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# Perceived utility of the psycho-educational report to Foundation Phase teachers.

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university.

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Laura Cook

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## ABSTRACT

Despite controversies around the utilisation of specialised assessment within an inclusive approach to education, psycho-educational assessment practices persist in South Africa and are argued to still hold value. Nevertheless, it is essential that psycho-educational assessments and consequently the reports yielded effectively provide insight that is deemed useful to teachers presently functioning in inclusive classrooms. Accordingly, this study set out to investigate Foundation Phase teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the psycho-educational report. The sample of eight teachers was from a single, private Junior Primary School in Northern Johannesburg. The study focused on how useful teachers find reports for understanding and supporting learners. In addition, problems experienced by teachers with reports, and how they could be made more useful to them, were examined. This was addressed with consideration of the requirements of an inclusive approach to education.

Although reports are found to provide the teachers with some useful insights for acquiring a more comprehensive understanding of the learner, there is need for improvement. Reports are generally perceived as useful for assisting the teachers in determining supportive interventions beyond the classroom context, but are thought to considerably lack utility for determining supportive interventions within the classroom. Criticism and preferences for technical aspects of reports were conveyed, most apparent being a problem with the overuse of technical language. Concern for a lack of consideration of learners as unique individuals was expressed, as well as an appeal for greater communication and collaboration with teachers. Yet, despite the uttered criticisms of psycho-educational reports, the teachers unanimously believe that reports still have the potential to hold great value to them within an inclusive approach to education. In view of the study findings, a number of recommendations for report writing are provided.

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