls for a transformative approach to regular schooling. (UNESCO, 1994, p.2). With this idea in mind, the Salamanca Manifesto was created with the goal of ending student segregation. The statement essentially promotes mainstreaming. The Salamanca statement makes recommendations for how inclusive education should be organized. According to some, the shift toward inclusive schools can be supported by the following arguments. Ainscow, et al. (2019) break out the numerous important justifications. The first is educational justification, which stresses the need for schools to adapt to student diversity and teach in a variety of ways that are beneficial to all students. It promotes teaching all students together (Ainscow et al., 2019). The second is social justification, which challenges unfair treatment. The ability of schools to alter attitudes about difference should be a priority for inclusive schools (Ainscow et al., 2019). The economic justification concludes by arguing that it is much more reasonable for schools to accommodate all students with diverse needs rather than just setting up schools to cater to students with different learning abilities because it may be expensive to establish separate schools for differing student needs.

From the afore-mentioned justifications, it is evident that the Salamanca statement advocates for inclusionary measures in such a way that all learners are accommodated in mainstream schools rather than establishing schools that may cater for learners with differing learning abilities (Ainscow et al., 2019). Thus, one may deduce that the Salamanca statement nullifies and rejects a medical deficit conception in which learners with disabilities are deemed to have a problem but rather argues that each learner matters and matters equally (Ainscow et.al., 2019). Based on this conception, it is quite a debatable issue. Although schools are meant to be inclusive as a cost-effective strategy, it is of significance that schools that are required to be

mainstream schools, are enhanced with thorough revamping services to ensure that facilities provided respond to each learner's needs, which is also a costly project hence the slow move towards mainstreaming. To support this view, Mitchell (2015) asserts that inclusive education simply means more than physical integration, this means support systems such as accessible classroom facilities and instructional systems are set in place to ensure that learners with disabilities are welcomed.

The "education for all" policy is one of the most important policies in the world because it recognizes the significance of ensuring that no learner is left behind. This policy document is informed by the social model approach, as its ideas are based on notions of equality and equitability. The document stresses universal access and asserts that "Children with disabilities should have equal access through an education that is integral to general education but notably not integrated with general education." (Peters, 2007, p. 105). The Education for All policy also stresses the paramount importance of the role of different organizations towards the growing movement of inclusion and stipulates that different organizations/groups, such as religious groups, NGOs, and the community at large are also tasked with the responsibility for planning, implementation, management, and evaluation of educational programs at the institutional level (Peters, 2007).

2.3: Inclusive education in South Africa

To be more precise, the Salamanca statement has given impetus to South Africa's policies of inclusion. South Africa has had one of the most segregationist policies in education during the Apartheid era, which resulted in some groups being denied an equal opportunity to access education. Despite South Africa's daunting past, the government post 1994 has played an immense role in eradicating injustices of the past by implementing one of the most significant policies in South Africa, the White paper 6 of 1996. The policy was put in place as a reform tool to make sure that disadvantaged groups are involved in the educational system. It is crucial that this essay examine inclusion in light of the 1996 White Paper 6 policy.

According to inclusive education, everyone can learn and needs support. According to inclusive education, which affirms, identifies, and respects this, all learners are diverse in some way, and they all have different learning requirements that are all equally valuable and a typical aspect of our human experience. Additionally, it makes it possible to use educational structures, processes, and teaching methods to meet the needs of every learner. Regardless of the learner's age, gender, ethnicity, language, or class, diversity among pupils is acknowledged and valued in inclusive education.

Additionally, it enables all learners' needs to be met through educational structures, processes, and teaching methodologies. No matter the learner's age, gender, ethnicity, language, class,

handicap, or HIV status, diversity among pupils is acknowledged and appreciated in inclusive education (Du Plessis, 2013). The concept also focuses on changing attitudes and behaviors, teaching methods, curricula, and the environment, maximizing each student's involvement in the educational environment, curriculum, and culture, as well as identifying and removing barriers to learning in order to address the needs of all students. With the development of each student's own talents, inclusive education empowers students to actively participate in their own education, acknowledging that learning occurs in both formal and informal settings, such as at home, community, and in schools.

This concept of inclusion as a must is equally important. The White Paper 6's description of inclusive education's most important characteristic is that it goes against the idea of a single type of knowledge (Du Plessis, 2013). There are many various ways to know, and inclusion recognizes the variety of methods that students may express in the classroom. It is important to use and recognize the knowledge that students have gained outside of the classroom and to supplement that knowledge with formal and scientific knowledge. Other crucial initiatives within the South African educational system, such as the South African Schools Act (SASA), have been made possible thanks to White Paper 6 (Du Plessis, 2013).

Furthermore, the South African Schools Act mandates that all schools be transformed into full-service establishments. Hence, the SASA views inclusion as a tool for transformation (Du Plessis, 2013). According to SASA, inclusion entails making sure that existing schools are changed in such a way that regular schools are given the required educational support services and that the facilities are put in place so that people with disabilities can access the facilities and other pertinent services.

The reality in schools is that learners with disabilities continue to be marginalized within the educational system despite policy notions of inclusion. This is a major problem that has not yet been overcome. There is still more work to be done to make sure that inclusion stays a reality rather than an illusion, despite the significant role that policy has played in altering our perspectives and guiding some improvements throughout our educational system.

In fact, the removal of access barriers in schools has been largely attributed to the implementation of substantial education policies. The Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support of Learners in Schools in South Africa is the name of the policy. According to Matolo and Ramabuda (2021), the policy was put into place in 2014 with the intention of guaranteeing that the quality of improving people' lives and unlocking each learner's potential is strengthened. The department of education's SIAS policy was put into place with the intention of providing a consistent method for identifying, evaluating, and offering programs to all students who needed extra assistance to increase their engagement and inclusion in schools (DBE, 2014), which was mentioned in (Matolo and Ramabuda, 2021).The SIAS policy strongly suggests that educators should comprehend

extrinsic elements that may obstruct learning rather than focusing on the learner's genuine characteristics. Consequently, the primary objective of the policy is to ensure that effective learning opportunities are maximized. By doing this, the policy is stated to enable a dynamic transition away from relying primarily on the support of a single learner and towards a more comprehensive style of support (Matolo and Ramabuda, 2021). The SIAS policy is closely related to the study's theoretical framework, particularly the social model, which emphasizes shifting attention away from students' inherent limitations and towards how such barriers are influenced by societal barriers to access since a disability is seen as a social construct.

2.4: Inclusive practices implemented by teachers in mainstream schools

Literature on inclusive practices implemented in countries globally exists. For example, Allan and Brown (2001) argued that the main debates about inclusion have always revolved around mainstreaming. Thus, Maciver et al., (2018) study in Edinburgh, UK, reported that the common practices used by educators to include learners with diverse abilities included the use of collaboration, which has differing practices such as peer mentoring amongst learners.

In another study, in China, Thailand, and Turkey, Hauwadhanasuk et al., (2018) indicated that learners were given the option to either attend a regular school nearby, or the country level government designated regular schools, this was to mainly support the learners who were able to attend a general school but needed special aids.

Singh and Agarwal (2015) conducted research on the Rehabilitation Council of India, which is primarily in charge of the education of students with special needs. As a result, the council has had a significant impact on managing the inclusion of students with special needs in regular classrooms by keeping track of and standardizing the curricula. So, it is essential to imply that ensuring reasonable accommodations for students who face difficulties primarily involves valuing each student's right to an education and recognizing their individual differences.

In another study, Juniar et al. (2021) in Indonesia argued that China has established regulations of the educations of persons with disabilities in regular schools and resource centers in certain areas to offer equipment, support, and guidance to facilitate disabled children in the regular school and also aid learners with disabilities. These regulations concern providing reasonable accommodations and support for disabled students and learners with barriers in education (Juniar et al., 2021).

In the United States, Samsonova (2018) reported that smartboards were deemed as powerful teaching tools that provided resources for lesson planning, were effective in enhancing demonstrations in lessons, and helped improve the quality of interactions in the classroom. Smartboards were also found useful for research-based practices.

Group guided reading is one of the greatest ways to teach reading and is crucial for improving students' reading comprehension and fluency. For instance, Tiarazani et al. (2020) stated that the group guided reading technique gives pupils the chance to expand their literacy horizons. The study also found that the group guided reading technique was effective in assisting students in fully understanding a text.

The use of tangible items in the classroom is crucial because inclusive education calls for the adoption of meaningful and efficient inclusive practices. Diverse students in an inclusive classroom have varying learning needs. Students who benefit most from visual demonstrations of concepts, such as movies or the usage of objects, can be accommodated by using actual objects. According to Mntunjani et al. (2018), many foundation phase schools use concrete arithmetic manipulatives such as number lines, counters, and blocks to help students understand certain mathematical concepts. The study added that the widespread use of manipulatives in the classroom had an impact on students' ability to think critically, serving as a catalyst for breaking down complex ideas into terms that students could understand.

Differentiated instruction has been identified as a crucial element of inclusive pedagogy, according to a study conducted in Ireland by Brennan (2019). It is believed that differentiation is a pedagogical approach that can improve the inclusion of all learners without labeling any particular person as different.

According to Yuwono (2018), each student uses a different curriculum learning strategy the curriculum adapts to the environment, and the choice of instructional materials is based on the child's abilities and the outcomes of the assessment conducted prior to the start of the learning process. In Ghana, UNICEF (2022) reported that educators were trained in learning how to use assessment to adapt teaching to become more engaging, which included catering for learners of various learning styles, namely visual, auditory, aural, reading, writing, kinesthetic, and tactile. One can deduce that the use of such inclusive practices has largely improved the educator’s self–efficacy in teaching inclusively and has greatly affected learners with differing learning abilities. In Zimbabwe, Chireshe (2011) reported that the society at large developed a positive attitude towards learners with disabilities. This imperative practice assisted disabled learners to socialize with learners without disabilities, which greatly impacted the learners’ high levels of academic and social achievement in more inclusive settings than segregated settings.

Le Fanu et al., (2022) findings show that skilled teachers made a variety of adjustments to address the needs of students with visual impairments, including creating learning materials in multiple fonts and writing in large letters on the board. In order to accommodate students with challenges, it was also found that teachers used general child-friendly techniques, including employing real-world objects and other inclusive practices. It can be argued that educators still play a crucial role

in implementing inclusive education despite challenges by consistently investigating a variety of ways to adequately accommodate students with barriers and disabilities. According to a study conducted in Ethiopia by Siska et al. (2019), inclusive education is being prioritized there despite all odds, and several inclusive measures have been put in place to guarantee that all students receive equal educational benefits. Many schools in South Africa have demonstrated a strong commitment to the important step of inclusion. As a result, one can conclude that this practice alienates ignorance because society has normalized the exclusion of people with disabilities, and thus insisting on learning South African sign language shows a progressive move towards inclusion. Another study found that paraplegic students were completely accepted and received the benefits of their right to an education in schools (Pather, 2011). From the reviewed studies above, there seems to be a range of results for inclusive practices and the implantation of inclusive education in schools. Moreover, limited research has been done on this aspect in South Africa; hence, this this study filled the research gap in relation to exploring more diverse inclusive practices.

Mihai (2019) argues that teachers seemed to enjoy using smartboards in the classroom as it benefited learners with barriers, educators claimed that the use of smartboards motivates learners and that using smartboards in the classroom stimulates learning that results in improved attention. In addition, educators stated that it was prevalent that learners who learn using smartboards are more attentive in the classroom. Educators also stated that smartboards were also used for games; the use of smartboards also contributed positively as educators could use the smartboards for creating more creative activities. It is purely evident from the study conducted that technology is an integral factor in inclusive education implementation.

2.5: Successes of Inclusive education implementation in mainstream schools

There has been prior research on the implementation of inclusive education in traditional schools, but the results have been mixed. For instance, a study by Ng (2015) found that in Singapore, the success of the implementation of inclusive education is due to the allocation of shadow teachers in schools, whose responsibility it is to help children assimilate into the system of mainstream schools. Du Plessis (2013) makes the case that inclusive education can succeed if we all acknowledge that parents, teachers, curriculum advisers, and the community are all jointly responsible for a child's education. Almost 95% of children with disabilities in the United States attend general education classes, regardless of their disabilities, according to Walk and Schinnenburg's (2015) report. This is because all schools in the country have integrated students with special education requirements. According to research by Paju et al. (2022) in Finland, the variety in mainstream classes necessitates cooperation in developing inclusive teaching methods. The study went on to state that numerous tactics were used to enforce collaboration among educators, and that crucial elements of

productive collaboration, such as shared duties, were mentioned by educators in Finland in the chosen schools.

According to a study by Toulia et al. (2021) conducted in Greece, peer tutoring is an effective strategy for meeting the academic demands of learners with disabilities in regular classroom settings. Peer tutoring was said to be wholly beneficial because it promoted students' inclusion in regular classes. In a different study, researchers Rafique and Hameed (2021) from Pakistan stated that all types of students were accepted in their respective schools. The study also noted the importance of an inclusive school culture and the fact that such cultures do really influence how successfully inclusive education is implemented.

A diverse educational environment is essential because it increases student effectiveness. According to the Abed et al. (2021) study conducted in Saudi Arabia, the study reported that although many factors influence the success of inclusive education implementation, inclusive education perspectives are crucial. The survey also found that teachers in the chosen mainstream primary school showed a grasp of inclusion and its significance.

According to Chophel and Choeda's (2021) study, parental participation is crucial to children's learning because it has a significant positive impact on their lives. Hence, parental involvement and support in a child's homework has a positive effect on the child's attitude, academic progress, and morale. It also encourages improved behavior. Saleem and Zaffar's (2022) study in Pakistan reported that parental involvement in homework is paramount; parents seemed to equip their learners in various ways, such as by reading to them and, helping them solve difficult questions, through successful forms of assistance. In another study by Copfer and Specht (2014) in Asia, North America, and Europe, it was reported that newly graduated teachers were more than willing to teach inclusively and felt confident in teaching disabled learners in their classroom if they were given field placements where they could work with disabilities.

Interestingly, in Nigeria, Adeyini (2015) deduced that the successes of inclusion can be attributed to a changed perspective and attitude of teachers, though not globally, there has been a significant rise in educators' willingness to ensure inclusionary practices are in place in schools. In Namibia, Chitiyo and Dzenga (2021) argue that the full implementation of this policy has enhanced teacher development, which is a very imperative strategy for inclusion, because it enhances their ways of delivering content in diverse ways. In Lesotho, UNICEF (2022) reported that children with and without disabilities had benefited from gender and disability friendly toilet blocks. Thus, accessible infrastructure, adapted teaching and learning materials, and improved teacher capacity are making it possible for all children to learn together (UNICEF, 2022). Indeed, the adoption of infrastructure is imperative for enhancing the learning experience and creating an inclusive atmosphere within the school. Infrastructure is vital as it enhances a safe learning environment for learners with barriers and disabilities.

According to a study by Revelian and Tibategeza (2021), school culture in Tanzania plays a significant role in the implementation of inclusive education in the Karagwe area. According to reports, creating an inclusive culture in the district's schools has a good impact on the development of educational systems, policies, practices, and performance (Revelian and Tibategeza, 2021). It is clear from the examined literature that creating a positive school culture has been crucial to the implementation of inclusive education, and one can thus draw this conclusion with confidence. It was also mentioned in some earlier research that Zimbabwe implemented intervention initiatives to improve learners' inclusion. For example, Nkomo (2018) reported that numerous intervention programs were implemented to respond to learner needs, more specifically learners with dyslexia, in mainstream primary schools. From this reviewed study, it is evident that intervention programs are mandatory and play a significant role in expanding learner knowledge and understanding through individualized support during intervention programs. According to Taukeni (2019), the introduction and effective execution of remedial teaching is a major achievement for the implementation of inclusive education in Namibia. In the language department, the primary goal of remedial help was to equip students with reading and writing abilities by providing them with more tasks that would improve their proficiency. Taukeni (2019) reaffirms that remedial support is to scaffold students according to their learning requirements. According to Koboli (2021), it is important for reteaching to be linked to the national plan of inclusive and general school scheduling in Tanzania in order to enhance the learning experiences of students who have hearing impairments and boost their performance.

Donohue and Bornman (2014) observed that although the implementation of inclusive education is still a topic of continuous debate in South Africa, there is a wealth of data to support this. Although there has been significant progress in ensuring that children have access to formal education, there is still a big gap between the rules on inclusion and how inclusive practices are actually put into reality. Last but not least, a study by Adewumi and Mosito (2019) conducted in South Africa revealed that teachers assisted students with special needs by setting up after-school support programs. Teachers were able to take on the job of social workers, who supported students with exceptional needs emotionally. The fact that many teachers taught multi-grade classes also helped students benefit from what was taught to students in other grades. According to a study conducted in South Africa by Mavuso (2022), participants who were able to recognize the learners were able to explain their observations by citing symptoms such as substantial language problems with reading and writing, as well as difficulty with spelling. To optimize the inclusion of all students in the classroom, educators who were skilled at identifying students who had the aforementioned hurdles were able to devise intervention and support measures.

According to the literature review on the implementation of inclusive education that was done above, there is a significant vacuum in the literature regarding the successes of inclusive education implementation. The only goal of the current study was to fill a gap in the literature. Literature on successes of inclusive education implementation is not as vast as challenge, this therefore creates ideas of assuming that challenges in inclusive education are major and outweigh the successes of inclusive education implementation. Hence the fundamental aim of the study was to fill this gap in literature.

2.6: Challenges affecting inclusive education implementation in mainstream schools

Previous literature also indicates that there are numerous challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive education in schools.

2.6.1 Teacher Related Challenges

Literature on the teacher related challenges of implementing inclusive education exists, but with varied results in different contexts. For example, Cenci et al. (2016) study in Brazil indicated that inclusive education has been a challenge because teachers found it extremely difficult to teach inclusively, as most of the educators were dealing with it for the first time. According to the findings, educators believe that inclusion is a fallacy because learners with special needs were allowed to attend school but did not learn anything. According to Leyser (1994) cited in Avramidis and Norwich (2010), a study that was conducted in several nations revealed that teacher attitudes were much less positive in Ghana, the Philippines, Israel, and Taiwan. Teachers were also said to have negative feelings regarding inclusion and low attitudes. In another study Ludago (2020) reported that in Ethiopia other challenges faced by teachers include a lack of adaptations to allow mobility to learners with disabilities, fear of responsibility, negative views of students with disabilities participating in their classes, and finally, a lack of professional understanding and capacity to treat these gifted children fairly.

To guarantee that educators are properly qualified to instruct students with hurdles, teacher training is required. While teacher education is important, it is important to remember that the majority of South African instructors lack comprehensive training in teaching students who have difficulties. Many teachers claimed they had received appropriate training to recognize and teach inclusively, according to a study by Zwane and Malale (2018) conducted in Swaziland. Unfortunately, individuals who received training were not sufficiently prepared to teach in regular classrooms, therefore their training was insufficient. According to Mncube, et al ‘s (2020) study in South Africa's Northwest, Mafikeng Molema district, there is insufficient teacher training on how to deal with students who have barriers, and educators' main concern is committing acts of injustice due to a lack of understanding on how to deal with students who have a variety of barriers to access.

Based on the literature reviewed above, there are various gaps in research in relation to understanding the challenges experienced by teachers because there are inconsistencies in the results obtained due to the variations. As a result, the current study filled gaps in the literature by focusing solely on challenges faced by educators in South Africa. The next sub-section presents literature on school related challenges.

2.6.2 School Related Challenge

McCrimmon (2015) study in Canada found that teachers faced a range of difficulties in the classroom, including growing class sizes, longer workdays, decreased funding for learning initiatives, and difficulties with parental and administrative demands to meet or exceed curriculum requirements (Crimmon, 2015).According to Parveen and Qounsar (2018), teachers in India thought that there were insufficient teaching and learning materials accessible to accommodate children with special needs, making it difficult to teach specific subjects. If resources are scarce, learners with barriers will be further excluded from the learning process since the implementation of inclusive education necessitates diverse resources to improve the learning experience of learners with barriers. Moreover, a study conducted in Ethiopia by Ludago (2020) found that dynamic barriers to constructing inclusive barriers in schools include a lack of resources, professional restrictions, a lack of duty to lead inclusivity, and other varied obstacles. The implementation of inclusive education in schools continues to be greatly hampered by a lack of resources, which is obviously a global issue. According to Parveen and Qounsar (2018), teachers in India thought that there were insufficient teaching and learning materials accessible to accommodate children with special needs, making it difficult to teach specific subjects. If resources are scarce, learners with barriers will be further excluded from the learning process since the implementation of inclusive education necessitates diverse resources to improve the learning experience of learners with barriers.

According to Mokaleng and Mowes (2020), instructors in Namibia reported difficulty in addressing the requirements of all pupils with special needs. According to the study, sufficient the successful implementation of inclusive education in schools depends heavily on the district support teams. Yet, several studies on the issues preventing the adoption of inclusive education in mainstream primary schools have focused on the ineffectiveness and lack of support provided by district support teams. According to Kasikako (2021), most teachers believed that the district-based support teams were providing insufficient or no support at all.

