

**EMPOWERING PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS WITH KNOWLEDGE AND  
SKILLS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN CAPRICORN DISRICT, LIMPOPO  
PROVINCE**

**by**

**METSEFEDILE YVONNE MANTHATA**



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**SUPERVISOR: Mr MB Njoko**

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### **Declaration**

I Yvonne Metsefedile Manthata, hereby do declare that this dissertation is the result of my own research, and it has not been submitted in part or full, for any degree to any other University.

**MY MANTHATA**

**05 SEPTEMBER 2022**

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Manthata Yvonne Metsefedile

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Date

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this research for my late brothers Papi and Johnny Boshomane. Their memory will always live in my heart.

## **ABSTRACT**

Majority children with learning barriers are taught in special schools that are few and far apart and as a result many of them end up leaving school without reaching their full potential. Learners with learning barriers can reach their full potential by attending education in ordinary school if Inclusive Education is adopted as the teaching philosophy. Government has developed policies and various initiatives for the implementation of Inclusive Education to provide education to all learners.

The study's main aim was to assess the primary school educators' knowledge and skills gaps for effective implementation of Inclusive Education. The aim is supported by objectives that are linked to research questions. A qualitative research approach and case study methodology were followed. A semi-structured interview guide was developed and subsequently face-to-face interviews were conducted with primary school educators and principals in the area. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the data collected. The study shows that even though teachers understand Inclusive Education, challenges such as inadequate teachers' skills, limited educator support and lack of enabling infrastructure hampers the effective implementation of Inclusive Education. Government should improve teacher support, teacher training programmes and provide enabling physical infrastructure.

The study concludes that most educators understand Inclusive Education. Challenges they face include limited educator support, inadequate educator skills to teach Inclusive Education.





# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

### 1. Introduction.

Majority children with learning disabilities in the African continent are faced with a number of learning barriers in the education system for various reasons (African Child Policy Forum, 2011). These barriers include difficulties in reading, writing, remembering what was taught, and those needing assistive and adaptive devices like Braille technology. Before 1994, in South Africa learners with special education needs were catered for in special schools and not in mainstream or public school's education system (National Department of Education, 2001) and this practice still continues. Most of these learners end up not realizing their potential in life. Post 1994 the National Department of Education (DoE) introduced Inclusive Education to cater for all learners to allow those with special education needs to participate as equal members of society (DOE, 2001).

The Ministry of Education in July 2001 published "Education White Paper 6-Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System" that commits government to provide Inclusive Education systems for all learners. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2005) views Inclusive Education as an ongoing effort of responding to and addressing the diversity of needs of all learners including those with disabilities and of seeing individual differences as opportunities for enriching learning. Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde (2012, 07) argue that the South African government is ahead of most African countries in developing Inclusive Education policies, but a lot still needs to be done to ensure that skills of educators in Inclusive Education are developed.

Government introduced skills development initiatives to enhance their capacity to teach Inclusive Education (DoE, 2011). The study will determine whether these development initiatives are implemented. Schools can run with Inclusive Education programmes only if teachers have adequate skills in curriculum differentiation, differentiated teaching methods, differentiated assessments in a conducive and adapted environment.

## **2. Research Problem.**

In 2001 DoE introduced a White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education Policy in Public Schools with the purpose of lowering barriers to learning for those learners with disabilities (DoE, 2011). Teachers would need to adapt and differentiate their teaching and assessment methods and create a conducive environment to allow learners with different needs to benefit from this policy trajectory. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) developed a framework that could be used to address curricular differentiation suited to lower barriers to learning by addressing wide spectrum of learning needs (Brand, Favazza and Dalton, 2012).

The problem hampering the attainment of this objective is the inadequacy of teachers' skills to differentiate the curriculum to meet a wide spectrum of needs of learners in Inclusive Education (Chataika, Meckenzi, Swart and Lyner-Clephas, 2012). Kruger and Yorke (2010) explain that within an inclusive learning environment, supporting the educators is crucial. Government introduced skills development initiatives to enhance the capacity to teach Inclusive Education.

Many children in Africa are faced with learning difficulties such as difficulties in reading, writing and those needing adaptive devices such as Braille technology (ACPF, 2011). Inclusive education is a dynamic approach toward responding to learner diversity by reducing barriers to learning (UNESCO, 2005). South Africa has developed Inclusive Education policies to lower barriers to teaching and learning (Dalton *et al.*, 2012). Educators especially those at foundation phase are the core resource toward successful implementation of Inclusive Education. Educators should improve their teaching skills and acquire new ones to successfully implement Inclusive Education (DoE, 2011). It is thus important to evaluate skills required by educators to implement Inclusive Education.