Mpanza and Govender (2021) discovered that educators viewed the district support teams' assistance as unproductive and inefficient since they did not provide the schools with enough help. The workshops, which were typically two days long, were too brief, according to the instructors. The study also found that DBST responds and attends to referrals, assessments, and placements of students in special schools too slowly. Mpu and Adu’s (2021) study in South

Africa reported that educators faced challenges such as issues of poor physical infrastructure, shortages in learning materials, learners with disabilities lacking reliable transportation services, and feelings of neglect. These were some of the key problems that learners with disabilities encountered. From the reviewed study, it can be argued that despite policies on the implementation of inclusive education in South African schools, there seems to be a vast gap between policy and practice. According to Morrow (2001), concerns with epistemological access, physical access to education, and the inability of students with special needs to obtain knowledge are the main challenges that inclusive education faces in the classroom.

2.6.3 Community Related Challenges

According to research by Mwangi and Orodho (2014), parents of disabled children in Kenya reported being stigmatized by the community while raising them. Also, teachers found it challenging to teach both students with impairments and students with average intelligence in the classroom because they felt that giving each student their own individual attention slowed down the process of covering the curriculum. According to the study's findings, it can be claimed that inclusive education calls for a comprehensive approach and that access should not only affect the classroom but the entire community. According to research by Mphinwa (2022) conducted in Southern Africa, there is a poor interaction between parents and teachers, and parents do not actively participate in their children's education or monitor their development, which puts instructors under stress. Moreover, Mphinwa (2022) noted that in some instances, parents lacked faith in the ability of the teachers to teach their disabled child. As a result, parents tended not to send their children to school, rendering inclusive education a complete failure.

According to Mncube (2020), the absence of parental support and involvement continues to be a barrier to the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa. According to the study, teachers working in underprivileged areas are more likely to have a poor opinion of parental participation. Since parents are one of the most significant stakeholders in the implementation of inclusive education, it may be concluded that a lack of parental support hinders the implementation of inclusive education. So, it affects the successful implementation of inclusive education if their functions are not fully prevalent. According to a study by Mafa (2018) conducted in the East London region of South Africa's Komga Great Kai, students' inability to get to school because of travel distance had a significant impact on their attendance. One of the main causes of learner absenteeism was said to be that some students were living without their parents, which meant that some students had to look after their younger siblings and perform certain tasks before school hours. This had a negative impact on the lives of children who live

in child-headed homes. Children with disabilities perform and achieve less well overall due to negative parental views.

According to a Mazuruse et al. (2021) study, there is a substantial correlation between poverty and disability in Zimbabwe, which suggests that many children with impairments come from impoverished households and are therefore ostracized and labelled as poor. While parents are expected to be totally accountable for their child's education, low parental involvement in that child's education is a major worry. Odongo (2018) noted incidences of poor parental involvement in Kenya as a worrying issue and noted that parents lack access to essential resources for their children owing to stigma and other circumstances. This had a detrimental impact on parents' participation in their children's schooling.

Oladimeji and Amosun's (2021) study in Nigeria found that children with special needs or impediments performed poorly academically in large part due to negative attitudes. Mkhize and Sibisi (2021) made the case in a different study that the amount of crime in the neighborhoods where schools are located has an unavoidable impact on students' behavior there. The study also found that exposure to violence in the community had a detrimental effect on learner behavior. The most common behavioral alterations were those related to anger and aggression, while some students tended to withdraw socially from various classroom activities.

2.7: Theoretical Framework

Two theories, namely the social model of disability and the inclusive pedagogic approach have been chosen to inform this study. The theories are discussed as follows:

2.7.1: Inclusive Pedagogic Approach

An inclusive pedagogic approach, also known as inclusive pedagogy, is a reaction to the individual variations among students that prevents marginalization from happening by using differentiation tactics that are solely created with individual needs in mind (Florian, 2015). According to the inclusive pedagogical approach, all students can learn and succeed, and learner differences should be seen as a natural element of human growth (Florian, 2015). To ensure that every learner can engage in classroom activities, the inclusive pedagogic approach represents a movement in pedagogical thinking away from conventional approaches that often work for most learners and towards a more inclusive shift (Florian, 2015). Also, the inclusive pedagogic approach recognizes that each learner has unique characteristics, which prevents the issues and stigma involved with labelling and designating some learners as different (Florian, 2015).

Relevance of the inclusive pedagogical approach

The inclusive pedagogical approach is vital and strongly relevant to the present study, as it is deemed an imperative tool that guides teachers' inclusive practices to ensure that inclusive

education is implemented successfully. The inclusive pedagogical approach is an imperative method of alienating any barriers and deems educators as agents of inclusion; the present study aims to explore inclusive practices; thus, the afore mentioned approach is an imperative guiding framework for this study as it resonates with inclusive practices and is an imperative tool to enhance inclusive education as a successful practice. The inclusive pedagogic approach is also relevant as it may respond to various challenges that educators face in the classroom that perpetuate notions of exclusion. Thus, inclusive pedagogic approaches aim to redress some of the challenges experienced by teachers, as explored in the literature relating to challenges to inclusion. In the literature review, a common challenge across literature is that some educators were confronted with the inability of teaching inclusively and dealing with differences amongst the learners; thus, the inclusive pedagogic approach is meant to dismantle any forms of exclusionary practices by educators. The selected mainstream school accommodates diverse learners, this strongly relates to the selected pedagogical approach as educators do not deem difference as an obstacle, but rather as an opportunity to learn.

2.7.2: Social model of disability

The Social Model of disability is one of the most important theories in inclusive education literature. Understanding inclusion as an agent of social justice and as a fundamental right has been influenced by ideas of the social model. The social model of disability entails viewing barriers to inclusion as social constructs rather than medical deficits. To support this view, Lisicki (2013) argues that the social model frames disability as something that is socially constructed. It alienates practices that blame the individual for their shortcomings rather than attributing learning barriers from a social perspective. In this sense, the social model aims at identifying socially constructed barriers and then advocating for getting the barriers fixed rather than mainly expecting the learner to fix themselves to fit in (Lisicki, 2013).

Within the social model of disability, there are numerous approaches such as the transformative and emancipatory approach, the critical theory approach, and the disability model approach.

The transformative approach is one of the most prominent approaches, as it advocates for the transformation of various societal structures as a method of inculcating inclusion. Mertens (2010) defines the transformative approach as a model that is distinct, as it draws its views from a critical perspective and advocates for transformation.

The transformative approach is more than just ensuring that learners are comfortable in the classroom; it focuses on offsetting systematic barriers and inequalities. It also seeks to disrupt power hierarchies in teaching and learning by advocating for transformation across different spheres of education (Daniels and Schoem, 2020).

Relevance of the social model of disability to this study

The Social Model is significantly relevant to this study as it also advocates for mainstreaming rather than excluding learners with barriers. Hence, this study mainly focused on mainstream schools. The social model was significant in this study as the study aimed to thoroughly engage with educators in understanding their reality in classrooms by mainly addressing the challenges, practices, and successes of inclusion thus allowing research participants to have their voices heard.

2.8: Conclusion of the Chapter

This chapter focused on exploring a detailed review of the literature on what inclusive education is and key aspects of inclusive education, such as policies. This chapter also presents studies in the literature relevant to the key questions of this research. Lastly, this chapter explored the theoretical framework relevant for the present study. The next chapter presents the research design and methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1: Introduction

This chapter presents the research design and methodology of the study. This chapter presents the research paradigm, method, design, participants, research tools, data analysis, and trustworthiness of qualitative research. Lastly, the chapter presents ethical considerations observed for the present study.

3.2: Research paradigm

A research paradigm refers to the researchers' viewpoint and can also be referred to as a school of thought or a collection of principles (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). The interpretivist paradigm, which contends that reality and truth are formed rather than discovered, was employed in the current study (Rehman and Alharti, 2016). Furthermore, from an interpretivist perspective, a researcher's goal is to attempt and understand how people interpret the social phenomena with which they interact rather than to discover universal, context-free knowledge and truth (Rehman and Alharti, 2016). Interpretivism, according to Rehman and Alharti (2016),

rejects the idea of a single, verifiable reality and any kind of unchanging, permanent underlying criteria by which truth can be understood by all people. The interpretivist researchers hold that there are numerous realities that are socially produced.

The interpretivist paradigm was appropriate for this study because it assisted in helping one comprehend various phenomena in practices, difficulties, and accomplishments encountered by teachers in the implementation of inclusive education. Furthermore, this paradigm was perfectly suited for this study since meaningful contact with research participants is essential for understanding their realities and creating meaning.

3.2: Research design

A research design, according to Akhtar (2016), is a strategy that outlines the sources and categories of information pertinent to the study's problem. A case study research design was used to lead this investigation. Case study research design is a crucial technique for examining and comprehending difficult situations, according to Zainal (2007). Furthermore, Zainal (2007) argues that it can be regarded as a reliable research technique, particularly when a comprehensive in-depth inquiry is needed. It's interesting to note that the case study research design approach is crucial for comprehending social science topics like poverty, unemployment, and challenges related to education. A case study enables a researcher to comprehend the behavioral conditions from the actor's point of view (Zainal, 2007). Case studies, in essence, help the researcher understand social phenomena through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions (Zainal, 2007).

For this study, the case study research approach was appropriate since the researcher wanted to engage with and comprehend important components of inclusive education. So, the case study research design approach was the most suitable and significant for gaining an in-depth understanding of the practices, triumphs, and obstacles in the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools.

3.3: Research methodology

The approach of qualitative research served as the study's guide. The examination of phenomena' nature through qualitative research is crucial since it enables the researcher to tackle a wider range of research issues. Understanding the quality, many manifestations, and viewpoints from which they might be observed is made easier using a qualitative methodology (Busetto et al., 2020). Because the research topics for this study cannot be answered numerically, qualitative research methods must be used (Busetto et al., 2020). The qualitative

research technique was suitable for this study because it focused more on human experiences- specifically, the experiences of educators who teach inclusively.

3.4: Research Site

In this present study, the researcher aimed to engage with a school located in the Benoni Ekurhuleni North District. The school is a well-resourced primary ICT school that was established by the government. The school mainly serves an impoverished community, as poverty in Cloverdene is at a peak. While the school serves an impoverished community, it is also categorized as a mainstream school. The school makes use of smart boards and other technological devices such as tablets to accommodate learners who are auditory and visual learners. Also, the school offers handicap accessibility features such as ramps and alternative restrooms that may assist students using wheelchairs. The school works to accommodate students who have additional mental disabilities, such as those who cannot read or write.

The researcher has selected this school to highlight and reflect some of the achievements of the government's inclusive education initiatives. To ensure that student needs are satisfied, instructors at the school have managed to collaborate effectively with social workers and build strong relationships with district institutions. The inclusive strategies this school has adopted are significant. The school has improved the SBST's (School based support team) use over time.

The team consists of educators who consistently provide support to learners with extrinsic and intrinsic barriers to access. Each year learners in Grade R and 1 are screened as expected per guidance of the SIAS policy. Lastly, while the school has a variety of learners with mental barriers such as the inability to read and write as mentioned, the educators are said to prove their willingness to provide support for learners with barriers.

3.5: Research sampling

In research, sampling refers to the selection of a subset of the study's target population (Turner, 2020). In research, sampling is frequently thought to be more practical and enables data to be gathered more quickly and affordably than trying to reach every person of the community. According to Mason (2010), the principle that should direct sample size is saturation. Hence, Mason (2010) maintains that because qualitative research is more focused on meaning formation, sample sizes tend to be smaller (Mason, 2010). Mason (2010) examined several sample size recommendations. Mason (2010) suggests that phenomenology uses between 5 and 25 individuals as a result. In the present study, the researcher engaged with 6 teachers to avoid sampling a large group of them, which may lead to data becoming repetitive and superfluous.

The study used non-probability sampling techniques. Non-probability sampling methods are those that collect data using non-randomized techniques, according to Showkat (2017). For the most part, this study was appropriate for a purposive sampling technique. According to Showkat (2017), the purposive sampling approach entails the researcher selecting the study participants based on his or her own judgement and keeping the study's goal in mind. To support the use of this approach, a broad group of highly skilled instructors were questioned to gain a thorough understanding of the challenges that educators have faced when implementing inclusion. The researcher also used the exact technique more precisely purposive sampling for observation. the researcher used own discretion as it was the most convenient method rather than having to use the voluntary response sampling and other non-probability techniques. With the use of purposive sampling, the researcher had a set criterion in mind, such as specifically engaging with educators with a well round experience in education. Also, educators who are part of the SBST committee and the most experienced or high performing standard in the grade 3 group of educators. To obtain the desired results, the researcher found it suitable to strictly use the purposive sampling method to ensure that the anticipated desired results are achieved.

The researcher studied both the successes and strategies used by educators in addition to the challenges they faced. Thus, to successfully answer the research questions, it required well experienced educators, educators in the SBST committee, educators who understand inclusive teaching, and departmental heads. Hence, the researcher emphasized the use of a purposive sampling technique as the specifics mentioned above regarding experience and mainly selecting educators in the SBST committee already echo that the researcher had a specific ideal goal in mind. Therefore, the process of selecting specific individuals required a sense of good discretion to ensure the desired responses are obtained, so that the research aims are fully achieved.

3.6: Data collection methods

In qualitative research, there are many ways to acquire data, such as through observations, textual or visual analysis, and interviews (Gill et al., 2004). According to Kabir (2016), the purpose of data collection is to make sure that high-quality evidence is recorded, which will likely lead to rich data analysis and allow for the construction of reliable answers to stated research questions. Structured interviews and outside observers' observations were two of the data gathering techniques employed in this study, and each is explained below:

3.6.1: Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews, according to Gill et al. (2020), include a few essential questions that help define the areas to be examined but also provide the interviewer or interviewee the freedom

to veer off topic to delve deeper into an idea or response. Because it allows for the discovery or elaboration of material that is significant to participants but may not have previously been considered relevant by the research team, this interview format is primarily used to stimulate debate (Gill et al. 2020). Six educators were interviewed for the current study, and each interview was recorded. Each research subject had an hour-long interview session.

3.6.2: Non-Participant Observations

The primary definition of observation is a systematic data collection method that involves using the senses to observe subjects in their natural environments or in naturally occurring circumstances (Kabir, 2016). In addition, field observation requires sustained participation in a setting or social scenario, clearly stated notes on how observation is conducted, and the recording of one's observations. Non-participant observations, according to Williams (2008), are a discrete data-gathering method in which the researcher avoids direct contact with the participants. The attached observation framework, which examines how the process of observation is navigated, served as the study's main framework. The researcher observed various aspects such as classroom arrangement, learner component, school set up, teacher responses to diversity, and other various factors that relate to the aims of this study.

3. 7: Trustworthiness of Qualitative data

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), it's critical to consider a research study's reliability when determining its value. Establishing credibility, transferability, reliability, and confirmability are necessary for trustworthiness. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the fundamental problem with reliability is straightforward because the major challenge is figuring out how to convince an audience that the results of an investigation are important.

3.7.1: Credibility

Credibility is defined by Diane (2014) as the accuracy of the information or the participant's viewpoints, as well as the researcher's interpretation and portrayal of them. Diane (2014) contends that the researcher's credibility is increased by sharing his or her experiences as a researcher and confirming the research results with the participants. Another aspect of credibility is ensuring that accounts of human experience are instantly recognizable by those who have had the same experience (Cope, 2014). In a similar vein, credibility is defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as the belief in the veracity of the results. It is crucial to stress that this study is legitimate because the researcher tried to produce and present engagement as well as methods of observation. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), several methods can be employed to do qualitative research, including member-checking, peer debriefing, prolonged involvement, persistent observation, and triangulation.

In the current study, the researcher used member checking to ensure the validity of the interview data by allowing participants to review the interpretation of their written interviews and participant section descriptions to check for factual errors, provide the necessary summaries, and assess the appropriateness of the analysis.

3.7.2: Transferability

Research findings that may be applied to different situations or groups are referred to as being transferable (Diane, 2014). A qualitative study, according to the argument, would have satisfied the condition if the findings were meaningful to people who weren't participating in the study and readers could relate the findings to their own experiences. It is crucial that researchers give readers enough information about the participants and the research context so they can judge how transferrable the findings are (Diane, 2014). Lincoln and Guba developed a crucial method for proving transferability by using a thick description. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define “thick description” as a way of achieving external validity. In the present study, the researcher ensured transferability by providing sufficient detail, then evaluated the extent to which the conclusions drawn were transferable.

3.7.3: Dependability

In research, dependability is defined as the consistency of the data under identical circumstances (Cope, 2014). Hence, reliability can be attained when a different researcher agrees with the decision-making processes and descriptions at each level of the study process. A study would be regarded as reliable if its results were repeated with similar subjects under comparable circumstances (Cope, 2014). An inquiry audit strategy, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), might be a crucial method for proving dependability. Without a remnant of records resulting from the investigation, the audit trail cannot be conducted. By supplying raw data, including electronically recorded materials, written notes, and other pertinent documents, the current study ensured dependability.

3.7.4: Confirmability

Confirmability in research refers to the objectivity of the study during data collection and analysis. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), conformability has to do with how little the study's findings are influenced by its participants and has nothing to do with the researcher's bias, motivation, or interest. Conformability, audit trail triangulation, and reflexivity are methods that Lincoln and Guba (1985) believe are efficient for ensuring conformability. According to the researcher, the audit trail was important in the current investigation, to verify conformability. The practice of transparent research is known as an audit trail, and these are records of the activities that took place during an investigation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The audit trail involves various processes such as including raw data, data reduction and product analysis, data reconstruction and synthesis products, process notes, materials relating

to intentions and dispositions, and instrument development information (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). These techniques revert to the use of the thematic content analysis data analysis method as the method, encourages the process of note taking and the development of themes and relationships between the themes. In relation to instrument development information, the researcher made use of observations. The use of the non-participant observation framework guided the observation process. 3.8: Data analysis

Data analysis means is defined as the process of putting facts and figures to solve the research problem (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). The study employed a thematic content analysis to analyze the data generated through the interview transcripts and non-participant observations. Van Zyl (2013) defines a thematic content analysis as a very common qualitative method involving identification of recurring themes. In conducting a thematic analysis of data, the researcher must do preliminary processing of material, which includes paraphrasing, identification, and characterization of recurring themes (Van Zyl, 2013). Maguire and Delahunt, (2017) described steps in conducting a thematic analysis of data.

The first step is familiarizing the data. This step involves re reading the data collected to ensure that the researcher has in-depth understanding of the data collected and has a great sense of the respondents' views. By so doing, the researcher will write notes, jotting down impressions of the researcher (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). The second step is generating initial codes. This process involves organizing data in a systematic and meaningful way (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). This step helps reduce large chunks of data to a much a synthesized form. Coding can either be inductive or deductive. The present study will make use of the deductive coding method, as the researcher will be aware of the themes that are required to be analyzed. Deductive coding mainly refers to starting with a predefined set of codes (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

The third step is searching for themes. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) explore this step as a significant process that captures something interesting and significant in the data collected. The step is based on the codes generated; the codes pave the way for themes to be identified. The fourth step is the review of themes. In this step, the researcher modifies the identified themes and develops the themes. This step is imperative as it includes synthesizing the generated themes to deduce whether themes overlap or whether too much or too little has been included under a particular theme (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017).

The fifth step is defining the themes. This step revolves around the refinement of themes (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). This process includes identifying what is said in each theme and any relationships between the various themes identified. Lastly, it involves identifying sub-themes. The sixth theme is a write-up. This step involves writing a report based on the collected data and ensuring that the researcher ensures the validity of the analysis (Maguire and

Delahunt, 2017). It is important that the researcher substantiate relevant findings with quotations to ensure validity.

3.9: Ethical considerations

The Wits School of Education Ethics Research Committee carefully monitored the study's ethical considerations throughout the process, and the Gauteng Department of Basic Education granted approval for research to be conducted in the chosen school. The following factors were taken into consideration to ensure ethical concerns in this investigation.

3.9.1: Permission

This research was granted full permission by the principal of the selected school, permission from the 6 educators that the researcher will engage with was also granted. The researcher requested permission from the one selected educator for observation purposes. Lastly, the researcher requested permission from the Wits School of Education Ethics Research Committee and the Gauteng Department of Education.

3.9.2 Informed consent

The researcher made sure that the research participants were made aware of the goal of the study before beginning the process of data gathering. The results of this study and how they were also disclosed to the participants. Only those who agreed to participate and signed the consent forms were chosen to be study participants, ensuring that participation in the research was entirely voluntary. The participants were also told that they might choose not to respond to any questions with which they were uncomfortable during the interview procedure.

3.9.3: Anonymity

This research made no use of identifying the participants with their names; the findings of this research were only made available to the researcher and supervisor of this study. To guarantee the anonymity of the participants in this study, pseudonyms were used, and no names of the participants were revealed. Anonymity is essential to enhance cooperation in the process of collecting data through interviews. It also enhances privacy; it allows participants to openly reveal any views that will not be attached to them.

3.9.4: Confidentiality

Participants were informed that recordings would be kept securely in a secured location with a special password known only to the researcher and the supervisor to preserve the confidentiality of the data obtained. As a result, the data will be deleted three years after this study is finished.

3.10: Conclusion of the Chapter

The research methodology, particularly the qualitative research approach, was the chapter's main topic. The case study research design was a secondary emphasis of the chapter. The two methods of non-participant observation and semi-structured interviews were explored by the researcher. Finally, the chapter discussed the ethical issues surrounding the current study and

argued that it was reliable. The study's results and an analysis of them are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1: Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the various themes from the data collected through interviews and observation. This chapter presents themes from the findings in response to the three parts of the study as follows: (a) inclusive practices adopted by teachers; (b) successes of inclusive education; and (c) challenges affecting inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school. In addition, under each of the above sub-headings, themes have been identified, discussed, and supported by interview excerpts from the research participants.

4.2: Findings on inclusive practices adopted by teachers in the selected mainstream school

The study aimed to examine the inclusive practices adopted by teachers in the selected mainstream school. Manea (2013) argues that inclusive practices confirm that all children can learn and that they all need some form of support for learning. On the basis of the thematic analysis used, the following themes emerged from the data obtained: creating a universal design for learning, reasonable accommodation for all learners, adoption of smartboards for creating activities, differentiated instruction for learners with barriers, adoption of individualized instruction, using and adopting play, games, music and dance as inclusive practice, adoption of a flexible curriculum, use of concrete objects , use of group guided reading, using stories in group activities, and adoption of group cultural and sporting activities. Below are interview excerpts and observation reports that explore an understanding of inclusive practices in inclusive education implementation.

Theme 1: Creating Universal Design for Learning

The Universal Design for Learning, according to Hall et al. (2012), is a paradigm for instruction built around three principles derived from the learning sciences. The design and development of curriculum that is efficient and inclusive for all learners is primarily guided by these ideas. Rose and Meyer (2002) restated the three tenets of the UDL, focusing on how they can be used to facilitate recognition learning and to present information in a variety of ways that are both flexible and effective. Provide us a variety of ways to act and communicate, or flexible options,

so that we can learn and communicate our knowledge in a strategic way. Provide a variety of ways to engage, or adaptable choices for inspiring and maintaining motivation, the reason behind learning, to facilitate affective learning (Rose and Meyer, 2002).

The UDL is important for learning since it covers instruction for all students, including, of course, general, and special education. So, the term "universal" does not imply that "one size fits all," but rather that all students, despite their individual characteristics, have fair and equal access to the same material and the opportunity to acquire it in the manner that suit them best. According to the study's findings, some teachers have embraced universal design for learning to meet the requirements of different students in traditional classrooms. The participants discussed several UDL implementation strategies that may be used in the classroom to better meet the needs of each student. It is vital to report the interview excerpts that demonstrate an understanding of the UDL:

> *Yes, it is, because if we exclude these learners with difficulties, then it might affect them in the long run. It's also important to remember that learners are not the same, a learner might be physically impaired but intellectually brilliant. So, excluding a learner with a particular challenge is an injustice because they all deserve an equal opportunity to learn.* (Teacher Participant 1).
>
> *Yes, it is, in the sense that, learners who are struggling are also included in the mainstream as they cannot be transferred to special school s, so it is necessary as they are now included. Thus, inclusive education is a must so that every learner feels welcome and important.* (Teacher Participant 2)
>
> *Yes, I think it's important, because each and every child has got the right to an education irrespective of their physical challenge and it doesn't mean that if a child is physically challenged then it automatically means that there is nothing that they can do, if we are failing that learner by not giving an opportunity for an education, then we might be losing out making a difference in that child's life, the learner might be physically impaired, but is gifted intellectually. I believe each and everyone has a purpose in life so each learner can do something. If you have an education then you can stand a chance to do something and become something. So, including every learner is important and inclusive education on its own is important.* (Teacher Participant 3).

> *I might be lost a bit, all I understand is that all learners should be taught as its their sole right, no learner should be left behind despite their challenges, either physically handicapped or even mentally, it is my duty to teach them because I cannot chase them. I cannot judge the learner.* (Teacher Participant 4).
>
> *Yes, it is because an educator, you need to know your learners, I did not really study inclusive education, but normally when I teach, I start with identifying what the learners know, so it's important so that learners are not left behind.* (Teacher Participant 5).
>
> *Yes, it is very important, there are some learners who can talk but cannot write, so it's important to include that learner in the classroom because not having the ability to do something does not necessarily mean you are incapable. For an example, a learner who cannot write but can talk can be assisted by the teacher. It might happen that the learner is intellectually capable, so if the teacher does not assist the learner in any way, the learner might be failed for nothing. So inclusive education is important to make sure no learner is left behind because each learner has a potential.* (Teacher Participant 6).

From the interview results above, it is evident that educators expressed a thorough understanding of the need for inclusion in the classroom and found inclusive education important. This is evident in their understanding of using multiple ways to enhance learning in the classroom. The observation journal entries also suggest that UDL is a key practice for taking care of the needs of diverse learners in mainstream schools. In addition, upon examining the data from the participants' diaries, the interrogated documents indicated that this inclusive practice has been adopted by the participants. The teacher Participant's 2 observational diary contained the following information:

> *In the observed classroom, the educator engaged in different learning styles to accommodate all the learners, different forms of representation were also considered throughout the entire lesson. The classroom has easily accessible materials for all types of learners* (Journal entry, 29.08.2022).

From the results obtained from the integration of both interview data and that from observation diaries, it can also be argued that some educators understand how diverse learners are. In addition, educators understand the significance of catering to each learner's needs. While educators may not be aware of the adoption of the UDL, their responses and practices echo the use and adoption of the UDL. Lastly, it is evident that educators understood the significance of understanding and

knowing their learners' strengths and weaknesses to better cater for their needs. However, the utilization of UDL was only evident among a few teachers, and most of them have not adopted this inclusive practice in their classrooms.

Theme 2: Reasonable accommodation for all learners

According to Roig (2017), one of the pillars supporting the acknowledgment of the rights of individuals with disabilities is reasonable accommodation. The basic goal of reasonable accommodations is to guarantee that everyone who is physically handicapped has full access to and enjoyment of their rights. It is crucial to recognize that every person has a right to an education, making accommodations in schools essential to eliminating any perceptions of inequality. The study's conclusions showed that, to meet all of their students' needs, most teachers used reasonable accommodations, such as seating arrangements and learning methods, that ensured that students with disabilities were taken care of throughout classes. Below are interview excerpts in which educators demonstrate some form of understanding of inclusive education as accommodation.

> *I think an inclusive class has to have everything that can help these learners, for example you might need equipment to cater for a learner who might not be able to write but can express themselves well, so a tape recorder can be of good use to support this learner, we might use the recorder to record everything rather than always insisting that this learner has to write everything. This does not mean that the learner will not write, they will be but, in some instances, and where necessary a recorder could be of great benefit to avoid time wasting*. (Teacher Participant 1).
>
> *An inclusive class should be accommodating and should include all the learners, meaning learners with and without barriers. Then those with barriers should be given support in the very same class that I am teaching in and should not be side-lined.* (Teacher Participant 2).
>
> *As long as the learner is not mentally disturbed, if his/her mind is working correctly, physically I don't think it's a problem provided the school can be able to provide the furniture for the child to be accommodated properly in the classroom, I will not have a problem with accommodating the child with*
>
> *a physical challenge or any other challenge, provided it's not a mentally disturbed child.* (Teacher Participant 3).

Inclusion is when you are teaching children irrespective of their abilities and disabilities that is how I understand inclusion and you have to have ways to accommodate those that have those challenges, it can be any type of challenge, such as a physical challenge so, you have to have a way to accommodate that child. Like in our school there are children who are challenged physically, and our school is able to accommodate those challenge, we have ramps for children using wheelchairs, even the classrooms, the child with a wheelchair is able to sit Infront so that they don't experience challenges such as seeing what is written from the smartboard while teaching (Teacher Participant 4)

My understanding is that we accommodate all the learners in the classroom, so we cater for all the learners, the slow learners, the gifted, we include them. When we teach, we must consider the slow learners and the gifted learners in the same class. (Teacher Participant 5).

An inclusive class is about including all the learners that has a variety of learners with differing abilities, all the learners are included in the same class and not discriminated against. In my own class, I have a learner who has a hearing problem, so he was given a hearing aid, because the learner with a hearing aid has been placed Infront. an inclusive class should mainly have different teaching aids. An inclusive class could be best described with good and well-equipped furniture and a good teacher who is able to understand all the learners. (Teacher Participant 6).

Based on the findings, it can be inferred that each participant understood inclusive education as a means of accommodation, as well as the significance of what an inclusive classroom should look like and the various resources and materials that could be very useful to accommodate different students with different needs in the classroom. So, it is crucial to understand that inclusive education is not primarily about including all students with different issues in one classroom but rather about putting accommodating measures in place. Educators comprehended the notion of accommodation based on the interview extracts and the observational data collected. However, not all teachers have demonstrated understanding and adopted accommodation in mainstream classes.

Corroborating the foregoing data from interviews with teacher participants, data from the observations confirmed the teachers' adoption of accommodations for learners with special

needs, and this is evident in their practice. Journal entries from observations are reported below:

> *In the classroom observed, the classroom is highly conducive, every learner had their own desk and chair, well arranged and the grade 3 class has all the necessary resources on the walls, the classroom is well decorated and has displayed all the relevant content that is of great use and benefit for the learners. On the walls, there are pictures of different fruits, months of the year, numbers, a number line, various alphabets with various pictures that represents the alphabets. This is significant for learners who understand better through visuals. There is also a vocabulary corner, the various resources in the classroom are designated to accommodate learners of differing abilities. Learners are also seated in groups which encourages learner participation and constant engagement.* (Journal entry, 29.09.2022).

It is evident from the observation journal presented that meaningful and reasonable accommodations for learners with barriers were prevalent through different inclusive practices implemented in the classroom. It is clear that the educator demonstrated an informed understanding of how to create an inclusive atmosphere and a welcoming environment for learners with barriers. It is also clear that the educator understood the significance of creating learner centered classroom in which various learners' needs were highly centered.

Theme 3: Adoption of smartboards for creating activities

According to Mun and Abdullah (2016), employing smartboards allows students to study and explore new concepts while utilizing technology to create a more engaging learning environment. Hence, when smartboards are implemented in the classroom, pupils become more enthusiastic about studying (Mun and Abdullah, 2016). Smartboard utilization in the classroom

and the creation of activities using smartboards is a significant inclusive practice since it encourages student participation and interaction. Also, it motivates students, helps keep them awake during the class and improves focus. The teacher participants reported that the use of smart boards ensured the inclusion of all learners with diverse needs in the classrooms. For example, one teacher reported that: "*No, I use it for writing as well but mostly for information, it also helps learners who struggle with access of technology, so we use the smartboard as an opportunity to expose the learners to the use of technology"* (Teacher Participant 3). In addition, another teacher also concurred and reported that: "*I am a NST teacher, for grade 4-5. So, I simply use the smartboard as a research tool, for example, if I am teaching them the skeleton, the least I can do is search pictures using the smartboard"* (Teacher Participant 4). Moreover, another teacher also reported that: "*In our school we have smartboards, normally*

in other schools they teach learners things they cannot see, so in our school we can teach learners what they can actually see" (Participant 5).

Below are other interview responses from different educators in response to the adoption of smartboards as an inclusive practice:

> *Yes, we have some essential resources to make it inclusive, we have smartboards in which we can program the smartboards with activities that include visuals. So, we use the smartboards to create activities that suit different types of learners with differing abilities.* (Participant 1).
>
> *So, using smartboards is great because learners with barriers are able to not just imagine what we teach them but see. To them seeing the story happening is interesting. So, we ask them questions to check if they are concentrating. The smartboards are good for visuals and listening skills.* (Teacher Participant 2).
>
> *yes, it is, if learners struggle with hearing, then the smartboard is a great tool because we use the smartboard for videos and pictures, so learners can watch videos with pictures even though the struggle with hearing, but pictures will be a great way of understanding the story or anything that is read to them. I use the smartboard researching, writing, use of pictures.* (Teacher Participant 6).

From the interview results above, it is evident that the use of smartboards in the classroom is an essential inclusive practice. It can be argued that the smartboard in the classroom has been used for various reasons, such as using it as a research tool and for various activities that are inclusive in essence. Therefore, it can be argued that the adoption of the smartboard is the most meaningful inclusive practice that each teacher found useful. Thus, it can be concluded that educators found the use of smartboards effective and accommodating for learners with various learning abilities and styles.

The merging of the interview excerpts with the observation entries is pivotal; the findings from the observation also indicated the significant use of the smartboards in the classroom to enhance learning and ensure that every learner is accommodated. Smartboards are paramount as they were not only used for convenience but also to keep the learners engaged and to ensure that every learner understands the lesson better. This is evident from the journal entries as reported below:

> *During the lesson, the learners engaged in different activities from the smartboard, the very first activity the educator drew a picture of a bicycle*

> *and the learners engaged in a fruitful lesson of sentence construction based on the picture drawn on the smartboard. As the lesson unfolded the educator used the smartboard for various other short classroom activities that were interactive* (Journal entry, 29.09.2022).

On the basis of the observation data above, it is evident that the use of smartboards has contributed meaningfully to the classroom. The learners seemed highly engaged in the lesson. It is also evident that the smartboard played a pivotal role, as the educator could use the smartboard to create a variety of activities that are carefully scaffolded, allowing for diverse and meaningful representation of activities through drawings on the smartboard and written activities.

Theme 4: Differentiated instruction for learners with barriers

Differentiated instruction, according to Lazarus (2011), gives students additional ways to learn material, process it, and show what they have learned. In addition, according to Lazarus (2011), differentiated instruction entails creating a nurturing learning environment where students feel accepted, safe, and willing to take academic and personal risks. As a result, differentiated instruction aids students in discovering their particular learning preferences. It is said that differentiated education results in active student engagement. The interview excerpts that follow highlight the importance of providing learners with barriers with tailored teaching as an inclusive practice in the implementation of inclusive education.

> *The slow learners during my teaching, I need to ask them questions that are appropriate for their understanding. Then the gifted ones will be asked questions that go hand in hand with their IQ. The slow learners are then put Infront, that is how they are separated in the classroom. So that I check on them frequently.* (Teacher Participant 4).

> *I think inclusive practices are about demonstrating, using demonstration, and using different learning styles such as using action so that learners do not forget what you have taught. However, we tend to leave some practices out because classes are congested, there is also not enough time so we sometimes do not do enough justice.* (Teacher Participant 5).

The interview excerpts explored above echo the use of differentiated instruction, and it is evident from the limited data results, that not every participant engaged in the use of individualized instruction. While most educators seemed to have an exceptional understanding of varied inclusive practices, it is evident that in relation to differentiated instruction, educators seemed to demonstrate a limited understanding of what differentiated instruction entailed.

From the limited responses obtained, it is evident that most educators did not resort to the use of individualized instruction as an inclusive practice in the implementation of inclusive practices.

Theme 5: Adoption of Individualized instruction

Individualized design and instruction, according to Lindner and Schwab (2020), is a didactic approach that aims to achieve educational equity in the sense of participatory fairness. It stimulates the teaching and learning processes. According to Lindner and Schwab (2020), individualized instruction and teaching primarily recommend a departure from the conventional "one size fits all approach" in response to heterogeneity, which provides a starting point for educational equity in the school context. Individualized education for students who have challenges is common and effective since it has its pedagogic roots in the needs of the students (Lindner and Schwab, 2020). Below are interview excerpts that demonstrate the implementation of differentiated and individualized instruction as an inclusive practice.

> *Lately we were trained on filling in the SNA forms, we were advised to make individual support plans for learners with barriers, remember learners are not the same, they have different barriers so it is best to do an individual support plan looking at the barriers they have, and we were advised to come up with strategies according to the challenges that they have.* (Teacher Participant 2).

From the interview excerpts, it can be argued that educators have, to some extent, an understanding of the importance of ensuring that no learner is left behind, and that every learner enjoys the full benefits of education. It can also be deduced that; educators understand the significance of implementing effective inclusive support measure. From the interview excerpts, it is also clear that educators understand learner needs and can differentiate their learners to enhance a positive response towards their needs through implementing differentiated instruction and individualized instruction.

Theme 6: Using and adopting play, games, music, and dance as an inclusive practice.

Play, songs and music as well as dance are crucial inclusive practices to enhance inclusion and effective for creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere in the classroom. Play-songs are said to not only provide musical experiences, but also experiences on various other levels, play-songs can supply support in certain learning phases (Salmon, 2008). Music in the classroom is imperative as it offers or encourages the establishment of contact to support relationships or to

help with difficult or disturbing experiences. Moreover, Salmon (2008) argued that educators interviewed used music, play, and games for various reasons, while other educators used the afore mentioned inclusive practices to enhance learning, while other educators used music and dance to accommodate learners who struggle with reading and writing. The findings of the study reported that some teachers adopted play, games, music, and dance as an inclusive practice to cater for the diverse needs of all learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. The participants argued that these techniques each uniquely made learners with special needs feel accommodated in the classrooms. Below are excerpts from interviews in which educators explored how play, games, music, and dance are inclusive practices in the implementation of inclusive education.

> *Life skills, where learners can run, jump, where we can see the different motor skills, so if a learner has challenges with their motor skills, so we can use different gaming activities to develop the child's motor skills, these are example of inclusive practices.* (Teacher Participant 1).
>
> *In LO, we sometimes do PE physical education, I allow my learners to sing and dance, and learners who usually struggle the most with SNA forms as learners who are identified with barriers are talented. There is a girl in my classroom who is a brilliant singer who sings very well, I even gave her 10/10 for her activity, so she might be struggling with reading and writing but she is a brilliant singer. So, I make sure I allow my learners to use their talents in the classroom. I made an example with one of South Africa's idols who won a couple of years ago, he really struggled with writing, but he asked a famous artist to write a song for him and he did well in the industry with that song that was written for him. I also use music in the classroom it is so helpful in the classroom.* (Teacher Participant 5).

From the interview excerpts, it is highly evident that educators had a sort of understanding of what inclusive practices in the implementation of inclusive education entailed. It can also be concluded that educators used music to positively impact the emotions of the learners and used dance to offer other learners with barriers an opportunity to express themselves. Music and dance were also used by one of the educators to sharpen the talents of learners with barriers this was another way of ensuring that learners can discover their potential.

Merging the interview results and observation journal data is pivotal, both the interview excerpts and observation journal explored the significance of understanding what inclusive practices entail. The journal entry is reported below:

> *The classroom observed was well organized, the educator conducted a variety of activities that included different elements. Firstly, the learners were asked to stand just before the lesson started and sang a song, after singing learners had to respond on their emotions and how they felt, thereafter the lesson started. The first exercise was a game about a bicycle, which was then developed into a lesson of building learner vocabulary and sentence construction. The second lesson was another guided practice and a game titled 'word find' where the educator drew a box with nine different letters and the 'ir' sound that is highlighted in red. Learners had to form words of their own from the different letters that were indicated in the box, by so doing, learners were expected to form words on their own in their books.* (Journal entry, 21.09.2022).

From the observation results above, it is evident that the educator found it meaningful to break the ice in the classroom through meaningful practices. Thus, it is important to note that educators are not only responsible for enabling learners' epistemological access but are also responsible for taking care of the learner's emotional well-being in varied ways. The use of games to also develop the vocabulary of the learners is also a significant inclusive practice as learners tend to grasp content and concepts better when delivered in a memorable way. Thus, using games was effective as it encouraged increased participation and kept learners immersed in the learning process.

Theme 7: Adoption of flexible curriculum

A welcoming classroom community, acceptance of learner variety, and respect for learner differences are all aspects of inclusive education. Hence, it is crucial for teachers to adopt a flexible curriculum and instructional techniques that fit all types of learners, such as differentiated activities, to foster a warm classroom environment. According to Yuwono (2018), a tailored curriculum that addresses the requirements of students with special needs and other learning hurdles is necessary for the successful implementation of inclusive education in schools (Yuwono, 2018). The findings of the study indicated that some teachers adopted flexible curriculum in mainstream classrooms to ensure that all learners are fully accommodated in the classroom and that every learner understands the content taught in differentiated ways through the adoption of a flexible curriculum. It is vital to ensure that a flexible curriculum is adopted as learners grasp content and concepts in various ways, so it is of great significance that learners are taught curriculum content that aligns with their intellectual capacity. The interview excerpts from teachers on the adoption of flexible curricula are reported as follows:

An inclusive class should have different textbooks that accommodate learners with differing abilities, so that activities could also vary, we are currently using the same textbooks for every single learner which makes it difficult for the learners with challenges. So, having different textbooks would also mean learners can do similar activities, just of different standards which would benefit the learners. (Teacher Participant 4).

No, the tasks are not the same, we can even go below the level of the grade the learner is in, we sometimes have to get tasks that are at the intellectual level of the learner, I sometimes get grade 1 tasks for my learners, as a grade six teacher, I have learners who are in grade six but are still at grade one level in terms of their performance , some still lack a solid foundation so I sometimes have to get tasks from grade one teachers to help the learners with barriers. (Teacher Participant 3).

We give the learners the same tests, but because learners with barriers cannot answer the same tests because they struggle, then I have to look for easier tasks. For example, in language, we have comprehension, summary, visual literacy, maybe for learners who struggle instead of them letting them write summaries we might give them a set of pictures and ask them to write sentences based on what they see, even if it's just two sentences to describe what they see. Even though the learner might not write full sentences, as long as there are some words, we can then tell whether the learner has an understanding of what they see. We are not usually in trouble for setting easier tasks because already the learners who get easier tasks are already in the intervention program so it's understandable (Teacher Participant 5).