## **3. Aim of the Study.**

The aim of the study was to assess the primary school educators' knowledge and skills gaps for successful implementation of Inclusive Education in primary schools in Capricorn Education District.

#### **4. Objectives of the Study.**

The objectives of the study are:

- To investigate whether the skills development initiatives to develop capacity of educators in Inclusive Education are being implemented,
- To examine challenges primary school educators face in terms of Inclusive Education teaching skills in Capricorn District.
- To recommend ways to improve skills development for primary school educators for Inclusive Education.

#### **5. Research Questions.**

- Are skills development initiatives to develop capacity of primary school educators in teaching Inclusive Education implemented?
- What are challenges faced by primary educators in Inclusive Education teaching in the Capricorn District?
- What recommendations can be made to improve the skills development for primary school educators?

#### **6. Significance of the Study.**

Foundation phase in South Africa is the first contact where a child with learning barriers would be identified and managed. Educators in Foundation phase often meet children with learning barriers and need skills to manage them. Identifying challenges faced by the educator and improving teaching skills for those educators who teach children with learning barriers will lay a solid foundation in the quest towards achieving Inclusive education and widening the net to learning.

Educator who is well trained and possess sufficient knowledge and skills benefits the learner greatly. He or she will be able to apply multi-level classroom instruction to lower barrier to learning for those learners with limited capacity to learn. He or she will be able to teach and manage classroom with confidence. Parents of learners with a disability would be much more involved with the teaching and learning of their children since Inclusive learning encourages co-operative learning. Inclusive education skills initiatives introduced by government are necessary in skill development of educators to teach children with learning needs. The challenges educators face when acquiring

skills to teach Inclusive Education will be determined from the study. The recommendation will provide insight to authorities to map up policy to improve skills training for educators towards teaching.

## **7. Definition of Concepts**

### **Inclusive Education.**

Inclusive education is the education system whereby learners with diverse education needs including those with learning barriers attend the same classes with learners without barriers in ordinary schools. Cheshire (2011) says that Inclusive Education is defined as education system that educates learners with learning barriers together with those learners without educational barriers in the same conditions and using assistive materials appropriate for divers needs.

### **Barriers to Learning.**

European Union (2015) says that a barrier to learning includes anything that impedes a child from learning effectively in a classroom situation because of the disability, socio-economic factors, neglect or abuse. A learning barrier negatively affects a learner's potential from reaching his/her full potential. Learners with barriers to learning usually develop a low self-esteem.

### **Curriculum Differentiation.**

It is an approach that is used by teachers to respond and address diverse needs of all learners with barrier to learning thereby modifying and adapting teaching methodologies, strategies, content and assessments in Inclusive schools to lower barriers to learning (DoE, 2011). Curriculum differentiation is done at the following levels:

#### **Differentiating Curriculum Content**

The teacher adapts the content of the curriculum in such a manner that learning objectives could be understood by a wide range of learners in his classrooms. Learners may be taught in appropriate style that help reduce barriers to learning (DoE, 2011).

### **Differentiated Learning Environment**

The setting where learning occur should be adapted to the physical and psychosocial requirement of the learners in that class. These factors include, furniture, class size, etc. (DoE, 2011).

### **Differentiated Teaching Methods**

Differentiated teaching methods involves flexible use of a wide variety of teaching materials, varying methods of presentation, tailored learning activities to learner disability, and organization (DoE, 2011).

### **Differentiated Assessment**

It is an approach to assessment and planning that is flexible enough to accommodate ranging needs of learners with learning impairments. It includes differentiated assessment to curriculum, learner interest and characteristics (DoE, 2011).

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction.

Inclusive Education according to the United Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2005,13) is defined as a *“process of addressing and responding to diversity of all learners through inclusive practices in learning, cultures and communities and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modification in content approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of appropriate age range and conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all”*. It is a system of education that allows learners with learning barriers to be taught in the mainstream school where curricular modification and other inclusive practices are used to reduce learning barriers (Nel, 2014). Inclusion according to Kochung (2011), is an organic approach toward responding to learner diversity in such a way that sees each barrier as an enriching experience to learning. This chapter reviews relevant literature in Inclusive Education and the implementation of such an approach. The researcher relied on journal articles, books and government policy documents and reports and newspapers as sources for the literature. The chapter is organized in subheading for ease of reading.

Inclusive Education in South Africa according to Mfuthana and Dreyer (2018) is closely linked to the principles of a new democracy which is based on social justice and the eradication of exclusive practices that justify the exclusion of learners with disability in mainstream schools. Inclusive Education subscribes to the notion that all students irrespective of challenges and barriers to learning are taught together in an age-appropriate classes and receive support and quality education to meet the level of education assigned to the core curriculum.