Learning barriers of learners, sometimes while trying to teach the learners, they find it so hard to understand some of the topics we do and some of the concepts we teach them. So, this problem has strongly affected my teaching, as I have to constantly think of ways of supporting the learners such as going to lower grades to get tasks that are at their level of understanding so that you can accommodate those learners. (Teacher Participant 6).

From the interview excerpts above, it is evident that educators demonstrated an exceptional understanding of inclusive practices that include the use of differentiated tasks and assessments and the significance of a flexible curriculum. This is prevalent among intermediate phase educators who used tasks from lower grades to better the learning experience of learners with barriers in their own classrooms.

Theme 8: *Use of* concrete objects and videos

Everyone needs knowledge; it is crucial, and if somebody is denied it, it can result in them not living a happy life, claim Shabiralyani et al. in their 2015 study. To ensure that no learner is denied the opportunity to further their education, it is essential to put into practice measures that will improve each learner's experience in the classroom. Every student's learning experience is positively impacted using objects in the classroom. Visual aids, which include things, are thought to be useful since they make lessons much clearer or simpler to learn. Examples of visual aids include movies, charts, photographs, and objects. Learners could use objects, videos, and other visual aids to retain the content taught (Shabiralyani et al., 2015). In the present study, the participants reported that the use of objects and videos is useful in the classroom. Videos and concrete objects were said to be used to enhance learner understanding. The findings also indicated that this inclusive practice which involved objects and videos, was particularly useful in Math lessons at the foundation phase level. One teacher respondent reported that: *"In reading skills, I have tried to break down the words into syllables, in math, using objects such as counters such as base 10 blocks, and number lines"* (Teacher Participant 2). In addition, another teacher also reported that: "*I like using objects, I once taught them how to do a recipe, I teach English and Life Orientation, so I would come with some of my own ingredients to make the lesson more interesting"* (Teacher Participant 5).

In addition, below are interview excerpts in response to the use of concrete objects and videos in the classroom as an inclusive practice in implementing inclusive education.

> *We use the dominos and building blocks for counting, so after the children have built the blocks, they practice counting. They also practice drawing with the blocks, because they can sometimes trace the blocks to develop their drawing skills.* (Teacher Participant 1).
>
> *By providing suitable activities, for example, using games, such as the use of bean bags, using the bean bags and balls to catch and throw to develop eye hand co-ordination for improved eye sight, the activities help develop the learners sight to see from the board.* (Teacher Participant 4).
>
> *I like videos in the classroom, I google and use the videos, for example, we have smartboards in the classroom, so using videos is simple because*

learners enjoy the videos on smartboards. The other day I played a video of Goldilocks and the three bears, so learners with challenges really enjoyed the video of the story, they concentrate even better and they are able to express themselves much better because in the video, there are pictures so they are able to relate the pictures and narrate the story from what they see from the video. (Teacher Participant 3).

From the interview results above, it is evident that the use of videos and concrete objects played a pivotal role in helping learners understand the concepts and content better, both practices were used by the educators to ensure that learners with barriers are well accommodated in the classroom. The use of objects and videos helps offer learners a better learning experience. Thus, it can be concluded that educators demonstrated an understanding of using a variety of objects in the classroom to respond to learners with various learning styles. Indeed, the educators showed an understanding of what inclusive practices are and the significance of using varied objects to enhance learning and the implementation of inclusive education.

Theme 9: Use of group guided reading

A crucial component of establishing inclusive education is the use of group guided reading, which is a successful inclusive technique. As a result, teachers in the foundation phase view the use of group guided reading as beneficial and successful in enhancing students' reading skills. It is stated that group guided reading is an essential component of a child's learning and reading ability development (Lagenburg, 2000). It is important to note that reading is an integral part of language acquisition; therefore, engaging in multiple strategies is of important. In group guided reading, educators tend to facilitate the reading process of learners in groups rather than reading stories. This gives the educator an opportunity to identify learners with reading barriers. Below are excerpts from interviews that deemed the use of group guided reading an effective inclusive practice:

In language I forgot to mention that I also use shared reading and group guided reading, so I read the story with the learners. In group guided reading, the children read in groups according to their abilities because they are not the same. (Teacher Participant 2)

From the obtained results explored above, it is evident that the use of group guided reading is essential, more specifically at the foundation phase level. Limited results on the use of group guided reading are a result of only engaging with two foundation phase educators. However,

group guided reading is essential, as it affords the educator an opportunity to engage with learners individually and respond to various learners' challenges individually.

Theme 10: *Using stories in group activities*

Gomez (2010) argued that stories are motivating and fun, creating a desire to communicate; they develop positive attitudes and help children keep on learning, stories are also effective as they exercise the imagination. Thus, children enjoy listening to stories repeatedly. It is important to note that using stories in the classroom allows learners an opportunity to engage in learning in a different way; stories enhance learners' listening skills and concentration skills. Engaging in stories allows learners with an auditory listening skill to feel immersed in the lesson and encourages thorough attention throughout. Also, once learners have listened to stories, they engage in story activities that require engagement. Thus, stories not only encourage learners to be attentive listeners, but they also encourage learner engagement, as is evident in the interview excerpt reported below:

> *For story reading, we have stories, we make them listen to stories, then we constantly stop the story, then start asking them questions to see if they understand, learners with barriers are brilliant with that, they have great listening skills, they don't just listen to the teacher reading but they can actually see from the smartboard*. (Teacher Participant 2)

According to the findings, learners, particularly those with barriers, enjoy listening to stories. It is evident that educators use this strategy and practice to ensure that learners with barriers are fully engaged in the lesson and that they are fully involved in the lesson without feeling left out of the lesson.

Theme 11: Adoption of group cultural and sporting activities

Rickwood (2013) argues that the participation of students in school-based physical activity is important for health, psychosocial and academic reasons. Participation in physical activity through sports also has a positive impact in enhancing a positive energy and feelings towards school. Rickwood (2013) further argues that allowing learners to further engage in sporting activities encourages increased collaboration amongst peers and cooperation. It also results in increased self-efficacy. Similar results were seen in adopting cultural activities such as cultural dance, poetry, and choir. An example from one of participants of this study reported that, *we also have cultural activities and sports, while some learners might be slow in the classroom, they excel and do better in cultural dance, or other sporting activities, some are even leaders*

in those activities. They enjoy it more. (Teacher Participant 4). Another participant reported that, *we have grounds in the schools for sporting activities to accommodate learners who are stronger in sports.*

From the obtained results, it is evident that the school has extra-curricular activities that encourage learner engagement in all possible ways, it is also evident from the responses that the educator found it meaningful to reflect on engaging and including all the learners with barriers. This shows that the school has an inclusive cultural ethos, as learners of varied abilities are accommodated in a variety of ways. It is important to note that engaging in cultural and sporting activities cultivates learners' talents and recognizes their potential.

4.3: Findings on successes of inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school

The study also looked at how inclusive education was implemented successfully at the chosen mainstream school. According to Olufemi et al. (2015), inclusive education is regarded as a global phenomenon and concept that aims to incorporate children with various abilities into typical mainstream schools. According to the data gathered, the majority of research participants had a positive attitude towards students with barriers. This is demonstrated by the various successes of the implementation of inclusive education, such as through intervention programs designed to improve students with barriers' learning experiences. From the analyzed data, the themes which emerged on successes of implementation of inclusive education include enhanced teacher collaboration and support, acquisition of infrastructure, increased understanding of inclusive practices, implementation and monitoring of intervention programs, increased peer support for disabled learners, establishment of an inclusive school culture, increased knowledge in understanding identification of learners with barriers, adoption of technology in inclusive classrooms , introduction of remedial teaching , increased parental help with homework and adopting re-teaching strategy. Below are responses and observation excerpts that echo the successes of inclusive education implementation.

Theme 1: Enhanced teacher collaboration and support

According to Milteniene and Venclovaite (2012), inclusive education has been acknowledged as a fundamental method for fostering an open and tolerant society and guaranteeing that every member has access to a high-quality education. Milteniene and Venclovaite (2012) further reaffirm that teacher cooperation is viewed as a social interaction in which shared activities are planned, efforts are joined, actions are coordinated, mutual assistance is given, and issues are resolved collectively. The study's results showed that most participants cited their teachers' greater cooperation and assistance as one of the achievements in the implementation of inclusive education in traditional classrooms. The teachers embraced the unique abilities of others in handling certain

learners with disabilities; hence, embraced other colleagues in this quest. The responses from interviews on this theme are stipulated below:

> *As a grade one teachers, we also tend to work together to assist each other and working together to find ways of teaching a particular aspect differently and better. This is also an example of an effective inclusive support measure.* (Teacher Participant 1).
>
> *No, I would ask teachers who have studied inclusive education specifically to assist with explaining how to deal with learners with certain challenges. So, by getting assistance from an expert teacher, I would then be developing my own understanding of inclusive education and teaching inclusively* (Teacher Participant 3)
>
> *I have been supported by numerous teachers, I was initially trained to be a senior phase teacher, but when I started teaching at Bapsfontein, I was expected to teach grade 3, there were a number of teachers who supported me to teach the learners at a lower level. I was firstly taught chalkboard skills, I was taught how to be patient with kids, I was also taught the Isizulu language, I was also taught phonics, the three teachers who have been so supportive also taught me how to be patient in dealing with different learners. I was taught that as an educator, I should not do anything that can hard the self-esteem learner. So, the support has been ongoing and till this very day we still work well together.* (Teacher Participant 5).
>
> *I get support from other teachers who are more experienced and who have a better understanding of inclusive education and ways of I also approach the deputy principal to advise on how best we can support learners with barriers. yes, very effective, when preparing a lesson, I sometimes find it difficult to explain some concepts so, engaging with other teachers has helped get a deeper understanding of some concepts and how to best teach the different concepts* (Teacher Participant 6).

From the interview excerpts, it is evident that some educators found working as a collective meaningful and helpful. Thus, it can be concluded that educators who interact with each other develop an enhanced understanding of how to teach inclusively, as some educators were not

exposed to an education that explored inclusive education. For such educators, collaborating with fellow colleagues indeed contributed to their understanding of how to teach inclusively and how to work with learners with differing abilities.

Theme 2: *Acquisition of infrastructure*

According to Umar (2019), the purpose of school infrastructure is to first and foremost improve and raise school attendance, improve staff motivation, and improve the academic performance of children. School infrastructure is a critical foundation for effective teaching and learning in schools. Umar (2019) goes on to say that to ensure effective and accessible education, school infrastructure is a crucial element. The study's conclusions showed that teachers cited increased infrastructure acquisition as one of the main outcomes of implementing inclusive education in classrooms. Most of the instructors who were interviewed mentioned the installation of ramps and restrooms for the disabled, ventilated classrooms, and laboratories for students who learn better through exploration. The following interview excerpts mainly explored the acquisition of infrastructure as a success factor for inclusive education implementation in mainstream schools.

> *The only thing is that our school has not been built the same way like other schools, our school has ramps to accommodate learners using wheelchairs, and the fact that they can also move in the classroom. I think it's the ramps that I can think of, even ablution facilities, we have a special toilet for learners with impairments* (Teacher Participant 3).

> *We have ramps in the school from the entrance, right up until their classrooms. There are also toilets as mentioned for learners using wheelchairs. We have windows in the classroom that are not all at the same level, some windows are higher, while some are lower, within the reach of the learners. So, learners with specific barriers are then placed along the side of lower window levels* (Teacher Participant 4).
>
> *So, we use labs more often to accommodate learners who learn best through the use of practical's in the lab. We have grounds in the schools for sporting activities to accommodate learners who are stronger in sports. Our classes have ventilation while other schools don't have proper ventilation, so our classes are really conducive. We have a school hall for assemblies and for other cultural activities.* (Teacher Participant 5)

> *Our school caters for every learner as we have ramps in the school to accommodate learners with wheelchairs. In fact, we already have a learner who uses a wheelchair, that child is well accommodated in the classroom.* (Teacher Participant 6)

From the results obtained from the interview excerpts, infrastructure in schools is critical. The interviewed educators understood the determinants of successful inclusive education implementation, so most educators regarded infrastructure as important measures of creating an inclusive space within the schools. While some respondents referred to the ramps and toilets for the disabled, other educators saw the importance of proper ventilation and windows, and the use of the laboratory for experiments was also deemed imperative.

It is important to merge the interview excerpts by reporting on the data obtained through observation explored in the observation journal. It is important that the entries in the journal mainly corroborate with the interview excerpts about the acquisition of infrastructure.

The school in general, based on the observed, there are exceptional facilities, there are ramps for wheelchairs and well-maintained toilets for learners with disabilities. The school is well built and spacious, well maintained. Learners who use wheelchairs are able to access classes that are on the second floor because of the ramps. (Journal entry 28.09.2022).

From the observation journal reported above, it is highly evident that the acquisition of infrastructure was one of the most prevalent and significant successes of inclusive education implementation. The acquisition of infrastructure, which mainly echoes the notion of the realization of inclusive education implementation in mainstream schools, indicates that there is some form of growth in the implementation of inclusive education. There is indeed progress in creating safe spaces for learners with disabilities, and there is progress in eradicating the stigmatization of learners with disabilities.

Theme 3: Increased understanding of inclusive practices

According to Mugambi (2017), inclusive education is the process of improving the ability of the educational system to reach out to all learners as a strategy to achieve education for all. This includes being proactive in identifying the barriers that may be overcome in accessing educational opportunities and in identifying the resources required. Recognizing learner differences is also an important component. Therefore, it is crucial that educators continually

become familiar with inclusion ideas and how to enhance their practice of inclusion. By doing this, it will in some ways benefit the students who have challenges in the classroom. Inclusive education should also be understood from a social justice perspective; thus, it is evident that an increased understanding of inclusion is a success measure towards the successful implementation of inclusive education. Below are excerpts from interviews from teachers who attended workshops catered by the Department of Education as a way of bettering their understanding of teaching inclusively and gaining knowledge of how to cater for learners with barriers:

> *I have been attending workshops, so in some cases, I got to know more about certain issues through workshops. I struggled and took time to understand the use of 3D's and 2D's, so through attending workshops, I got to know the difference between the two and also managed to teach it to the learners and managed to explain the difference between the two, to the learners. After training, I have never hesitated to implement what we were taught during workshops, so in some instances, after implementation, there are cases of learners who improve.* (Teacher Participant 1).
>
> *I was trained in workshops to teach in such a way that learners are not left behind and that they understand, and I confirm that as at now, I understand most inclusive practices that could be used to assist learners with various disabilities in school* (Teacher Participant 2).
>
> *Apart from getting information on my own through searching, we usually get workshops, so when there are any workshops, then I make sure I attend because I never studied inclusive education before.* (Teacher Participant 3)
>
> *I usually attend workshops; we were taught that learners who are slow in writing should be given additional time. Learners who cannot see should be placed in front and so on. Yes, I did, because I have tried implementing what I was taught during training as a form of support* (Teacher Participant 4).
>
> *The only thing that I was impressed with is that we had been trained to identify learners with barriers, support them, then if learners still struggle even after supporting them, then we are supposed to fill in the SNA form.* (Teacher Participant 5)

From the interview results above, it is evident that one of the most prevalent and key successes of inclusive education implementation in mainstream schools is the increased understanding of

practicing inclusive education through attending workshops offered by the department of education. Therefore, it is vital to note that educators demonstrated a good interest in attending workshops to better their understanding of teaching inclusively. In addition, educators found the workshops meaningful as they helped enhance their teaching experience and methods for dealing with learners with barriers.

Theme 4: Implementation and increased monitoring of intervention programs

According to Martin et al. (2019), inclusive classrooms open new opportunities for group membership and the development of productive learning environments. As a result, Martin et al. argue that to ensure that inclusive classrooms are successful, both the students and their teachers must learn how to effectively communicate and collaborate with one another. Thus, it is crucial to comprehend that intervention programs provide learners with barriers with a better learning experience in less constrictive contexts because educators may provide tailored help to learners with hurdles. According to the study's findings, most instructors reported enhanced oversight of the interventions used in schools for students with disabilities. As an illustration, one participant stated that "*one of the successful measures is that the school issues letters for intervention to the parents so that parents are aware"* (Participant 4). In addition, another teacher reported that *"We have intervention and support programs we also have an active SBST committee"* (Participant 6). The following interview excerpts also represent the responses of educators who viewed intervention programs as paramount and as a success in inclusive education implementation.

> *Monitoring the intervention program, the management monitors the program on a weekly basis, the grade reps collect the support books to submit to the HOD's and then the HOD submit to the SBST committee. Other successful measures are that the district also monitors the intervention program, though not regularly.* (Participant 2).
>
> *We have an intervention program in the school for such learners It is every week, it's not every subject, some subjects, teachers have to be supported the learners in the classroom. So main subjects such as languages and Math's are core subjects that need intervention apart from the class. The SMT manages the program.* (Participant 3).

Even though the responses were from a small number of teachers, they regarded the implementation of intervention support programs as a success of inclusive education implementation; interestingly, the intervention program is mandatory, according to educators.

It is also of significance to note that educators implemented intervention programs as mandatory, in addition, learners with barriers are afforded an opportunity to engage with different learning material and activities that are different from what they do in the classroom. Educators prepare different learning resources and work that is of a lower standard to positively impact the learning experience of learners with barriers. Thus, from the responses, it is evident that successes in inclusive education implementation are prevalent.

Theme 5: Increased peer support for disabled learners

According to Castagnera and Bond (2006), successful inclusion of students with disabilities requires a variety of supports, so one can deduce that teacher support is not the only form of support that is pivotal to enhancing the learning experience of learners with barriers. Peer support is of great significance, as it encourages a healthy community in the classroom and enhances an inclusive atmosphere. According to Bond and Castagnera (2006), one of the most readily available supports for students is other students. Moreover, using peers is an effective intervention as it motivates learning. McCullers (2022) stated that peer-meditated interventions offer opportunities for students with disabilities to learn a variety of differing skills. The findings of this study reported that most teachers have embraced inclusive education resulting in increased peer support among them. Thus, the following responses from the interviews echo the significance of peer support as a success of inclusive education implementation.

> *I am going to refer back to the learner using a wheelchair, I am also not so sure if I understand your question or if I am going to answer it correctly, but I think another inclusive practice is teaching other learners' responsibility in assisting other learners with impairments. If they can see that the learner in a wheelchair is struggling, they should be taught the importance of assisting the impaired learner. They need to know how to deal with the learner, even in terms of playing, they need to know how to play with him and choose specific plays that will accommodate the learner in a wheelchair. So more of an inclusive culture, the learners need to understand that they might be with this learner for a longer period, so they need to know how to deal with the child and understand their condition.* (Teacher Participant 3)
>
> *Besides doing intervention, learners with barriers are usually given more work to be assisted by the parents at home. I also allow my learners to engage with other teachers to get more support than depending on me as their main*

subject teacher. I also allow the learners to work in groups so that they can support each other. I also support the learners with barriers through allowing them to engage in peer support groups. (Teacher Participant 6)

From the interview data, it is purely evident that, while not every educator explored the significance of allowing learners to support each other, some of the respondents found it impactful to engage in different ways of supporting learners with barriers. Thus, it is of great significance to note that successes in inclusive education implementation are prevalent based on the collected data, and to a greater extent, inclusive education implementation is progressing. While the data might be limited in relation to the responses of peer support as successes, the educators who adopted the strategy, to a great extent demonstrate a better understanding of what inclusion entails.

It is of significance to merge the interview results with the observation journal results, as both echo the significance of peer support. Below is an entry from the observation journal:

Learners in the observed class, understand the significance of team work and peer supporting, throughout the lesson, the educator makes sure that the lesson is more learner centered and that every learner participates in the lesson through giving their input. Increased learner support was evident through constant support and scaffolding of all the lessons taught no learner was allowed to laugh at any learner, and learners seemed to enjoy supporting each other in diverse ways during the lessons, especially when playing games. (Journal entry 26.09.2022.)

From the obtained journal entry results, it is evident that teachers continue to understand the role of enhancing inclusionary measures in the classroom. Peer support is vital as it encourages support amongst learners and encourages them to embrace each other's differences in a meaningful way. One of the fundamental principles of inclusive education is that learner differences should not be viewed as an impediment, but rather as an opportunity to learn.

Theme 6: Establishment of an inclusive school culture

School culture is one of the underlying traits associated with the success of the implementation of inclusive education, according to Zollers et al. (2010). A program for inclusion can also be greatly aided by creating an inclusive culture within the school community. Seba and Ainscow (1996) made the argument that school culture is crucial in addressing the idea of improved school development, which was highlighted in Carrington (1999). So, it is crucial to recognize that how inclusive education is conducted is influenced by school culture. The implementation of inclusive education has seen several triumphs, and the inclusive behaviors that were examined in this study reflect the growth of an inclusive school climate. So, one can convincingly argue that other triumphs are brought about by implementing an inclusive school culture. For an example, one of the educators reported that, I *motivate them, I make sure that I show them that they can*

perform and do their best like other learners. (Teacher Participant, 2) The following were other interview excerpts that explored the establishment of an inclusive school culture as a success of inclusive education implementation.

I think another inclusive practice is teaching other learners' responsibility in assisting other learners with impairments. If they can see that the learner in a wheelchair is struggling, they should be taught the importance of assisting the impaired learner. They need to know how to deal with the learner, even in terms of playing, they need to know how to play with him and choose specific plays that will accommodate the learner in a wheelchair. So more of an inclusive culture, the learners need to understand that they might be with this learner for a longer period of time, so they need to know how to deal with the child and understand their condition. (Teacher Participant 3).

I firstly make all the learners understand that we are all not the same, even if you are gifted, so learners need to know that they should not judge one another, I also try to create an inclusive atmosphere in the classroom. A learner in my classroom using a wheelchair has their own spot close to the door in front so that it's easier for them to easily exit the classroom when needed. A learner who has eye sight problems is also placed in front of the classroom to make learning more conducive. So, I am responsible for my learners. (Teacher Participant 4)

The training was effective, it helped me a lot, by going into the classroom you can see if this learner is coping and not and you can already tell whether they can have the ability to do the task. It is also easy for me to notice when a learner has a problem with reading and writing. So, this training helped me with the identification process well. I really do think that in mainstream schools, there should be a special class where learners with challenges are all addressed in one class. (Teacher Participant 6)

According to the findings, educators have a diverse understanding of an inclusive school culture for example, while one respondent suggested improving inclusive education implementation through special classes in the school, other educators defined an inclusive school culture as emotional support and motivation. In addition, from these results, it is evident that inclusive culture can be implemented in varied ways and that creating a non-judgmental space in the classroom is of equal importance, as it encourages learners to understand each other's barriers and strengths and to support one another.

It is important to merge the interview excerpts with entries from the observation journal that echoed the importance of implementing inclusive education through an inclusive school culture. Both the interview excerpt and observation journal data results are paramount as they echo on the significance of ensuring that every learner experiences a sense of belonging through a welcoming culture in the school:

In the grade 3 English class, the learners were asked to stand and sing "if you happy and you know it clap your hands" this was to simply set a good tone for the class before the lessons had started. Interestingly, during observation learners were encouraged to speak in English and express themselves in English, the educator asked random learners how they were doing, and learners who found it difficult to respond fluently in English were assisted by their peers. The educator demonstrated a great interest in understanding the feelings and emotions of learners who have various barriers in the classroom and allowed them to feel included in the classroom through constant support in the lesson. (Journal entry 27.09.2022).

It is evident that an inclusive culture is of significance and is considered one of the most important successes of inclusive education implementation. One can deduce that for inclusive education to be successfully implemented in mainstream schools, an inclusive culture should be a driving force behind the implementation of inclusive education. It is also clear that without an inclusive culture, inclusivity is futile, as an inclusive school culture sets the tone for how diversity is embraced within the school.

Theme 7: Increased knowledge in understanding identification of learners with barriers

Every learner must benefit fully from their education, which depends on inclusive education. According to Mulovhedzi and Mudzielwana (2021), recognizing students who encounter learning obstacles is a vital step in delivering an inclusive education that is effective. According to the study's findings, having a better grasp of how to identify students who have hurdles is crucial to the implementation of inclusive education since it drives teachers to put a range of support measures in place. The following are interview replies that describe how a success factor of inclusive education implementation is greater knowledge in the identification of learners with barriers. *I also support the different learners in the classroom, I monitor the learners, if they struggled, I then re explain. I also monitor their books through marking, if I identified a number of learners with problems, I then re teach, I then give gifted learners their own work to do while I re teach a particular topic to avoid them feeling bored. I also do this to avoid leaving the learners with challenges behind* (Teacher Participant 4)

By intervening and supporting the learners, to give the learners extra work to do at home so that the learners do not suffer individually. Allowing learners to stay behind afterschool. I can also support the learners during my lessons, say for example while walking around the class to monitor the

learners, then once I encounter that there is a learner who is struggling, then I will be able to assist that learner. (Teacher Participant 5)

I was never trained at college level; however, I did a certificate in special needs, I can identify the learner who cannot cope in mainstream class who needs to be referred to the SBST committee for further assessment. I was trained to be a teacher at the university of Pretoria, then I did an advanced certificate in special needs. So that's where I was trained to identify learners with special needs (Teacher Participant 6).

From the results above, it can be argued that identifying learners with barriers is an imperative measure as it contributes to helping learners reach their potential and improve their learning experience. It is critical to note that, based on the limited interview excerpts, some educators considered it critical to be able to identify and support learners. It is vital to note that not every educator received training in identifying learners with barriers; thus, educators who received some sort of background on special needs and inclusive education deemed identifying and supporting learners with special needs and barriers as a successful inclusive measure in the implementation of inclusive education.

Theme 8: Adoption of technology in inclusive classrooms

Ley (2021) contends that the integration of technology in schools depends on successful teacher education programs that support instructors in developing innovative teaching and learning strategies and implementing them in the classroom. A learner of any aptitude can benefit from using different types of technology because some learners are oral, and some are visual. The incorporation of technology was seen by educators as a successful example of inclusive education implementation, and they appeared to enjoy using it in the classroom. It is crucial to examine the interview excerpt:

I think if I can get trained even further of how to use the smartboard, so that I can use it in different ways, then I will be more than confident in teaching inclusively so that I do not just use the smartboard for writing but for listening as well. So, if I can be trained on using the smartboard better than I am using it now, then I can at least try and incorporate using the smartboard to accommodate learners who understand better through listening to other material apart from just listening to the teacher. (Teacher Participant 1).

Yes, it is, as some learners enjoy using technology, they are able to use technology to see certain stuff while we teach them, slow learners enjoy making their own projects that involve the use of technology, some even excel at it more than anything. (Teacher Participant 4).

From the obtained results, it is important to note that though the adoption of technology was prevalent in two participants, every other educator seemed to elaborate more on using smartboards for creating activities as an inclusive practice. Thus, it is evident that, though not every participant reported the adoption of technology in the classroom as a successful inclusive education implementation measure, most of the educators elaborated more on the use of the smartboard as an inclusive practice to ensure that no learner is left behind.

Theme 9: Introduction of remedial teaching

According to Chimhenga and Chitsa (2016), remedial teaching is the use of exercises, strategies, and practices to address any flaws or shortcomings that slow learners are known to have. Additionally, it is said that remedial instruction is required when a learner has cognitively average or above average intellectual ability and can easily comprehend the missing concept and apply it to the remainder of the subject or field of study (Chimhenga and Chitsa, 2016). Thus, remedial education is mostly an interventionist strategy used by teachers to offer support services to students who are experiencing hurdles. Investigate the interview excerpt that is presented below: *Yes, workshops plus studying, I studied remedial teaching both were effective and have contributed to my teaching experience. After training, I have never hesitated to implement what we were taught during workshops, so in some instances, after implementation, there are cases of learners who improve.* (Teacher Participant 1).

From the obtained results, it is important to note that remedial teaching was implemented and introduced because the educator had a good background of what remedial teaching entailed. It is also important to note that the educator proved to be willing to implement inclusive education fully through their own development. In addition, the educator implemented every skill taught and saw significant improvement in some learners who struggled. This shows that initiative and willingness are paramount traits that directly affect any inclusive measure put in place. Though not all educators explored the notion of remedial teaching, it is evident that in the long run, remedial teaching will be of significance in the selected mainstream school as one of the educators already demonstrated an understanding of what it entails, so it can be fully utilized.

Theme 10: Increased parental help with homework

Helping children with their homework as parents is a crucial way to boost parental support and provide aid for kids who need it (Mora and Escardibul, 2018) Several studies have suggested that greater academic achievement is possible when parents are actively involved in their children's educational process because parents are important actors in the production of education and parental effort affects educational outcomes and children's overall well-being (Mora and Escardibul, 2018). The most effective way to help a learner develop and advance

effectively is to actively involve parents in their children's education. It is important to report on the interview excerpt that explored the importance of increased parental help with homework as a successful inclusive measure in the implementation of inclusive education. For example, an educator reported that *besides doing intervention, learners with barriers are usually given more work to be assisted by the parents at home. (Participant 6).*

From the results explored above, though responses were limited, it is important to note that the use of giving learners additional homework for parents to assist with is essential as it provides parents with an opportunity to be fully immersed in the education of their children. It also provides educators with an opportunity to be fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses faced by their children. This encourages a meaningful relationship between the educator, the learner, and the parent. Thus, though responses were limited, it is important to note that homework is given to learners daily, so educators are compelled to assist the child. Though the educators who participated in this study might not have alluded to allowing parents to assist their child with homework as a form of practicing inclusionary, it is obvious that parents are expected to assist with homework as a way of gauging learner performance.

Theme 11: ***Adopting re-teaching strategy***

According to Koboli (2021), one of the most beneficial and additional opportunities for learners following actual inclusive class learning is the use of the re-teaching technique. Re-teaching is characterized as a second chance for both teachers and students to target and fine-tune their teachings through the clarification of student knowledge and learning. On the other side, students have a second chance to learn the material, skill, or method (Koboli, 2021). Re-teaching thus benefits both the teacher and the student. One may infer that it is not merely a

new means of verbatim repeating knowledge but also a chance to improve on previously employed techniques as well as adopt and investigate new ones. Also, it enhances understanding among students. Below is an interview excerpt that explored re-teaching as a success in inclusive education implementation. It is of importance to explore the use of re-teaching as a success in inclusive education implementation through reporting on the interview excerpts below:

> *I re teach, I change the strategy, I am not so sure if that would be then be an example of inclusive practices, I am not so familiar with inclusive education as I only got exposed to it during workshops organized by the department of education* (Teacher Participant 2).
>
> *I also took another chair, placed it next to him to make it easier for him. I also support the different learners in the classroom, I monitor the learners, if they struggled, I then re explain. I also monitor their books through marking, if I identified a number of learners with problems, I then re teach, I then give gifted learners their own work to do while I re teach a particular topic to avoid them feeling bored. I also do this to avoid leaving the learners with challenges behind.* (Teacher Participant 4)

Thus, from the obtained results, it is evident that, though there were only two participants who reflected on re-teaching, educators tend to engage in this strategy often to give learners an added opportunity to better understand various concepts. Thus, it is evident that indeed, despite minimal responses, re-teaching as a strategy is fundamental and enhances the implementation inclusive education.

4.4: Findings on challenges affecting inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school

Finally, the study also explored challenges affecting implementation of inclusive education in the selected mainstream school. This section presents the findings on main themes and sub-themes on challenges affecting inclusive education implementation, as *teacher related challenges* (negative teacher attitude, inadequate teacher knowledge of inclusive education policies, low teacher self-efficacy towards inclusive education and lack of teacher training), *school related challenges* (variance between policy and practice, learner intrinsic defects, limited time to attend diverse learners/individualized instruction, lack of resources, language barrier and lack of efficiency from district support teams), and finally, *community related challenges* (lack of parental support, poverty, negative parental attitude, exposure to violence in the community, low parental participation, fragile neglectful family background, learner absenteeism, physical abuse from home and parental denial on children's problems). The

themes and sub-themes on challenges affecting implementation of inclusive education in the selected mainstream school are presented in figure 1 below.

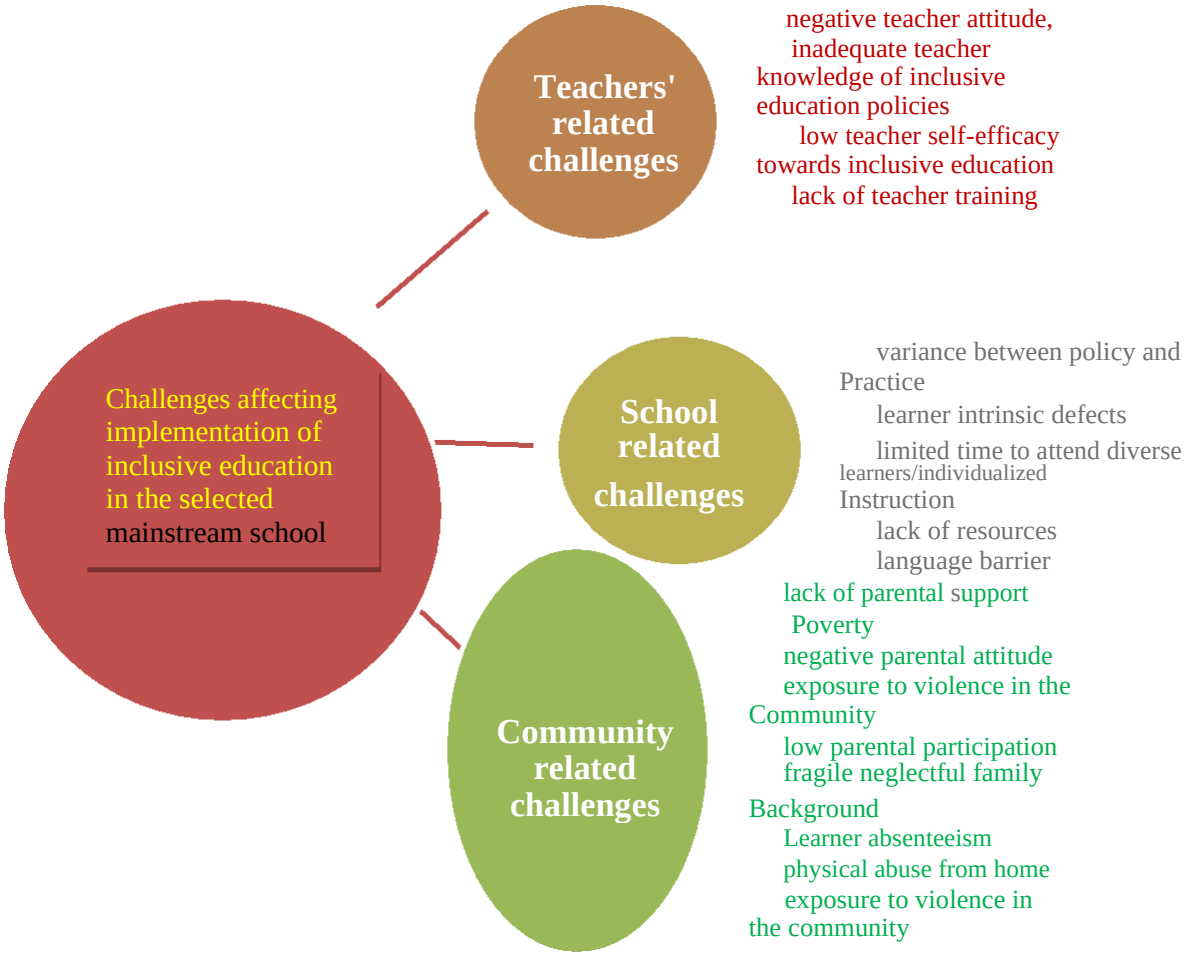


Figure 2: *Themes and sub-themes on challenges affecting inclusive education implementation* (Source: Analyzed Primary data (2022)

The main themes and sub-themes are presented and discussed as follows:

4.4.1: Theme 1: Teacher Related challenges

Teacher related challenges are issues that emanate from teachers, and this affects the implementation of inclusive education in one selected school. According to the findings of the teacher participants, there are numerous personal challenges that teachers face that impede the implementation of inclusive education. The sub-themes reported include negative teacher attitudes, inadequate teacher knowledge of inclusive education policies, low teacher self-efficacy towards inclusive education, and finally, a lack of teacher training. The sub-themes on teacher related challenges are discussed as follows:

Sub-theme 1: Negative teacher attitude

Ewing et al. (2017) claim that teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education have an impact on how well it is implemented in traditional institutions. Ewing et al. (2017) made the case that instructors' attitudes influence whether a classroom learning environment is supportive of inclusive education. According to Ewing et al. (2017), students who express less pleasure and cohesiveness in the classroom tend to have teachers who have fewer positive attitudes towards inclusion. Since it is frequently the case that a teacher's mood affects the student being taught, it is imperative that educators adopt a positive outlook to make sure that students with hurdles are accepted in the classroom. An illustration drawn from interview quotes that address unfavorable teacher attitudes in the implementation of inclusive education. *It has affected me a lot, I ended up developing an attitude towards this particular learner because of how the parents are handling the whole issue of the learner who cannot really see.* (Participant 1).

Below is another interview excerpt that echoes the issue of negative teacher attitudes:

I don't think so, because when we include them in the same class, we cannot go through the lesson fast, we need to teach and think about the slow learners and you need to teach at their pace which bores the gifted learners, I highly doubt it's good for me it needs more time, we usually have only 30 minutes, we need more time (Teacher Participant 4)

From the obtained results, it is prevalent that there were only two educators who possessed a negative attitude out of frustration, while other educators mainly felt that it is pivotal not to allow any predicament to affect how the learner with a disability is treated. It is also vital to note that expressing a negative attitude towards a learner is quite detrimental as it may affect their efficacy and performance. It may also result in the learner's further exclusion. Thus,

learners with barriers require patience. Thus, a negative attitude towards learners is as attributed to other factors rather than educators generally having a negative attitude. It is also of great significance to note that these are very limited results of negative attitudes. This shows that in general, educators from the selected mainstream school have a positive attitude towards learners with barriers.

Sub-theme 2: Inadequate teacher knowledge of Inclusive education policies

According to Du Plessis (2013), the advent of inclusive education in South Africa has resulted in significant philosophical changes for the entire system of education. As a result, it is said that new policies in place have embraced an ecosystem viewpoint, which suggests a shift away from identifying problems within learners and instead places them in all the systems that function as barriers to learning (Du Plessis, 2013). Although the various inclusive education policies have advanced by providing recommendations for inclusivity's implementation, Du Plessis (2013) contends that there has still been insufficient real-world activity to carry out all the plans for the policies. One of the major issues prevalent is inadequate teacher knowledge of inclusive policies; this has to some extent had a major impact on understanding the significance of enhancing inclusive education to break the societal stigma of disabilities and other barriers in the classroom. An example of inadequate knowledge of inclusive education policies is: *I really do not know any, I am blank, I cannot think of any, I don't want to lie. The only thing I know is that learners should be treated equally*. (Participant 3).

From the results stipulated above, it is of great significance to note that, the educator spoke in all honesty about not being familiar with any inclusive education policies, while there was only one educator who spoke in all honesty, other participants noted that they were only familiar with the White Paper Six but could not fully elaborate on what the White Paper Six entailed. Thus, one can strongly deduce that familiarizing yourself with only one policy also indicates a limited and inadequate understanding of inclusive education policies.

Sub-theme 3: Low teacher self-efficacy towards inclusive education

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is a future-focused perspective and belief related to one's level of competence that they might exhibit in circumstances that have an impact on their emotions and thoughts (Zainalabadin and Ma Rof, 2021). The success or failure of implementing inclusive education over the past three decades has been proven by research, and Soliman (2020) asserts that self-efficacy is crucial to enhance the inclusion of learners in the mainstream. This is because research has shown that for the past three decades, implementing inclusive education has been proven to depend on many factors, such as the acquisition of knowledge and skills and other characteristics, including self-efficacy. This primarily demonstrates the significance of educators raising their self-efficacy, as inclusion practices in

the classroom are negatively impacted by low self-efficacy, as shown in the interview sample below:

> *The recent one was seeing a learner in my class who was autistic, I referred the learner to the district, because of following procedure, I had to keep the learner in my class made me feel bad, watching a learner who cannot write, communicate, read, express themselves was so challenging for me. I really struggled. I also noticed that the learner had a problem with their muscles when holding a pencil, so I had to try and make sure that I sit down with the learner and use fine motor skills to help them improve. It was challenging, he usually expressed himself in one word, so I tried my best but it was difficult.* (Teacher Participant 2*)*
>
> *I don't think so, because when we include them in the same class, we cannot go through the lesson fast, we need to teach and think about the slow learners and you need to teach at their pace which bores the gifted learners, I highly doubt it's good for me it needs more time, we usually have only 30 minutes, we need more time,* (Teacher Participant 4)

From the obtained results, it is evident that some educators appeared to have low self-efficacy as the educator has never come across an autistic learner, despite several attempts to assist the learner, the educator was not fully confident and was uncertain of how to support the child who was diagnosed as autistic. Another teacher felt that teaching different learners in the classroom is generally not comforting for them as it creates problems among the learners who are fully competent. Thus, this affected how the educator would attempt to teach learners with varying abilities. From these results, it is evident that educators with low self-efficacy require support to ensure that they are fully competent to deal with learners who have differing abilities and barriers.

Sub-theme 4: Lack of teacher training

According to Mokaleng and Mowes (2020), for inclusion to succeed, educators need training that is efficient and consistent. So, the implementation of inclusive education will suffer if educators only obtain insufficient or limited training. However, it is crucial to recognize that teacher training is necessary to improve the classroom learning environment for the students. In addition, Ozel et al. (2018) made the case that teacher preparation must be considered as a crucial element when it comes to guiding education initiatives in the development of inclusive schools, a foundational training for inclusion. Although training is essential, the Department of Education has not given all instructors' ongoing training the priority it deserves in order to teach inclusively. Below are excerpts from educators who found it challenging to educate some learners with barriers, while

others lack proper training. Examples of educators who explored the lack of teacher training stated the following, *in fact, back in my college years, I was not trained to teach inclusively, I was just trained to teach in a general classroom. So training was divided into two.* (Participant 3). While another educator reported that, *my experience was not easy at all, I discovered along the way of how to teach inclusively. I was never formally trained in college. So inclusive education was honestly a self-training.* (Teacher Participant 5).