Inclusive Education has captivated the international community through various international bodies, organisations and forums. Article 26 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights gives the right to education for all (United Nations, 1948). All people on earth regardless of their age, sex and nationality cannot be denied education. Article 13 of International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

according to De Beco, Quinlivan and Lord (2019) state that primary education shall be available and compulsory to all learners of school going age. The covenants bind all member countries and ensure that all learners including children experiencing barriers to learning should receive primary education.

Education for All (EFA) is an initiative in 1990 by the international community that signaled the global movement's inclination towards providing basic education to all children, youth and adults (UNESCO, 2005). According to Donohue and Bornman (2014) this initiative is one of the major undertakings by the international community that became the precursor to the development of policies that led to Inclusive Education. World Conference on Special Needs Education that was held in Salamanca, Spain adopted a statement on education for disabled children called Salamanca Statement in June 1994. Salamanca Conference was attended by 92 governments and 25 international organizations (UNESCO, 2005). Article 24 of United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) according to De Beco et al, (2019) says that children with disabilities should be able to participate in the education system and should not be discriminated against. Article 24 of (CRPD) put the plight of children with disabilities on their governments to put measures in place to ensure that children with disabilities are provided with education.

Millennium Development Goals adopted by 189 countries in 2000 renewed their commitment to education ideals by adopting six goals, namely: government should provide and expand education especially early childhood education; free education that is compulsory to every child of school going age; provide life-skills programs including learning for needy adults; increase literacy of adult to 50% by 2015; promote gender equality in education; and improve of all areas of education in order to achieve quality education for everyone (Donohue and Bornman, 2014). Donohue and Bornman (2014) say the provision of compulsory and free education for all children of school going age is a precursor for inclusive education. The Incheon Declaration had forecasted the implementation of Inclusive Education using Education 2030 Framework for Action with the main aim being to ensure equitable, quality and effective outcomes of learning as part of right to education (UNESCO, 2005). Mfuthana and Dreyer (2018) say that high quality education for all means that learners with diverse needs include those with learning challenges should also be given quality education.



There should be no lesser form of Education reserved for learners with barriers to education such as the one offered at special schools.

## **2.2. South African Inclusive Education Policy Framework.**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa advocates for human rights of all its citizens. Section 24 of The Constitution enables public schools to undertake to provide a dispensation that offer equal opportunities for each learner through inclusive education (Nel, Muller and Rheeders, 2011). Section 29 of The South African Constitution says that it is a constitutional right to all learners to be educated (South African Constitution, 1996). National Department of Education post 1994 committed itself towards promoting Inclusive Education with the aim to educate all learners as a way of ensuring that even learners with barriers to learning are afforded a chance to participate in society (National Department of Education, 2001).

Inclusive Education is a philosophy based on the rights of all people even those with learning barriers, to quality and equal education that would enable everyone to reach their full potential and human dignity (Nel, 2014). UNESCO estimated that in 2007 only 10% of children with learning barriers attend school (UNESCO, 2005). Kochung (2011) says that there is less than 1% of people with disabilities that can access higher education. He says most of those accessing higher education fail. In South Africa, it is compulsory for all children between ages 7 to 17 years to attend school (Donohue and Borman, 2014). They further state that 70% of children of school-going age with disabilities are out of school. Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde (2012) show that significant strides have been made by the South African government toward development and implementation of inclusive education policies in comparison with other African countries.

The South African government published “Education White Paper 6-Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training” as a commitment by government towards providing Inclusive Education for all learners including those with disability (DOE, 2001). According to Donohue and Borman (2014) The Education White Paper 6, is based on six key broad strategies toward establishing and implementing Inclusive Education system and they are namely.

- “The improvement of existing special schools and the conversion of some special’s schools to resource centers.
- The mobilization of nearly 300 000 children with disabilities who are of school-going age but not currently at school.
- Conversion of some mainstream primary schools into full-service schools, which will be those that are inclusive.
- The orientation of the staff and administration in mainstream schools to the tenets and practices of Inclusive Education, as well as how to make identification of children who may have disabilities
- The establishment of district-based support teams to help support educators with process of implementing inclusive education practices in their classrooms.
- The implementation of a national advocacy campaign to orientate South Africans to the ideas of inclusive education (Donohue and Bornman, 2014)”.