Thus, from the data collected, some of the educators lack sufficient teacher training and a background of inclusivity. This caused numerous challenges for the educators as they found it challenging to enhance inclusive education. Lack of teacher training refers to training at the college level. It is vital to note that from the collected data, some educators were not trained at the college level to teach inclusively. Low self-efficacy is also problematic, as it makes it difficult for the educator to confidently accommodate learners with barriers in the classroom.

4.4.2: Theme 2: School related challenges

School related challenges are constraints from within the school; this includes challenges that are more structurally based, thus hindering the implementation of inclusive education. To some extent, the constraints do not stem from the educators, though they may directly affect the educators within the school. Thus, one can deduce that some of the school-related challenges are because of limited support and intervention from the government, and challenges that emanate from other relevant stakeholders, such as the learners. This is prevalent from the findings that are explored in sub-themes, this includes the following, variance between policies and practice, learner intrinsic defects, limited time to attend diverse learners/individualized instruction, lack of resources, language barrier, and lack of support from the district support teams.

Sub-theme 1: Variance between inclusive policies and practice

One of the most important elements that profoundly affect the educational system is how policies are implemented. The policy applies different types of practices that are used in schools. The fact that there have been disputes over how policies have been implemented in South Africa, however, is also significant. Lack of clarity and, more crucially, poor policy execution, according to Donohue and Bornman (2014), are two barriers to effective policy.

Policy should be altered to ensure that policy plays a meaningful role in the improvement of inclusion, as this is one of the issues Donohue and Bornman (2014) mention in their article. It is also pivotal to note that this issue continues to affect the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa, hence policy should be revised as alluded to. There were various views regarding the implementation of policy; for example, one of the educators reported that:

No, because what is written in policy is different from what happens practically, so yes policy is written but practically I do not see any implementation of what is said in the policy. (Participant 4). While another educator deemed policy implementation is ineffective, *yes, it has, at a minimal rate because teaching learners in the mainstream and including those with barriers in the classroom is rather challenging to us teachers* (Participant 2)

While other educators shared similar sentiments and showed very limited understanding of policies, the interview excerpts are as follows:

> *This is a very tricky one, I actually don't like policies, because policies are different from what we do, sometimes we are taught to actually mix the learners with differing abilities in one class but in reality, it's difficult for us to actually teach learners of differing abilities in the class.* (Teacher Participant 5)
>
> *Not really, screening the learners and assessing the learners from grade 1 are then not supposed to be moving along to the next grade, they are actually supposed to be transferred to special schools. So, the government is failing us. If a learner has failed a grade because they struggle, then they cannot be constantly progressed to the next grade because they become a burden in high schools because of their inabilities to read and write. Some special cases can be dealt with in mainstream schools but it's important to remember that some cases tend to be beyond the teacher. So, policy implementation about including all the learners in the same classroom is difficult for us. Some learners just cannot cope in mainstream classes.* (Teacher Participant 6)

From the results above, it is evident that policy documents were found problematic by some educators, some deemed policy problematic as they argued that policy is said to be unreal, what is said in policy, is different from reality, the goals stipulated in policy have not been implemented. The lack of policy clarity and an unrealistic approach to policy have to some extent affected how educators understand the significance of inclusive education implementation.

Realizing the constitutional objectives of equality, freedom from discrimination, and the right to a basic education for all students, including those with hurdles, is one of the numerous issues facing education in post-apartheid South Africa, according to Walton et al. (2009). While it is important to include all students who have barriers, it is also critical to recognize that challenges in the classroom can take many different forms. For example, managing a classroom of students with different needs can be difficult. Physical, sensory, neurological, and developmental limitations are examples of intrinsic faults and impediments. It is difficult to teach a learner who has problems with their ability to read, write, see, or hear. The teachers

who were interviewed said that overcoming internal barriers was difficult and that doing so required enough time and help from numerous stakeholders. It is purely evident that while including all learners is crucial, working with learners with intrinsic barriers is a challenge in the implementation of inclusive education as educators, seem not to be fully equipped to work with learners with intrinsic defects. For example, one teacher reported on intrinsic learner defects which cannot be changed as follows: "*I also have kids who struggle with writing and reading, there are actually kids who cannot do much or cannot do anything* (Teacher Participant 3). The other responses from interviews were as follows:

> *Learners do not finish even after getting extra time, some cannot read, if you ask them to open their textbooks to page 100, they cannot even locate that page in their textbook, they cannot even refer to specific activities in their own writing books.* (Teacher Participant 4)
>
> *Their abilities are not the same, we have different learners, it is also sometimes uncomfortable for learners with barriers as they are supposed laughed at, so I have learners who cannot read and write. Learners who struggle a lot with language, learners who struggle with expressing themselves. Hearing is another big problem.* (Teacher Participant 5)

From the interview excerpts, it is clear that inabilities in reading and writing are a challenge that some of the educators experienced in the classroom. Inabilities in reading and writing put educators under immense strain. The problem of reading and writing is a common one, more so at the foundation phase level. It is important to note that not being able to read and write is a serious learning barrier as it causes frustration in learners. Not only do the challenges of reading and writing affect the learner's efficacy and self-esteem but they also exert pressure on the educator to find ways to enhance the learning experience of learners with disabilities.

Sub-theme 3: *Limited time to attend diverse learners*

According to Ermenc et al. (2020), fostering a learner's optimal development primarily involves putting the principle of individualization into practice, which calls for schools and teachers to plan and carry out the educational process in a way that gives each individual learner the chance to gain knowledge and develop their skills and personality traits as best they can. So, it is crucial to provide students with individualized training and to cater to their various needs because doing so helps them develop their skills. The successful implementation of inclusion through individualization is impacted by time constraints. One of the interview excerpts listed below makes this clear:

> *Yes, it does, so after the parent who asked that I teach her child individually, I never did because there is no time to do that. We as educators tend to know the*

learners better, so I knew that the child has a difficulty but parents insisted that their child understands and does better when taught individually than taught together with other learners. My attitude towards the learner was not affected though, because I cannot despise the learner. I was told that I am too soft so their child requires me to be harsher. I just realized that the parents do not understand the classroom situation, hence they suggested that I teach their child individual and not as a whole together with other learners. (Teacher Participant 4).

It is important to note that the educator could not implement individualized instruction for the learner due to time constraints and other classroom factors. Individualized instruction requires sufficient time and support from both the parental and school level, and to some extent, district support. From this response, it is also evident that parents tend to make demands out of desperation and hope for the best. One can strongly deduce that individualized instruction should be maximized in instances where learners show no understanding of concepts, rather than reteaching every lesson to the individual.

Sub-theme 4: Lack of resources

The most frequent reason cited as a hindrance or barrier to implementing inclusive education is a lack of resources in the classroom. Resources are therefore essential and have a basic role in the classroom. According to Odongo et al. (2015), the education system has failed students with disabilities and other impediments by failing to provide them with the necessary teaching and learning resources to exercise their rights. The implementation of inclusive education is aided by the crucial problem of time. Mpu and Adu (2021) contend that the difficulties faced by schools at the meso-level are related to two key issues, such as a lack of resources and time. Issues with time and resources occur in classrooms. Thus, it is evident from the study that while educators work tirelessly to engage with learners needs, the issue of not having differentiated learning materials is problematic. Below are responses by educators who explored the issue of resources as a challenge to implementing inclusive education.

Yes, the only reason why I say I might have a problem with teaching inclusively is because I only have the same resources in the classroom, I do not have a variety of resources that caters for different learners with differing abilities. (Teacher Participant 4)

Resources, it has been difficult to teach without much of resources, for example our library, we might have a library but it's not used fruitfully, the resources we have are not differentiated, we use the same resources for all the learners, so it's important to have differentiated resources to

accommodate learners with differing abilities. I think we cannot be using the same resources while the learners are all different in their own ways, there must be different resources. (Teacher Participant 5)

From the results above, it is evident that lack of resources is another major problem for educators in mainstream school., From the interview excerpts in relation to resources, it is evident that the main concern of educators was the lack of differentiated resources rather than just the smartboard and textbooks. One of the key factors of the lack of resources is that educators in the upper grades of primary are not classroom based, they rotate. This means educators cannot fully implement the successful use of visual aids and other resources that are beneficial for the learners.

Sub-theme 5: Language barrier

According to O'Connor and Geiger (2009), many South African students are bilingual and attend school in a language other than their first language; as a result, some students struggle academically when learning in a language other than their mother tongue. It's also important to keep in mind that students from low-income households may not be completely exposed to English at home, which makes it difficult for them to continuously speak in English. The excerpt from an interview with a teacher that follows examines the problem of language barriers in the classroom as it relates to the implementation of inclusive education.

Language barrier is a very big challenge, it's a bit challenging because if the child is not the speaker of the language you teach it becomes problematic, but some tend to adjust overtime. Unfortunately, we cannot code switch and use another language, however I use gestures to try and explain at times. (Teacher Participant 2)

From the results obtained, it is vital to note that language barrier as a challenge was only experienced by one educator participant. This mainly means that amongst the challenges that educators experience in the implementation of inclusive education, language barrier is rather a minor challenge, as it is explored as the most prevalent. This simply proves that other educators seem to handle the issue of teaching in English in a much more inclusive way through various effective strategies, rather than burdening the learners without much intervention.

Sub-theme 6: Lack of support from District support team

According to Tlale, et al. (2016), the district support team has a duty to provide a coordinated professional service that draws on the expertise of local schools and targets special schools, specialized settings, designated full-service schools, and other primary and educational institutions. The district plays a crucial role in the school and in the implementation of inclusive education.

Unfortunately, the District Support Teams' activities are not effectively carried out, and the DST's duties also have significant gaps (Tlale et al., 2016). It is significant to emphasize that educators' ability to fully integrate inclusive practices in the classroom is impacted by the district support teams' lack of assistance. So, if the DST is ineffective, educators become demoralized and occasionally helpless. This is evident in the interview excerpt reported below:

> *The district sometimes takes too long, in some cases they might take up to three years, you find that the learner has already been progressed to high school with the very same barriers, so the only challenge is that the department of education really tends to take too long to respond to these learners that we refer. In some cases, after the learner has been supported numerous times but still struggles, the SBST committee will then follow procedure with assessing the learner and if needs be, the learner is then referred to the district for further assessment. Post assessment, we are sometimes told that the learner just requires your own support as a teacher, this is after the teacher has done everything in their power to support the learner.* (Participant 4).

From the obtained results, it is important to allude to the issues of inclusive education as being on the battlefield. There are various arguments pertaining to inclusivity, and while inclusion advocates for mainstreaming and implementing full-service schools in which learners should not be taught in segregated settings, the reality in schools is that educators find it difficult to cope with teaching diverse learners. Hence, some learners are referred to special schools. From the interview results explored above, the DST seemed to be inefficient in terms of responding timeously in assessing and referring some learners with barriers, while in other instances, the DST insists that educators fully support learners with challenges, even after fully supporting the child with no results. Thus, it is evident that the DST continues to struggle to fully implement its responsibilities and duties.

4.4.3: Theme 3: Community related challenges

Community related challenges are more complex; these challenges originate from within the community and are detrimental as they affect the successful implementation of inclusive education. These challenges involve various stakeholders in inclusive education such as the parents and the community at large. Lastly, some of the community related challenges include more social issues. Thus, the effects of the community related challenges have far-reaching effects on the learners and the implementation of inclusive education. The sub-themes of this section are reported below and are as follows; lack of parental support, poverty, negative

parental attitude, exposure to violence in the community, low parental participation, fragile, neglectful family backgrounds, learner absenteeism, physical abuse from home, and parental denial of children's problems.

Sub-theme 1: Lack of parental support

Parental support has been found to be beneficial to a child's development and has, in some cases, helped boost learner morale. Parental support is essential to a child's growth. Munje (2018) argued that parental involvement can benefit children's social and emotional development. As a result, it is interesting to note that educators in schools serving underprivileged communities are more likely to have a negative perception of parental involvement, frequently classifying it as less encouraging and less rewarding (Munje, 2018). This is evident in some of the responses listed below:

> *Not often, sometimes when I try and call the parents to come to the school, they just don't come to school at all. They only come for collecting reports of their child, some sometimes someone else to come and collect the report. This affects the learner, some parents actually respond, but those learners with barriers have parents who just don't respond so it does affect them, some learners are actually aware of their problem and this child is aware of how other parents actually come and respond to the teachers request. The performance of the learner is affected because it discourages the learner a lot.* (Participant 6).

From the interview responses, it is purely evident that lack of parental support affected both the learner and teacher. While one teacher expressed their honest view that the lack of parental support led to developing a negative attitude towards the child, this shows that lack of parental support can to some extent, demoralize the teacher concerned. It is also clear from the interviews conducted, that it is the parents of learners with barriers who are less interested and who contribute less to the development of the child. In addition, it is also clear that from the interviews conducted, the results prove that lack of parental support derails the process of learner development, as it becomes difficult for educators to implement other strategies and support measures without the consent of the parents.

Sub-theme 2: *Poverty*

According to Enwefa and Jennings (2006), poverty has a cumulative impact on all children's academic achievement, including those who have disabilities. Hence, poverty alone can result in poor academic performance. Poverty also frequently increases the number of school dropouts. This is apparent in the standard school that was chosen; some students experienced extreme poverty, which led to other issues in the classroom and at school, like a lack of focus

and a low work ethic. Most of the time, poor parents overlook their children's needs. These are the characteristics and results of poverty. The following are excerpts from interviews that discussed how poverty affects people, "*Poverty, some are orphan's child headed families, some are abused".* (Participant 4). While another participant added that*: poverty is a very big problem, there are some children who are well taken care of from home while some are not, so there's usually a huge gap between these learners. During civvies days you find kids repeating clothes* (Participant 3).

It is vital to note that poverty is one of the major predicaments that many South African communities are confronted with. In addition, poverty continues to be a hinderance in the implementation of inclusive education. Thus, although few respondents reported it as a challenge, the two participants still deemed it a hinderance and a negative contribution to a child's life as it caused some learners to steal from others because of hunger. In relation to suggestions on how educators suggest that issues of poverty should be addressed, most respondents vouched for a feeding scheme to redress the issue of poverty, as the school is in a poverty-stricken area serving a poor community. As evidenced by the limited responses, educators appear to regard poverty as a norm rather than a challenge to inclusive education implementation.

Sub-theme 3: Negative parental attitude

Prado (2002) claimed that crucial elements in the implementation of inclusion programs include parents' attitudes towards the inclusion of both children with and without obstacles and disabilities. In other words, a learner's attitude and the implementation of inclusive education are directly impacted by a parent's attitude. It is crucial to remember that the implementation of inclusive education necessitates participation from many stakeholders, including parents. Hence, if parents have a bad attitude towards their child's education, it hinders the child's development and lowers their performance because there is no accountability. The interview excerpts that follow discuss how learners and educators have been affected by their parents' unfavorable opinions.

> *It has affected me a lot, I am currently experiencing a case of a parent harassing me telephonically, the parents of this learner do not want to come to the school at all. I gave the learner a consent form so that parents could sign to grant the department of health permission to test the learner at school. The form was not filled. The learner sits right in front but cannot see at all even though the learner sits in front. The learner has also somehow developed an attitude too, now this situation is also just beyond me because I do not even know what to do beyond this.* (Teacher Participant 1)

> *Some even go in as far as making excuses that their kids can read at home so how can they struggle with reading in class or even writing. We are sometimes often accused that we do not teach. There was a parent who once claimed that their child is fully capable and all they need to is to be taught individually than taught together with other learners in the classroom.* (Teacher Participant 4).
>
> *Educators in the school are actually different, some teachers question why I allow learners with barriers to have some responsibilities in the classroom, that's because other teachers tend to have a certain attitude towards learners with barriers.* (Teacher Participant 5)

According to the findings, negative parental attitudes are one of the major and most prevalent challenges, demonstrating that parents tend to exert pressure on educators rather than working together to better develop the child. Thus, a negative parental attitude not only affects the educator, but it also affects the development of the child and affects their productivity and morale.

Sub-theme 4: Exposure to violence in the community

Children being exposed to neighborhood violence on a regular basis raises concerns, according to Bailey and Coore-Desai (2012). Hence, Bailey and Coore Desai (2012) further suggested that kids who experience violence are typically at risk for a variety of social and psychological issues, such as the aggression problem. The results of the interviews given below support the intriguing claim that underprivileged populations are more likely to engage in violent behavior (Bailey and Coore Desai, 2012). In most underprivileged neighborhoods, violence in the neighborhood is common, and kids often copy certain behaviors. It is common for children to repeat certain behaviors that is normalized in their communities, as they think repeated acts and behaviors that are immoral in nature are normal. Children tend to find it difficult to discern between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors and acts. Thus, it is pivotal not to expose children to acts of violence and other detrimental behaviors as they affect the child in various ways. An interview excerpt is reported below:

> *We would like to also address the issue of stealing and crime that learners experience from their community, so we really need the involvement of the police as some of these children end up stealing from home and abusing other kids in schools because of what they face from home. We also need social workers, ohhh social workers are so imperative.* (Participant 5).

From this interview excerpt, it is evident that exposing children to violence is detrimental as it affects how they behave in and outside of the classroom. Children tend to adopt this toxic trait of stealing as they are more exposed to it in their home and community; thus, they would then find it normal to steal from other learners in the classroom. It is thus clear that it is important to model good character to positively shape the behavior of all children because children learn and adopt their character from what they see around them. Thus, to alleviate cases of theft and violence in the classroom, it is important to transform certain societal norms of violence that encourage negative traits and acts of violence.

Sub-theme 5: **Low parental participation**

According to Odongo (2018), research has consistently shown that parental involvement in their children's education continues to have a significant impact on both their academic success and overall development. As a result, parents who are not completely involved in their children's education tend to have a detrimental impact on the development of the child in question. It is clear from some of the responses that teachers found it difficult when parents weren't completely responsive to anything involving the child. Parents who don't participate fully don't seem to comprehend their children's difficulties; they are largely in the dark, which is detrimental to the child in every manner. Low parental involvement and participation also affects the educators in massive ways as it becomes difficult for educators to intervene in some ways that might benefit the learner. It is important to report on the interview excerpts. One of the educators reported that, *most who struggle with eye problems cannot write properly because of the eye sight problem. It's sad because you cannot even be fully involved because of parents who cannot even respond positively.* (Participant 1). In addition, another participant reported that, *it's a challenge, because some parents do not want to admit that their child has a problem, only a few responds positively and acknowledge the problem that their child might be experiencing.* (Participant 2). Lastly, another participant reported that, *it should actually be often but we have a problem with parents who do not respond and its usually parents with learners with barriers, they just don't come at all.* (Participant 3).

It is evident from the results obtained that low parental support and involvement continue to have negative effects on the education of the learner affected, it is also evident that it is important that educator continuously receive support from the parents to ensure that the lack of development and support is fully maximized. Low parental support and involvement and participation portray a negative attitude of the parent; thus, it is important that parents are made aware of their significance in participating fully in the education of their child.

Sub-theme 6: Fragile neglectful family background

Neglecting a child and growing up in a broken household have terrible psychological and physical consequences. Similarly, Manly et al. (2013) stated that children from fragile and

neglectful households exhibit poor work habits, struggle to work independently, and may be referred to special schools. Neglected children appear to be at the highest risk for school maladaptation. It is crucial to recognize the harm that comes from exposing students to unstable, negligent family environments. For example, *some of the learners do not have parents, they stay with step parents. Some live with family members who are unemployed, some suffer from poverty, some are abused.* (Participant 1). While another participant added that, *some parents are negligent, parents drink liquor, these kids then struggle and cannot concentrate in the classroom.* (Participant 2). Another participant reported that *some of these children experience their parents doing adult activities in the open spaces as they live in shacks, they then come back to school and harass other children in the classroom because of what they see from home.* (Participant 5).

It is important to report another interview excerpt that reported on the issue of fragile and neglectful family backgrounds:

> *Most of the learners live in squatter camps, these kids experience violence from home, some of their homes have no privacy, they are exposed to intimacy of their parents which is so problematic in the classroom. In some cases, these learners swear a lot because of what they experience from home. The children in my classroom also experience lack of sanitation so they hardly take good care of themselves.* (Participation 3).

From the results obtained, it is prevalent that a neglectful and fragile family background is sensitive and results in devastating effects on the child affected, especially in the classroom and in the implementation of inclusive education. Neglectful parents affect the learner in the classroom, as the child affected might find it difficult to concentrate in the classroom, as alluded to by one of the participants. Thus, if children are not well groomed and exposed to parents who drink liquor in front of them, it proves that parents condone bad behavior, and this might affect the learner in the long run. In addition, if learners are exposed to other detrimental behaviors such as harassment, then they will appropriate this behavior and practice it in the classroom. Thus, it is important for families and parents not to expose their children to neglect behavior as it has a negative impact.

Sub-theme 7: Learner absenteeism

According to Coetzee and Venter (2016), a learner's social and economic conditions frequently cause involuntary absenteeism. Because students spend more time at home than in the classroom, learner absenteeism is considered one of the key predictors of learner underperformance. While learner absenteeism has an impact on student performance, it's crucial to address the causes of learner absence. For example, in the study that was observed, some students reported being absent because they had a long commute to school; as a result,

the weather played a role in whether they were present. Thus, one of the participants maintained that one of the factors that has affected their teaching experience is the issue of learner absenteeism. An excerpt from the interview is explored below:

> *We have learners who travel for long distance, sometimes during winter or rainy conditions they skip school for 2-3 days depending on the conditions, so such learners miss out, it even affects them a lot in the classroom and in their assessments and it does not really reflect well on the teacher. Sometimes these learners end up sleeping in the classroom, they get home really exhausted so it has affected my teaching experience.* (Teacher participant 3)

From the responses reported above, it is highly evident that learner absenteeism was not one of the most major and prevalent factors that affected the implementation of inclusive education, as there were few responses that reported on the issue of learner absenteeism as a major issue. Thus, it is evident that there are limited cases of learner absenteeism, should there be intervention measures set in place of responding to the issue of transport, then learner absenteeism might be a challenge that can be resolved at school level.

Sub-theme 8: Physical abuse from home

According to Khosravan et al. (2017), "child abuse" is a type of domestic violence against children under the age of 18 that includes all types of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual harassment, and carelessness that may have a variety of effects on the learner. It's interesting to note that Khosravan et al's (2017). argument claims that childhood is a crucial period of development that shapes and establishes one's identity. This is evident in some of the responses from the interview excerpts. For example, *if a learner is beaten at home or harassed, he/she cannot concentrate in class, it also causes bullying, those learners tend to bully other learners because of their own background, this strongly affects their concentration span.* (Participant 1). While another participant reported that; *Some are bullies because they experience violence from home. Some steal in the classroom such as uniform (jerseys) and lunchboxes because of what they face from home.* (Participant 4)

From the results explored above, it is vital to note that educators were able to understand the detriments of physical abuse. While the violence from home might not always be fully physical, learners still feel its effect as it creates resentment and creates a certain behavioral disorder. This is evident in the responses in which some learners are said to have become violent in the classroom through bullying.

Sub-theme 9: Parental denial on children's problems

Ho and Keiley (2003) asserted that parental denial is a significant issue that should not be disregarded. Some parents have a propensity to downplay the severity of their child's intellectual handicap. It is reported that parents may hop between specialists in pursuit of a finding that disproves intellectual disability. Ho and Keiley (2003) claim that parents who are in denial ignore contradictory evidence. Some of the interview snippets make this point quite clearly, *the parents are usually in denial that's why they hardly come to school.* (Participant 3).

Another interview excerpt is reported below:

> *Normally the parents deny and disagree, there was a child who struggled a lot, the parent really denied and till this very day the parent still denies the learners problem. I usually use some of the platinum reading books. This boy has a reading problem, he usually crams, he could not read for himself. I would sometimes give him a book to take him, then the next day, he would come back and read, I would then ask where he is reading, that's when I'd notice that he cannot read. So, his mom would help him read and he would cram. He is now in grade 9 in high school with the same reading problem because of how his mom has been in denial.* (Participant 5).

From the results obtained, it is evident that parents in denial respond differently. While another parent might find it necessary to not be involved in any way and not respond to any meetings at the school requested by the teacher, another parent tends to exert the blame on the educator or force the learner to do something that they are incapable of doing.

4.5: Conclusion of the Chapter

This chapter presented the findings of the study. The next chapter aims to explore the summary of findings, discussion of the results, conclusion, recommendations, and suggestion for future researchers. Lastly, the last chapter will also delve into the limitations of the present study.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study's findings, a discussion of the findings in relation to the literature, the conclusion, recommendations, and limitations of the study. Moreover, suggestions for further research are also presented.

5.2 Summary of Findings

5.2.1 Inclusive practices adopted by teachers in the selected mainstream school

The study explored the inclusive practices adopted by teachers in the selected mainstreams. From the findings, it is evident that, to a great extent, educators demonstrated an exceptional understanding of what inclusive education entails. It was evident from the findings; inclusive education was understood as both a rights-based approach and as the cornerstone of social justice. The most prevalent inclusive practices that educators adopted in the selected mainstream school was creating the Universal Design for Learning approach. While educators adopted this approach unnoticeably, their responses echoed the significance of creating the UDL approach in the classroom to enhance the learners' learning experience and to eradicate any injustices that may infringe on the learners' right to learn. Another prevalent study was on reasonable accommodations for learners; this inclusive practice was mainly adopted by most of the educators as they proved that the implementation of diverse measures of inclusion in the classroom created a much safer and more conducive learning environment. Thus, from the findings, it is evident that inclusive education implementation in South African schools is progressing, and that continuous efforts to bridge the gaps in the education system are a never-ending process.

5.2.2 Successes of inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school

The study also explored the successes of inclusive education in the selected mainstream school. The results showed that there were several inclusive education implementation successes that were adopted in the chosen mainstream school. The school's infrastructure purchase had a positive and crucial role because it was primarily wheelchair accessible. Since it sets the tone for the effective implementation of other inclusion measures in the school, the implementation successes of inclusive education in the chosen mainstream school also demonstrated the critical necessity of an inclusive school culture. Also, the study made the case that improved teacher collaboration is equally important as continual professional development for teachers in inclusive education. The results show that inclusive education implementation in mainstream schools in South Africa is, in fact, a developing success.

5.2.3 Challenges affecting inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school

This study also examined the challenges that the selected mainstream school had in implementing inclusive education. Implementing inclusive education is difficult but not impossible, according to the study's results. According to the findings, sociocultural social constraints like poverty still have an impact on how inclusive education is implemented in

South African schools. The results showed that the chosen mainstream school faced a range of issues that were divided into three categories, including teacher-related issues, school-related issues, and community-related issues. The results suggest that implementing inclusive education does not just fall on the shoulders of the teacher in the classroom; it also requires cooperation from several other stakeholders, including the parents, who were reportedly unsupportive and uninvolved. The findings also echoed the dire effects of dysfunctional family backgrounds and the physiological effects they had on the children in the classroom. Indeed, the implementation of inclusive education in South African schools continues to be hampered by several disparities that impede its success.

5.3 Discussion of findings

5.3.1 Inclusive practices adopted by teachers in the selected mainstream school

The study explored the inclusive teaching methods used by the teachers in the selected public schools. The results showed that the adoption of the Universal Design for Learning approach in the classroom as an important practice because it considers the need for an education for everyone was one successful inclusive strategy that the educators implemented. Rao (2021) agrees, arguing that the UDL starts with knowing your learners and their requirements, then choosing instructional design strategies that address those needs. The study also revealed that acceptable accommodations were made for students who faced challenges. In agreement, Roig's (2016) research revealed that one of the most important tenets of inclusive education is, in fact, reasonable accommodation. Moreover, Fanu et al. (2022) reported on the reasonable accommodation of students with visual impairments, in which teachers replicated work in larger fonts and huge printing to improve the learning experience for students with visual impairments in the study's observed school. Moreover, Juniar et al. (2021) claimed that one of the cornerstones to implementing inclusive education is to offer reasonable accommodations and support.

In addition, the findings indicated that the adoption of smartboards to create activities was another implemented practice that educators used in the classroom. In addition, smartboards accommodate learners with differing barriers, such as those who struggle with concentration and those who are visual and auditory learners. The findings agree with Mun and Abdullah (2016), who reported that smartboards are significant as they create a dynamic learning experience for learners. In addition, Samsonova (2018) indicated that the use of smartboards in the classroom positively impacted the learners as they enhanced demonstrations in lessons and were deemed useful for research-based practices. Moreover, Mihai’s (2019) study reported

that learners seemed to enjoy the lessons, and learners with barriers would be more engaged and attentive.

The study also reported that there is differentiated and individualized instruction for learners with barriers as an inclusive practice that was implemented by the educators in the selected mainstream school. The findings agree with Brennan's (2019) study, which argued that differentiated instruction is a key instructional and pedagogic approach that does not mark any learner differently. The study also reported that the adoption and use of music, dance, and games was reported as another inclusive practice, that contributed positively to enhancing the learning experience of learners with barriers. The findings concur with Salmon's (2008) report, which reported that music develops the learner in different phases and can help learners who tend to experience difficulties or other disturbing experiences.

In addition, the study reported that the adoption of a flexible curriculum is another significant inclusive practice adopted by the educators in the selected mainstream school; educators in the selected mainstream school resorted to the use of lower grade tasks and activities for learners with barriers. This finding concurs with that of the Yuwono (2018) study, which argued that a flexible curriculum is not static, as it is adapted according to various measures such as the ability of the child, teaching material, and other factors.

The findings of the study reported on the use of objects in the classroom as a significant practice that educators in the foundation phase used. The use of objects and videos in the classroom is a meaningful inclusive practice as it also accommodates learners who are tactile learners who understand better through a sense of touch. The findings concur with the Mntunjani et al. (2018) study, which argued that the use of concrete apparatus by Math educators to teach certain concepts in math. Moreover, Mntunjani (2018) argued that the use of manipulatives is meaningful as it contributed to developing the thought process of the learners. Objects were reported as imperative as they were classified as catalysts that developed the learners' understanding of mathematical concepts.

Finally, using stories and group guided reading was reported as another inclusive practice used by an educator in the foundation phase classroom of the present study. The findings of the present study agree with Tiarazani et al.'s (2020) study, which reported that the implementation of group guided reading was meaningful as it contributed to helping learners comprehend the text. While there might be limited studies in the literature on the use of group guided reading, it is important to note that one participant in the present study mentioned that group guided reading was one of the inclusive practices implemented in their classroom. Group guided reading is effective as it helps the educator understand the reading abilities of the learners in

their groups. Also, educators in the foundation phase usually allow learners to engage in different texts according to their reading abilities and strengths, this helps the educator develop a sense of understanding of which learners need further support in reading.

5.3.2: Successes of inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school

The study also explored the successes of inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school. The findings indicated that enhanced teacher collaboration was an imperative success factor in the implementation of inclusive education as it encourages educators to work together and continuously support each other. The findings agree with Paju et al.'s (2022) report, which reported on enhanced teacher collaboration in schools in Finland and that mainstream classrooms require collaboration and a strong support structure. The study reported on teachers who would co-teach in the classroom. Therefore, the researcher argues that enhanced teacher collaboration is an important success factor of inclusive education implementation as it also creates an inclusive and united culture in the school. The findings also indicated that the acquisition of infrastructure is one of the most prevalent successes in the implementation of inclusive education in the selected mainstream schools. This finding concurs with UNICEF (2022), which reported that in Lesotho, there is good lighting, ramps, handrails, and low latrines with lids, which contributed positively to creating a much more inclusive and safer environment for learners with barriers. Moreover, Umar (2019) reiterates that infrastructure is a key component in inclusive education implementation as it enhances learner attendance and staff motivation.

The findings also indicated that there is increased understanding of inclusive practices among educators. In agreement, Mariga et al. (2014) stated that inclusive education provides educators with the opportunity to understand learner difference and to view difference as an opportunity to learn rather than an impediment. The findings also agree with Abed et al. (2021) study, which reported that educators who developed an increased understanding of inclusive education and inclusive practices portrayed much more positive attitudes towards inclusion and learners with barriers. The findings also reported on the implementation of intervention programs and increased monitoring of learners with barriers as another success in the implementation of inclusive education. This finding agrees with Nkomo (2018), which reported that two intervention programs were implemented by the Zimbabwean government to enhance learners' skills such as auditory, kinesthetic, phonological, and other various skills.

The findings also stated that an inclusive school culture is essential because it requires the educators to teach other learners how to support learners with disabilities and not to judge any

learner. The findings agree with Revelian and Tibategeza (2021), who reported that the implementation of an inclusive school culture in one of the schools located in the Karangwa district was meaningful as it contributed towards the construction of other inclusive practices, policies, and educational systems. Moreover, the finding reported that peer support encourages learners to support one another and collaborate with each other positively. The findings agree with those of Toulia et al. (2021), who reported on the use of peer support in one of the selected schools in Greece. Moreover, peer support was of great benefit to learners with barriers, as the educator would allow learners to engage in peer tutoring, working in groups or pairs as a way of supporting each other (Toulia et al., 2021).

The study also reported that there was increased knowledge of learners with barriers, which is also another significant success in the implementation of inclusive education as it allows the educator, to effectively plan the measures that would respond to every learner's needs more specifically those identified with barriers. The findings agree with Mavuso (2022), which reported that identification of learners with barriers by teachers in Gauteng was effective as it helped educators plan and design supportive and interventionist approaches to better the learning experience of learners with barriers.

The findings also reported that one of the most significant successes is parental involvement in homework. Similarly, Saleem and Zaffar (2021) reported that parents seemed engaged in the education of their children as they would assist in various ways, such as helping learners with thorough reading, and helping learners solve difficult questions. Moreover, another success in inclusive education implementation is the introduction of remedial teaching, which is aimed at eradicating any weaknesses in the learner so they may better understand certain concepts. To some degree, it requires ongoing support and thorough approaches in the classroom. In agreement, Taukeni (2019) reported that the remedial program was introduced to scaffold the learners and assist the learners in various subjects, such as Mathematics and English. The programs were implemented in a variety of primary schools for learners who received lower grades, ungraded symbols, or who failed dismally. One can strongly deduce that the intervention program implemented in the school is more remedial teaching oriented as the fundamental goal is to support learners who struggle in various core subjects.

5.3.3 Challenges affecting inclusive education implementation in mainstream schools

This study also explored challenges that affect inclusive education implementation in the selected mainstream school. From the findings, the challenges were categorized into three

types: teacher related challenges, school related challenges, and community related challenges. The findings are discussed as follows:

5.3.3.1: Teacher Related Challenges

The study reported that some teacher related challenges include a lack of teacher training in inclusive education, which hampered their implementation efforts. As a result, teachers lacked knowledge of inclusive practices for the various disabilities that learners have. In agreement, Malale and Zwane (2018) reported that educators were not adequately trained at both the service level and the university level. Moreover, the few educators that reported having been trained argued that it was not adequate as they had never received formal training on how to identify learners with barriers and how to teach inclusively. Educators who were chosen to participate in the study displayed a limited and hazy grasp of inclusive education, according to a different study by Phiri (2021) on the experiences of educators in the implementation of inclusive education in conventional schools. Lack of training, more specifically a lack of in-service training, was one of the factors cited for the lack of clarity surrounding inclusive education. None of the teachers at the chosen school had undergone any official inclusive education training (Phiri, 2021). Finally, according to Jali (2014), a lack of training and skills is a major contributing factor to the difficulties encountered while implementing inclusive practices in the classroom.

In addition, Sam (2019) reported that educators in the selected schools in Ghana, the Philippines, Israel, and Taiwan had a less positive attitude towards teaching inclusively and a less positive attitude towards learners with barriers. Similarly, Alhassan, (2014) reported on the teachers' negative attitude towards teaching learners with barriers, such as speech disorders, and learners who needed more professional skills to read and write. In addition, another teacher argued that they were more willing to teach learners with social problems than those with visual and auditory impairments. According to the studies discussed thus far, negative teacher attitudes do contribute to the segregation of students in schools. According to Sam's research (2019), instructors struggled to adopt inclusive education because of their poor self-efficacy. Based on the data and comments presented above, the researcher makes the case that, while efforts may be made to establish inclusive education, obstacles that prevent its successful implementation are unavoidable. Even though very few of the instructors in the current study had negative teacher attitudes, they still put a lot of effort into implementing inclusive practices and achieving success with inclusion.

5.3.3.2: School-Related Challenges

The study found that there were major school-related challenges to the implementation of inclusive education at the selected mainstream school. According to the study's findings, there are differences between inclusive policies and practices. Policies are crucial because they guide the implementation of inclusive education. The issue of the gap between policy and practice was reported, educators showed a lack of interest in policies as they believed that what is said in policies is different from a real classroom situation. This is not only a crisis in South African schools, the inconsistency and gaps between policy and practice remain prevalent in most countries. Haug (2017) argues that policies tend to be either ambiguous or promise too much. This is mostly evident in mainstream schools. While policy nullifies the segregation of learners and the labelling of learners according to their abilities, Haug (2017) argues that in some mainstream schools, learners are grouped or divided into different classes according to their abilities, which is concerning. Mokaleng and Mowes (2020) argued that the challenges of implementing inclusive education in Namibia were vast; however, inconsistencies and gaps between policy and practice were reported to be a challenge in inclusive education implementation. On the other hand, Mambo (2011) reported that teachers lacked an understanding and knowledge of inclusive education policies.

The problem of learner intrinsic defects students who struggle with reading and writing disabilities makes it challenging for teachers to promote inclusivity because they provide challenges in the classroom. Teaching students who cannot read or write is a severe task because it puts a lot of strain on the teacher. Teaching a student who cannot read or write falls solely on the teacher because parents may not know how to step in. Because they may not know how to support students who have inherent flaws, teachers who lack the necessary training and skills may find it burdensome. In agreement, Ogano (2012) reported that the teachers stated that it would have been better for parents to assist the learners to improve their reading and writing skills rather than solely depending on the teachers for support.

A senior phase educator mentioned that she used the same material for all the learners, whereas resources should be diverse, including textbooks that respond to the needs of the diverse learners, which is another significant challenge that was reported in the present study. Learners with barriers lacked their own individualized resources that best catered for their needs. So, it was an issue to not have access to differentiated resources. This is in line with the findings of Mokaleng and Mowes (2020), who claimed that educators lacked the resources to meet the needs of all students.

The results of this study show that the teacher cannot always fully code switch in between the lesson, so if students don't seem to understand what the teacher is saying, hand gestures are

used to demonstrate. This shows that the problem of language continues to be a challenge in South African schools, especially for students who are second-language English speakers. Similar to how Mataka (2020) reported that the teacher in certain instances had to translate in IsiXhosa since the students in their class would get agitated, especially while giving oral presentations (Mataka, 2020). The findings of this study reported that there was inadequate cooperation from the district support team, as they would take time in responding about a particular case of a learner who had to be referred to a special school. In agreement, Mpanza and Govender (2021) reported about the district's inefficiency in terms of inadequate training and the issue of the DBST taking too long to respond to or attend to referrals, assessments, and referrals of the learners to special schools. One can strongly deduce that such instances have a negative impact on the overall system of education, as learners tend to drop out because they cannot cope with the standards in high school, not because they lack interest but because of their inabilities and barriers. Thus, continuous delayed intervention by the DBST causes a lot of strain on teachers and causes learner frustration. This indeed proves that while inclusive education is against the segregation of learners in schooling and finds the notion of "special schools" problematic, teachers continue to honestly find it challenging to teach learners with varying abilities in one class. This is a reality that cannot be overlooked.

5.3.3.3: Community Related Challenges

The study also found that implementing inclusive education was hampered by issues in the community. The results showed that there was a lack of parental involvement and support, which had a detrimental impact on the implementation of inclusive education. According to the study's findings, parents had no interest in helping their child with his or her education. This finding is in line with Mphinwa's (2022) study which indicated that parental denial of the child's problem was a further obstacle to the implementation of inclusive education. Similarly, Mncube (2020) reported that most parents would be in denial of their child's barriers, in contrast to other parents who deliberately ignore communication from the educators at school and would ignore parent-teacher meetings. In addition, the findings reported on the issue of poverty showed that most of the learners come from poverty-stricken backgrounds, and this negatively affected the implementation of inclusive education. This finding agrees with that of Mazuruse et al. (2021), who reported that many children with disabilities are from poor families; the study suggested that there was a direct link between poverty and disability.

The results also showed that some disabled students had family responsibilities at home, which had an impact on their academic performance. This result supports Mafa's (2018) claim that students would frequently miss class due to long commutes and that the transportation problem

would have an impact on students' attendance at school. The findings of this study also revealed that students from the neighborhood surrounding the school experienced violence and abuse. This demonstrates that community-based schools do not run autonomously or in a vacuum; rather, what happens in the community directly affects how the school is run. In agreement, Mkhize and Sibisi's (2021) study reiterate that learners who are exposed to violence in the community are likely to imitate the behavior as it may seem morally acceptable, this is evident in the findings of the present study.

5.4 Conclusion

The study concludes that the inclusive practices implemented by the educators showed an informed understanding of the importance of inclusive education. The researcher argues that educators understood the concept of a learner centered approach aimed at ensuring that every learner's needs are met and that each learner experiences learning in the most beneficial and effective way possible. Most importantly, because of the significance of creating reasonable accommodations for all learners, most of the implemented inclusive practices were aimed at ensuring that every learner's needs are fully catered for and well accommodated; hence, educators fully maximized the use of smartboards to ensure that learners of differing abilities benefit from assistive tools in the classroom.

The study also concludes that the successes of inclusive education in the selected mainstream school are pivotal. Indeed, the successes in the implementation of inclusive education in the selected school echoed a significant understanding of inclusive education as a cornerstone for social justice in the community. The educators implemented diverse successes, most importantly the intervention program as a compulsory acquisition of infrastructure in the school, which echoed the significant growth in creating a fair and equitable system of education. The use of ramps and other infrastructure shows that the rights of learners with disabilities continue to gain momentum and are centralized in some schools, which shows the significant development and transition from segregated schooling to more inclusive schools. An enhanced school culture was another success, and it shows how the development of a child is a more wholistic approach than just intellectual development. Thus, creating a more inclusive school culture is paramount, as it paves the way for successful implementation of beneficial programs and strategies. Thus, the successes of this study are paramount, as they echo the dynamic shift that the post-Apartheid government envisioned for South African schools.