The Department of Basic Education adopted two strategies that are vital for the successful implementation of inclusive education namely: The National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) (Department of Education 2014), and The Guidelines for Responding to Learner Diversity in the Classroom through Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (DoE, 2014). SAIS policy guides Inclusive Education by defining and clarifying the process of identification, assessment and enrolling learners with special needs in categories suited for their learning needs according to the inclusive model (DoE, 2001). The guidelines for Responding to Learning Diversity in the Classroom through Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement is a practical guide to both school managers and teachers on how to plan, teach and meet the learning diverse needs of learners (DoE, 2011)

### **2.3. Inclusive Education in the South African Context.**

Genuine inclusion according to Ndlovu (2019) involves phenomenon in which diverse learners including those with disabilities have access to professional learning within a transformed institution with the main aim of participating in learning being to achieve

their potential with their diversities. Inclusion has a global agenda according to Mfhuthana and Dreyer (2018), but its context is often influenced by local factors such as those brought about by socio-political history of South African apartheid system that favored colonial values as compared to and to the disadvantage of indigenous African values and knowledge systems. The unintended consequence of inclusive education may result in exclusion of many indigenous members of society instead of total institutional transformation of the education system in which all diverse learners are provided with access to mainstream education that reduces barriers to learning (Ndlovu, 2019). Teachers that grew up and teach in rural areas of South Africa are in this context a product of society entrenched in segregation and exclusion and principles of inclusive education may be contrary to their traditional beliefs of segregation (D'Amant, 2012).

South African diverse society with many different languages and ethnic groups during apartheid system have different understanding of what disability is, and the best practice to educate learners with disabilities (Donohue and Bornman, 2014). South African society influenced by poverty, different ethnic groups and previous apartheid policies contributed to the differing views on what a learning disability is and the best practices that could be implemented to address learning needs. (Donohue and Bornman, 2014). Ndlovu (2019) argues that we need the right inclusion framework in order to prevent a continued exclusion of groups of students from previously disadvantage members of the South African society. The exclusion of learners with disability from mainstream classroom together with exclusion of people with disability is a human rights issue (Donohue and Bornman, 2014).

#### **2.4. Inclusive Education Implementation Challenges**

Shareefa (2016) says that there is a growing demand for policy focus towards inclusive education that includes all members of the society. Equity and inclusion should be the overall arching principle that guides all policies, practices and plans in education provision (UNESCO, 2005). Inclusive Education according to Mfhuthana and Dreyer (2018) forms part of transformation and democratization of South Africa. Inclusive Education training in Africa is meant to provide own support for its implementation but in practice there is a gap between Inclusive Education training and its implementation (Mfhuthana and Dreyer, 2018).

Inclusive Education implementation poses significant challenges to most education systems not only in South Africa but around the world (Mfhuthana and Dreyer, 2018). Most significant constraint according to Donohue and Bornman (2014) is the poor policy clarity brought about by ambiguity of the goals, inadequate means for inclusion and poor implementation policy. The policy-practice dilemma especially in rural areas according to D'Amant (2012) could be attributed to conflict between main principle of inclusive policy and traditional values held by majority of citizens in rural communities.

Research conducted by Mfhuthana and Dreyer (2018) blames poor implementation of Inclusive Education in South Africa to lack of skills necessary for practicing inclusive pedagogies in classroom. Implementation challenges according to Shareefa (2016) include, lack of skills, lack facilities, curriculum difficulties, time constrains and lack stakeholder awareness.

## **2.5. Transformation and Inclusive Education**

Shareefa (2016) argues that the effort of inclusivity undertaken by schools should be reflected in their school's vision, mission statement, policy and practice if Inclusive Education is to be implemented successfully. Mainstream schools practicing Inclusive Education should transform and adapt to accommodate all learners' needs rather than expecting the learner to fit in the school system (Mfhuthana and Dreyer, 2018). It is argued that "mainstream schools" should not expect learners to adapt to school system, but the education system should be transformed to cater for all learners with diverse needs. Henry and Namnhla (2020) argue that for successful Inclusive Education implementation to be achieved, there must be a professional programme that is well designed to transform teacher attitudes and resourcefulness to cater to the diverse needs of all learners.

Mainstream teachers in South Africa according to Mfhuthana and Dreyer (2018) were traditionally not trained for teaching and learning in a class of learners with diverse needs but the transition to inclusive education compels them to teach all learners including those with special needs. Learners with disabilities used to attend special schools in the past. D'Amant (2012) says that teachers need to be transformed toward becoming inclusive practitioners thereby refining their capacities in inclusive teaching practice.

Stakeholders should move away from context and notion of seeing inclusion as accommodating learners with disabilities but rather see it as transforming mainstream school system towards meeting needs of all learners (Ndlovu 2019). Inclusive education should involve the diversity makeup of the population and of all stakeholders (Meltz, Herman and Pillay, 2014). According to D'Amant (2012) all stakeholders should participate in the process of transforming the education system to meet the educational requirement of all learners with diverse needs. Radical inclusion according to Ndlovu (2019) faces many challenges of implementation and is often met with resistance in South African institutions of higher learning. Responsive support according to Mfuthana and Dreyer (2018) is required in order to develop pedagogical practice for Inclusive Education in South Africa. The education system should be transformed to accommodate all learners with diverse needs in mainstream classes (Ndlovu, 2019). He also indicates that inclusion in mainstream classes will change the way learners with disabilities view themselves and not to view their inclusion as favour by the able-bodied individuals but as full members of the community.