The study finally concludes that there were numerous challenges identified, but it is important to note that there were very few respondents for each challenge, which cannot be overlooked. It shows that with continuous joint efforts and more radical improvements, the challenges that

continue to hinder inclusive education can be eradicated. On a positive scale, there were fewer teacher related challenges than community and school related challenges; this continues to show that a change in perception and a positive attitude among educators towards inclusive education implementation continue to be on the significant rise. While challenges were mostly prevalent in the selected mainstream school, educators continued to implement various successful measures and practices to combat the challenges of inclusive education. Thus, it is highly evident that, indeed, the narrative is transforming, and educators are more willingly serving the community of learners who were previously marginalized.

5.5 Recommendations

From the study findings, discussion, and conclusions, the following recommendations for practice are suggested:

The findings suggest that the Department of Education give priority to in-service teachers' initial and ongoing training in inclusive practices for a range of learner disabilities. This is due to the findings, which indicated that teachers at the selected mainstream school showed informed and increased awareness of what inclusive education includes and successfully managed to apply successful inclusive practices. To address the teacher-related difficulties in implementing inclusive education, it is crucial to remember that teacher growth and training remain crucial.

- The study also recommends that school governing bodies provide additional support to special schools to make them resource centers, which would positively impact mainstream schools in diverse ways and benefit learners with disabilities and other challenges. This is because the findings indicated that some educators in the selected mainstream school experienced a lack of self-efficacy in supporting learners with barriers such as autism; thus, if educators at special schools trained and supported mainstream educators, the implementation of inclusive education would be enhanced.

- The study also suggests that principals make teacher collaboration a formalized program in the school rather than collaboration between specific individuals in the school. This would help to improve the experience of newly graduated teachers who do not know how to cater to students with a variety of needs and barriers It is also pivotal that educators work together continuously and support each other to better the experience of learners and increase the level of understanding for educators who do not have a background in inclusive education.

- The school governing bodies should strengthen and support counselling staff to ensure that learners who are victims of child neglect, violence, feeling excluded from school, and other challenges such as abuse are counselled by professionals. This would help alleviate the challenges of bullying, aggression, and stealing from other learners. This is because the study reported that there were community related challenges that made learners feel excluded from school.

- In South Africa, the department of education should emphasize the importance of inclusive education and make sure that it is implemented compulsorily to improve the learning experience of every learner. The department of education should educate stakeholders about their critical role in the implementation of inclusive education. Every stakeholder, including parents and the District Support Team, continues to fully play their respective roles, but if their support is insufficient, inclusive education cannot be effectively implemented.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study is that the researcher only engaged with one mainstream school, thus exploring inclusive practices, successes, and challenges by teachers in the implementation of inclusive education in one school. This is a limitation as it does not necessarily provide a clear outline of the experiences of teachers in other mainstream schools that would contribute to further studies in the literature of the growing realization of inclusive education in South Africa. However, the aim of the study was still achieved through obtaining different views from teacher participants.

5.7 Suggestions for future research

It is of paramount importance that future researchers who are likely to embark on a research study similar to the present study engage with numerous mainstream schools; this will help researchers gain an in-depth understanding of how inclusive education is implemented across multiple mainstream schools. In addition, future researchers could engage in exploring research in rural schools, this would have a positive impact on contributing to new literature in the academic space and give a clearer understanding of how inclusivity is understood and experienced in schools in rural areas. Studies that explore the realization of inclusive education in South African schools should not only be limited to public schools, more specifically model C schools and schools in the townships, as these schools are to some extent exposed to various opportunities, rural schools on the other hand experience inclusive education differently. As a

result, it is critical that future researchers investigate schools that are out of their reach, such as farm schools and mainstream schools in rural areas.

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APPENDIX I: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

(I) SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE INSTRUCTIONS:

(II) Kindly respond to all questions

(III) The interview schedule consists of 3 sections.

(IV) All information gathered will be kept confidential.

SECTION 1: EXPLORING INCLUSIVE PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION

1. What is your understanding of Inclusion?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Do you think inclusive education is important?

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. How would you best describe an inclusive class?

(You can make reference to your own class; would you best describe it as an inclusive class?)

_____

_____
_____
_____

4. What is your understanding of inclusive practices?

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. What are some of the inclusive practices you've implemented in the classroom?

(If none have been included what are some of the practices would you like to implement?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6. Your school makes use of technology; do you think the use of technology is another great practice of Inclusion?

YES/NO

If yes describe, how would you use technology to teach inclusively.

_____
_____
_____
_____

7. How best would you improve your own practice of Inclusion?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. What type of support have you been given to ensure that you continuously improve on teaching inclusively?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If any support was given, did you find it effective?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If no support has been given, what type of support would you find useful?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

SECTION TWO: EXPLORING SUCCESSES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION BY TEACHERS

2.1 What are some of the policies that you are familiar with in inclusive education?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2.2 Do you think that policy implementation has played a role in your understanding of teaching inclusively?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2.3 Describe your experience of teacher training in inclusive teaching?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

(If no training was received, do you think it has had an impact in how you teach)?

2.4 What are the different forms of successful measures that your school has implemented in implementing inclusion?

(If there aren't any, what are some of the measures you would recommend)?

2.5 What type of support have you given learners with barriers to enhance inclusion?

SECTION 3: CHALLENGES IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 What types of barriers of access do you think have affected your teaching experience?

3.2 What are the different challenges that the learners face within your classroom?

3.3 How often do you interact with the parents of the children with barriers?

3.4 Describe your experience with how learners with barriers have been dealt with in the school?

3.5 Describe some of the challenges that learners face from home that may contribute to the challenges they experience in the classroom.

3.8 Suggest ways in which you think the above-mentioned challenges can combat exclusion of learners with barriers.

APPENDIX II: NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION FRAMEWORK

What is to be observed?	Procedure / Duration
• Inclusive practices implemented by teachers. • General classroom setup. • Seating arrangement of learners. • Teaching practices of the educator. • Classroom learner engagement. • Learner composition. • Assessment strategies implemented by teacher.	Activity • Physical observation and annotating practices implemented by the teacher. Duration • The duration will be determined by the lesson duration of the educator (Approximately 45 minutes – 1 Hour)
Successes of Inclusive education implementation by teachers.	Activity

• Use of technology in the classroom. • Learner support measures. • Teacher attitudes towards learners •Physical and psychosocial support in the school. • Teacher response to learner diversity. • Physical and psychosocial support in the school.	• Physical observation and taking notes of successes of inclusive education implementation in the school and classroom by the teacher Duration • The duration will be determined by the lesson duration of the educator and general accessibility to the entire school and varying facilities in the school (45 minutes – 1 hour)
Challenges of Inclusive education implementation by teachers • General school set up types of challenges varied facilities. • Teacher understanding of Inclusion. • Teacher understanding of learning styles. • Teacher willingness in teaching Inclusively.	Activity Physical observation of educators and the general school set up and annotating challenges encountered by the educators. Duration • Dependent on duration of the lesson of the educator and accessibility in all facilities in the school

APPENDIX III: PERMISSION LETTER

Title of Study: Exploring Inclusive practices, challenges and successes experienced by teachers in implementation of Inclusive Education in one selected mainstream school in Ekurhuleni North district, South Africa

Institution: University of Witwatersrand, School of Education.
27 St Andrews Rd, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193.

August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research at Chief Luthuli primary school no.2

My name is Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo. I am studying for a Master's Degree in Education in the Education Campus at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am seeking permission to do research at Chief Luthuli primary school no.2.

I am conducting research on Exploring Inclusive practices, Challenges, Successes experienced by teachers in implementation of Inclusive Education. The study aims to examine the inclusive practices, challenges and successes experienced by teachers in the implementation of Inclusive Education.

The research requires collecting data from your staff, mainly 6 educators who are mostly from the SBST committee of the school. I will invite individuals from your organization to participate in this study through face - to face interviews within the schooling premises. I will also observe 1 educators' classroom lastly, observe the schooling environment more specifically inclusive practices implemented within the school. Participants will be asked to give their written or verbal consent before the research begins. Their responses will be treated confidentially, and identities (their names and the name of the organization) will be anonymous unless otherwise expressly indicated. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

The results will be communicated in terms of a dissertation.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

All research data will be stored on a password protected computer.

I therefore request permission in writing to conduct my research at your organization. The permission letter should be on your organization's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Amogelang Mamogobo

0748668492

1624241@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor:

Dr Peter Aloka

01171773065

peter.aloka@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX IV: PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET (Teachers)

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo. I am a Masters student in Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. My supervisor is Dr Peter Aloka. The study title is Exploring Inclusive Practices, challenges, and successes experienced by teachers in implementation of Inclusive Education.

The research seeks to engage with teachers experiences in implementation of Inclusive Education. Thus, the key focus of this research is to get a thorough understanding of the experiences of teachers in implementing inclusive practices in the classroom. It is also vital to engage and understand the challenges that educators' experiences and some of the successes in Inclusive education implementation. Inclusive education is a broad significant movement that aims to alienate exclusionary practices that learners with differences may experience. The sole purpose of Inclusive education is to ensure that each learner feels welcomed and that their differences are celebrated rather than deemed as an obstacle. While Inclusive education is a great initiative that centers the learners needs, it is also vital to consider some of the challenges that educators are likely to experience in teaching inclusively. Thus, this study is significant as it not only seeks to understand the challenges that educators experience in the classroom, but it also seeks in understanding the realization of the successes of Inclusive education implementation despite the challenges that educators may be confronted with. To have an in-depth understanding of the experiences of teachers, I have to conduct face to face interviews and do classroom observations, particularly 1 class and observing the schools' inclusive practices, as this will assist in understanding the successes of Inclusive education implementation and inclusive practices.

The interview will be confidential and anonymous. When I share the results of the research study, I will not include your name or anything else that could identify you. I intend on using pseudonyms within my dissertation. With your permission, other researchers may use the data collected from this research study, but your name and any personal information will not be used or passed on.

If you decide to take part in the research study, it should be because you want to volunteer. You do not have to take part. You can stop being in the study at any time. You do not have to answer any questions if you do not want to. You will not get any direct benefits if you choose to join the research study. You will not lose any services, benefits, or rights you would normally have if you decided not to join. Taking part in the research study will not cost you anything. You will not be paid for being in this research study.

This research study will be written up as a research report. The report will be available on the university library website. If you would like to receive a summary of this report, I will be happy to send it to you.

If you have any questions during or afterwards about this research study, feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the details listed below. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical procedures of this research study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408.

Yours sincerely,
Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo

Contact Details

Name of Student:	Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo
Email address:	1624241@students.wits.ac.za
Cellphone number:	+27 748668492
Name of Supervisor:	Dr. Peter Aloka
Email address:	peter.aloka@students.wits.ac.za
Telephone number:	+27 836117147

APPENDIX V: PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET (Departmental Heads)

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo. I am a Masters student in Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. My supervisor is Dr Peter Aloka. The study title is Exploring Inclusive Practices, successes, and challenges experienced by teachers in implementation of Inclusive Education.

The research seeks to engage with teachers experiences in implementation of Inclusive Education. Thus, the key focus of this research is to get a thorough understanding of the experiences of teachers in implementing inclusive practices in the classroom. It is also vital to engage and understand the challenges that educators' experiences and some of the successes in Inclusive education implementation. Inclusive education is a broad significant movement that aims to alienate exclusionary practices that learners with differences may experience. The sole purpose of Inclusive education is to ensure that each learner feels welcomed and that their differences are celebrated rather than deemed as an obstacle. While Inclusive education is a great initiative that centers the learners needs, it is also vital to consider some of the challenges that educators are likely to experience in teaching inclusively. Thus, this study is significant as it not only seeks to understand the challenges that educators experience in the classroom, but it also seeks in understanding the realization of the successes of Inclusive education implementation despite the challenges that educators may be confronted with. To have an in-depth understanding of the experiences of teachers, I have to conduct face to face interviews and do classroom observations, particularly 1 class and observing the schools' inclusive practices, as this will assist in understanding the successes of Inclusive education implementation and inclusive practices.

The interview will be confidential and anonymous. When I share the results of the research study, I will not include your name or anything else that could identify you. I intend on using pseudonyms within my dissertation. With your permission, other researchers may use the data collected from this research study, but your name and any personal information will not be used or passed on.

If you decide to take part in the research study, it should be because you want to volunteer. You do not have to take part. You can stop being in the study at any time. You do not have to answer any questions if you do not want to. You will not get any direct benefits if you choose to join the research study. You will not lose any services, benefits, or rights you would normally have if

you decided not to join. Taking part in the research study will not cost you anything. You will not be paid for being in this research study.

This research study will be written up as a research report. The report will be available on the university library website. If you would like to receive a summary of this report, I will be happy to send it to you.

If you have any questions during or afterwards about this research study, feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the details listed below. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical procedures of this research study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408.

Yours sincerely,
Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo

Contact Details
Name of Student: Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo
Email address: 1624241@students.wits.ac.za
Cellphone number: +27 748668492

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Peter Aloka

Email address: peter.aloka@students.wits.ac.za
Telephone number: +27 836117147

APPENDIX VI: CONSENT FORM (TEACHERS)

Title of project: Exploring Inclusive practices, successes, and challenges experienced by teachers in implementation of Inclusive education in one selected mainstream school in Ekurhuleni North district, South Africa.

Name of researcher: Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo

I, ……., agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:

Please circle the relevant options below

The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about.	YES	NO
I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the study.	YES	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded.	YES	NO
I agree that direct quotations from my interview may be used by the researcher in their research report.	YES	NO
I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name will not be used by the researcher in their research report).	YES	NO
I agree that other researchers may use the information I provide in my interview (depending on their own ethics clearance being obtained) but my name and any personal information will not be used or passed on.	YES, NO	

…… (signature)

…… (name of participant)

…… (date)

…… (signature)

Amogelang Mamogobo…… (name of researcher/person seeking consent)

…… (date)

APPENDIX VII: CONSENT FORM (DEPARTMENTAL HEAD)

Title of project: Exploring Inclusive practices, successes, and challenges experienced by teachers in implementation of Inclusive education in one selected mainstream school in Ekurhuleni North district, South Africa.

Name of researcher: Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo

I, …….., agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:

Please circle the relevant options below

The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about.	YES	NO
I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the study.	YES	NO

	YES	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded.		
I agree that direct quotations from my interview may be used by the researcher in their research report.	YES	NO
I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name will not be used by the researcher in their research report).	YES	NO
I agree that other researchers may use the information I provide in my interview (depending on their own ethics clearance being obtained) but my	YES	NO

name and any personal information will not be used or passed on.

…… (signature)

…… (name of participant)

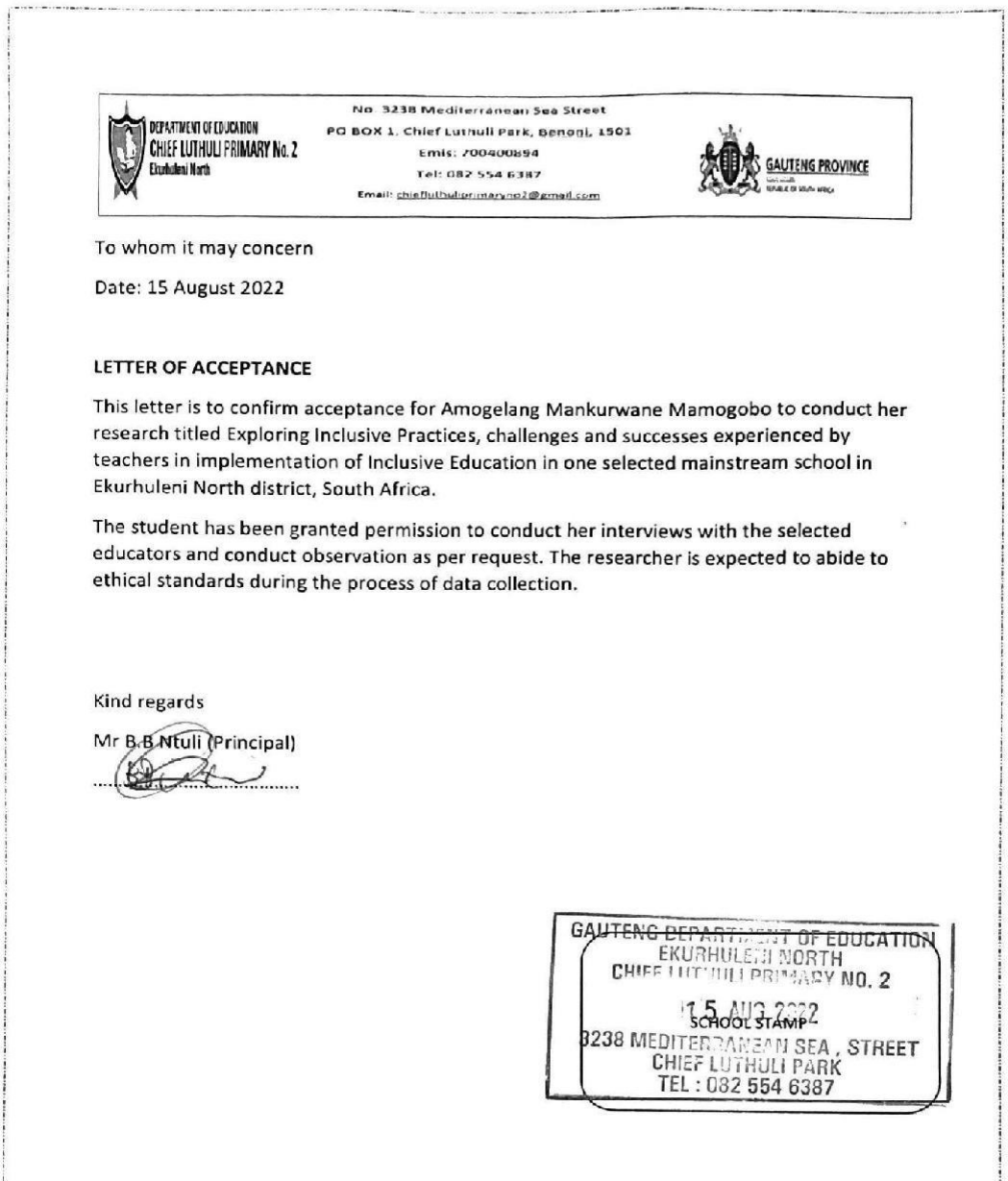
…… (date)

…… (signature)

Amogelang Mamogobo…… (name of researcher/person seeking consent)

…… (date)

APPENDIX VIII: LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM THE SELECTED SCHOOL



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHIEF LUTHULI PRIMARY No. 2
Ekurhuleni North

No. 3238 Mediterranean Sea Street
PO BOX 1, Chief Luthuli Park, Benoni, 1501
Emis: 700400894
Tel: 082 554 6387
Email: chiefluthuliprimaryno2@gmail.com

GAUTENG PROVINCE

To whom it may concern

Date: 15 August 2022

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

This letter is to confirm acceptance for Amogelang Mankurwane Mamogobo to conduct her research titled Exploring Inclusive Practices, challenges and successes experienced by teachers in implementation of Inclusive Education in one selected mainstream school in Ekurhuleni North district, South Africa.

The student has been granted permission to conduct her interviews with the selected educators and conduct observation as per request. The researcher is expected to abide to ethical standards during the process of data collection.

Kind regards

Mr B.B Ntuli (Principal)

GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
EKURHULENI NORTH
CHIEF LUTHULI PRIMARY NO. 2
15 AUG 2022
SCHOOL STAMP
3238 MEDITERRANEAN SEA , STREET
CHIEF LUTHULI PARK
TEL : 082 554 6387

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	23 August 2022
Validity of Research Approval:	08 February 2022– 30 September 2022 2022/374
Name of Researcher:	Mamogobo AM
Address of Researcher:	6 Raven Street
	Crystal Park
	Benoni
Telephone Number:	074 866 8492
Email address:	162424@students.wits.ac.za
Research Topic:	Exploring Inclusive practices, challenges and successes experienced by teachers in implementation of inclusive education in one selected mainstream school in Ekurhuleni North district, South Africa
Type of qualification	Masters
Number and type of schools:	1 Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Ekurhuleni North

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.

23/08/2022

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

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

APPENDIX XI: CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

WSoE Wits School of Education

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS COMMITTEE

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

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER:** 2022ECE058M
PROJECT TITLE	Exploring Inclusive practices, challenges and successes experienced by teachers in implementation of Inclusive education.
INVESTIGATOR	Mamogobo Amogelang
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	**WSOE**
DATE CONSIDERED	16 September 2022
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	No Risk
EXPIRY DATE	Date of submission of the Research Report
ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE	**CHAIRPERSON** Mbokane Dr. Batseba Mofolo-Mbokane
cc: Dr. Peter Aloka	

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

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

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

_____A. Mamogobo _____13/_____10/_____2022

Signature

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesbu

Date

| Pvt Bag 3, WITS, 2050 | **T** +27 11 717 3007 | www.wits.ac.za/education
WATERSRAND | YUNIVESITHI YA WITWATERSRAND