## **2.6. Barrier to Education**

Africa Child Policy Forum (ACPF) (2011) argue that many children in Africa are faced with barriers to learning in education system for many different reasons. (Kochung, 2011) says that learners with disabilities include people with long-term physical, intellectual, mental or sensory impairments that may have a negative impact on their participation in the society on equal bases. Learners with barriers to learning include those learners with intellectual, physical and sensory barriers that may benefit from specialised support either in the form of specialised apparatus and/or teaching support to enable them to participate effectively in learning and practice (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011).

Barriers to learning according to European Union (2015) include anything that stands on the way of learning effectively in the classroom and may be caused by either socio-economic factors, disability, neglect or abuse. One of the most common barriers to learning according to Nel, Muller and Rheeders (2011) is over-crowded classroom and most emotional barriers to learning can be traced back to family problems. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) (DSM-V) is the most common barrier to learning in lower classes (Nel, Muller and Rheeders, 2011). Children with dyslexia may have

higher abilities than average learners in certain dimension such as creativity and these abilities should be identified and nurtured (Kate Cockcroft and Melanie Hartgill, 2004). Kochung (2011) argues that learners with disabilities are excluded from institution of higher education due to barriers such as discriminative policies and practices, negative attitudes and inaccessible environment. Other barriers to learning according to UNESCO (2005) include lack of schools in the immediate area next to where the learner resides, lack of trained teachers and teacher training programmes.

## **2.7. Teacher Attitudes**

Inclusive Education implementation in mainstream schools could be facilitated by the promotion and development of positive teacher attitudes towards quality inclusion in schools (Ahmad & May, 2018). Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011) define attitude as a “tendency to react positively or negatively towards a certain object, be it a person, idea or a situation.” Teachers are internationally acknowledged to be playing a major role towards establishing and implementing Inclusive Education around the world (Mfuthana and Dreyer, 2018). Ahmad & May (2018) argue that a positive teacher attitude towards inclusive education is related to teacher motivation towards working with learners with disabilities. A change from negative to positive attitudes towards Inclusive Education for teachers in mainstream classrooms is related to successful inclusion of students with special needs (Nel *et al.*, 2011).

Shareefa (2016) argues that Inclusive Education policy regarding specialised teacher support could either influence teachers in mainstream schools positively or negatively. Inclusive Education policy that is ineffective or restrictive has a tendency of influencing teacher attitudes negatively (Nel, *et al.*, 2011). Inadequate Inclusive Education policy knowledge, ineffective implementation of Inclusive Education policy and poor feasibility of inclusive practices are some of the factors that negatively influence teacher attitudes towards implementing Inclusive Education in mainstream schools (Shareefa, 2016). Dalton *et al.* (2012) say that for educator attitudes towards Inclusive Education to improve, there must be appropriate teacher support towards Inclusive Education and training. Many teachers in South Africa are not confident about their ability to teach in an Inclusive Education system effectively (Smith and Tyler, 2011). Dalton *et al.* (2012) argue that positive attitudes towards Inclusive Education,

educator training and effective support are very important for a successful implementation of Inclusive Education in South Africa. (Mfuthana and Dreyer, 2018) say that teacher skills, pedagogical knowledge, understanding Inclusive Education and teacher's attitudes are major factor for successful integrating learners with special needs in the mainstream classrooms. Attitudes of teachers towards Inclusive Education should improve if teachers receive appropriate support with well-planned information (Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind, 2011). It is important for governments to provide targeted support to teachers in mainstream schools that have learners with special needs. Donohue, and Bornman (2014) say that adequate resource allocation with improved infrastructure will have a positive impact on Inclusive Education implementation. Positive attitudes of teachers, leadership, effective support and adequate teacher training are vital for successful implementation of Inclusive Education (Shareefa, 2016). Supportive interactions, positive relationships with learners and teacher pedagogic competencies are related to positive outcomes for learners with diverse needs in inclusive classroom (Henry and Namnhla, 2020). Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind, 2011) say that there is a positive correlation between positive teacher attitudes to Inclusive Education and the support they give learners with special needs.

## **2.8. Societal Attitudes and Inclusive Education**

Participation of learners and adult with disabilities on matters related to schools in the community depends on the values and cultural attitudes of citizens towards disability (Donohue and Bornman, 2014). In situations where communities disregard and prejudge people with disability, exclusionary practices and discrimination will continue. Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011) argue that attitudes are judgements that are based on the principle of Attitudes Psychology that develop on the ABC model namely; Affect, Behavior and Cognition. Attitudes according to this model depends on the mood that affect an individual, how one behaves, his/her state of mind and level of understanding. Attitudes represent a link between cognitive and social psychology and is closely related to opinion based on interaction between members of society and his/her previous experiences (Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind, 2011).

D'Amant (2012) argues that teachers derive their rationality and a sense of what is just by the community from where they come from, and most traditional communities still believe in exclusionary practices that are contrary to Inclusive Education principles. Donohue and Bornman, (2014) argue that societal attitudes towards disability are to blame for the level of stigma experienced by learners with disabilities. Nell et al (2014) say that when an individual holds two views that are inconsistent psychologically, he/she experiences a state of dissonance, and he/she finds it difficult to make those views consonant. It is difficult to change views of professional teachers about Inclusive Education without changing views of society from wherein the teachers come from and this view makes it difficult for Inclusive Education to be implemented, especially in low-income countries where exclusionary views are held (Donohue and Bornman, 2014).

Teachers' cognition and belief should be addressed and their attitudes towards Inclusive Education could be improved by providing them with well-planned information about Inclusive Education (Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind, 2011). Lewin's planned approach to change, including field of theoretical and group dynamic theory according to Meltz, Herman and Pillay (2014) argue that individual's principles and cognitive views are represented by his beliefs and these beliefs determine their possible actions. Lewin contends that these beliefs are powerful forces through which an individual is seen as part of the group that holds similar beliefs, he says that the belief represents a force field consisting of opposing belief forces that are in a state of quasi-stationary equilibrium (Meltz, Herman and Pillay, 2014). By addressing the reason behind teacher negative attitudes towards Inclusive Education and providing them with well-planned information and necessary support, it is possible to implement Inclusive Education successfully (Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind, 2011).

Positive teacher attitudes toward Inclusive Education in regular schools play a vital role toward its implementation because they are the ones who are faced with those learners daily in classrooms (Dreyer,2013). Barco (2007) argues that the negative teachers' beliefs and attitudes regarding inclusive practices have a negative impact in the learning environments and learning opportunities for students with diverse learning needs (Shareefa, 2016). To ensure meaningful and equal participation for all through



Inclusive Education, teacher attitudes and practices towards IE should be changed from negative to positive (D'Amant, 2012)

## **2.9. Teacher Challenges**

Shareefa (2016) says that teachers face substantial challenges that make it difficult to implement Inclusive Education and practices in mainstream schools. These include but not limited to, lack of teacher Inclusive Education knowledge and skills, lack of stakeholder awareness, lack of facilities, curriculum difficulties and time restrictions regarding Inclusive Education. Henry and Namnhla (2020) contend that teachers need to be equipped with competencies including positive attitudes, positive mind-set and effective teacher training programmes to manage their challenges towards Inclusive Education implementation. He says that adequate support from authorities must be provided to help teachers overcome Inclusive Education implementation challenges, to enable them to develop strategies to accommodate learners with disabilities in mainstream schools.

Other challenges that overwhelm teachers according to Mfuthana and Dreyer (2018) include contextual factors such as inadequate materials, human resource, large classes, inadequate training and little or no support from District Based Support Team and Institutional Level Support Teams. Smith and Tyler (2011) contend that rapid growth of new knowledge (information expansion) regarding effective Inclusive Education teaching practices and myriad of professional development programs overwhelm many teachers. Every teacher should determine areas of deficiencies that he/she needs to develop on, depending on type of learner disabilities and needs at institution where he/she works (Henry and Namnhla, 2020).

Teachers working and living in rural areas often must deal with traditional beliefs and values from the community from which they live in, that contrast with new approach of Inclusive Education pedagogy (D'Amant, 2012). It is often a challenge for these teachers to reconcile contradictions between old familiar belief systems and new unfamiliar approach of inclusion in schools (D'Amant, 2012). Smith and Tyler (2011) say that teacher training programs have not produced enough teachers and principals to teach and manage learners with special needs. Challenges faced by teachers include inadequate support, lack of adapted facilities and materials, ineffective

legislation and policies, inadequate training programs and lack of relevant research information (Sheefa 2016).

## **2.10. Strategies for Teaching Inclusive Education**

Drafting of The Education White Paper 6 showed the commitment by South African government towards transforming education and training system in South Africa and to provide Inclusive Education and support to all South Africans with barriers to learn school curriculum (DoE, 2001). These curricula barriers according to DoE (2001) arise from many learning areas in the form of content, curricular organization and time constraints to complete curricula, language, teaching methodologies, assessment and support etc. Inclusive Education offers differentiated curriculum to learners with diverse needs through modes and models of delivery to accommodate diverse teaching and learning requirements of learners with special needs (DOE, 2001). It is thus vital for teachers to know how to respond to learner diversity in classroom through differentiated curricular, differentiated assessment and individualized support to the learner whilst he/she also receives support from the DoE, parents and community. Teachers should approach teaching from a position that recognizes the unique gifts of an individual learner and address those needs accordingly, and he/she should continuously re-evaluate and fine-tune teaching methods, strategies in a way that meets the evolving needs of individuals with disabilities.

### **Universal Design for Learning (UDL).**

Universal Design for Learning according to Dalton, Mackenzi and Kaonde (2012) developed a teaching framework to address curricular differentiation to enable teaching learners with diverse needs in a single classroom. According to Dalton, Mckenzie, Kahonde, (2012), UDL is useful and an appropriate strategy for curriculum differentiation in an inclusive classroom environment. It is a framework that emphasizes the need for a flexible curriculum design and presentation in an inclusive classroom in order to lower learning barriers with intension to enable learners with varying needs to be accommodated in a single classroom. Dalton, et al. (2012) says that “UDL is based in the field of cognitive science and neuroscience that address the understanding of how we learn through memory, language processing, perception, problem solving, and thinking”. It is, according to Dalton, et al. (2012) a model to helps teachers to intergrade varying approaches to teaching and learning in methods,

materials, goals, instructions and assessments that could benefit learners with diverse learning needs.

According to Rao and Meo (2016), UDL framework is based on guidelines by Centre for Applied Special Technology (CAST) and is made up of three core principles of representation, action and expression, and engagement that help the teacher to build flexible strategies to learning and teaching in inclusive classroom. These principles are as follows:

- *Multiple Means of Representation:*  
These principles provide for multiple flexible materials and options for presentation on the following
  - Perception: provide material to stimulate areas such as visual and auditory and tactile perception,
  - Language, symbols and mathematical expressions and
  - Comprehensions.
  
- *Multiple Means of Action and Expression:*
  - Multiple ways of physical action,
  - Multiple ways of communication and that of expression and
  - Executive action.
  
- *Multiple Means of Engagement:*
  - Recruiting interest, Sustaining effort and persistence and Self-regulation.

### **Curriculum Differentiation**

Ahmad and May (2018) argue that learners with barriers to learning have difficulties in following curriculum that is developed for general mainstream schools for learners without disabilities. It is important for teachers to possess skills that enables them to adapt their teaching methods to reduce learning barriers to include learners with diverse needs and to assess the effectiveness of their methods towards teaching in inclusive schools (Smith and Tyle, 2011). Some teachers do not possess the skills of individualized lesson planning and modification as such they cannot offer

individualized support to learners with diverse need (Shareefa, 2016). Curricular modification and adaptation require that teacher move away from old practices of separate learning towards inclusive practices (Smyth and Tyle 2011). Shareefa (2016) argue that it would take a long time before success of curricular modification especially in institutions of higher learning become realized. Curriculum differentiation is a useful strategy available for teachers in inclusive classroom because it involves adapting teaching methodologies, assessments and curricular contents to diverse learner needs (DoE, 2014). The teachers in inclusive classroom should be able to differentiate curricular content, assessment, teaching methodologies and the learning environment to suit individual learner needs.

### **Differentiating Curricular Content**

Shareefa (2016) argues that it is of vital importance for teachers to adapt the curriculum content and its presentation in inclusive schools so that learners with barriers to learning should not be left behind. Content differentiation is a process that involves adapting the content of the curriculum and present it in a manageable way to meet the learning objectives of a subject matter without leaving anyone behind (DoE, 2014). Subject content includes the learning objectives that the learner needs to acquire, and it includes concepts, facts and skill set and competencies needed at a particular learning level (DoE, 2014).

Learners in an inclusive classroom learn at different pace and are usually at different level of understanding as such, the teacher should adopt multilevel teaching at different level of abstractness, complexity and variety of materials that are appropriate to different levels of intellects (DOE, 2014). Content differentiation should be done at the level of abstractness, complexities and variety. The content differentiation should be modified and adapted to individual learner needs at the level generalizations of key concepts, facts, patterns description, definitions (DoE, 2014). Complex aspects of curriculum should be adapted to the level of understanding of diverse intellect of individual learner. Curriculum content adaptation and differentiation in inclusive schools doubles up the responsibilities of teachers due to the fact that they will have to prepare regular preparation for learners without disabilities and the individualized materials for learners with disabilities (Ahmad and May, 2018).

### **Differentiating the Learning Environment**

The teacher should make the setting, the physical place of learning or the learning environment conducive for learning (DoE, 2014). The learning environment could be either physical or psychosocial setting. Psychosocial environment includes situations such as interpersonal cooperation, classroom and school culture, effective communication including protection from harassment and harm (DoE, 2014). This soft learning environment is very important for both mental and social development of a learner including his self-esteem. Shareefa (2016) says that the emotional development of learners with special needs would be enhanced by the positive psychosocial environment.

The physical environment includes spatial arrangement of a learning area including classroom infrastructure, furniture arrangement, resources and noise level (DoE, 2014). Shareefa (2016) says that it is important to improve the physical environment by providing facilities to enhance flexibility and accessibility to children with special needs. Shareefa (2016) indicates that learners with poor eyesight may need to be closer to writing board and those with poor hearing may need to be close to the teacher, learners with attention deficit disorder (ADHD) may be separated and to prevent distracting other learners (DoE 2014).

### **Differentiating Teaching Methods**

Inclusive classroom caters for learning needs of diverse group of learners with varying barriers to learning, they require differentiated teaching methods and strategies to ensure that all learners participate (DoE, 2014). The teachers use flexible methods of presentation of curriculum, learning materials, lesson organization and learning activities in such a manner that it is appropriate for the learning needs of all learners (Ahmad and May, 2018).

### **Differentiated Learning Materials**

Teachers use a wide range of graded and adapted learning materials to suite wide range of learning needs and styles (DoE, 2014). Shareefa (2016) recommends that schools should be provided with materials that are needed to help effect curricular differentiation and differentiated learning activities. These materials range from large prints for learners with poor vision to electronic learning material via e-learning that the teacher may adapt to teach wide range of learning needs (DoE, 2014). Assistive

materials and devices help teachers in planning and developing curricular differentiation, presentation and assessment strategies (Mfuthana and Dreyer, 2018). Institutions must provide assistive devices to learners with special needs to reduce barriers to learning such as eye trackers, hearing loops, computers (Kindles), wheelchairs and built environment (Ndlovu, 2019).

### **Differentiated Learning Presentation**

There is a need to differentiate the methods and format in which task is presented in terms of complexities in all areas including illustrations, graphs, tables, picture diagrams, written description and explanations and adapted visual materials (DoE, 2014). Teachers must possess skills that enable them to adapt their presentation and instruction of their curricular needs based on latest research-based methods of teaching (Smith and Tyler, 2011). Concepts such as scaffolding, flexible lesson presentation, enhanced or enriched learning, and straddled learning are useful for a differentiated learning presentation (DoE, 2014).

## **2.11. Inclusive Education Models**

### ***Medical Model***

Medical Model according to Masoumeh and Leila (2012) view barriers to learning as caused by a disorder or disease and educational treatment of the barriers is dependent on the diagnosis of the disease or the disorder that caused the learning barrier. This view resulted in learners with disabilities been excluded from general mainstream education because the system seeks to change them rather than changing the institution to adapt and to become inclusive (Ndlovu 2019). Medical model according to Massourmeh and Leila (2012) is based on the understanding that learning difficulties are caused by genetic factors, biological function errors and neurologic dysfunctions and this view necessitates the need for regular consultation between healthcare and educational professionals in order to plan the way of teaching learners with disabilities.

Supporters of the Medical Model believe that learners with special needs may perform above or below normal and this fact may pose teaching difficulties and as a result they would benefit from special education in special schools (Meltz, Herman and Pillay,

2014). “The model assumes that a comprehensive diagnosis of physical, neurological and biological disorders should precedes intervention in educational setting”, so it is important to know and understand the diagnosis that caused the disabilities and its impact on education and the society (Massoumeh and Leila, 2012). Teachers in South Africa according to Donohue and Bornmann (2014) have been trained either as general or special education teachers and these practices produced teachers that do not possess skills to teach learners with diverse needs in mainstream education.

Socially constructed normal which is desirable is at the center and is define and conceptualized as normal and the deficit lies in subjects who are on the margins of normality and they should be normalized or accommodated at the center (Meltz, Herman and Pillay, 2014). Medical Model and Special Education approach see learners with barriers as belonging to a separate category of normality in which they need separate staff, authority and funding that must be provided for, in separate setting and this discourse promotes tolerance of learners with disabilities and limits the chance of success of implementation of Inclusive Education (Meltz, Herman and Pillay, 2014). Special education model according to Meltz, Herman and Pillay (2014) support the medical discourse and supports the exclusion of learners with barriers to leaning to be taught in separate settings.

### ***Social Justice Model***

Social justice model moves away from the deficit construct as the cause of disability and the resultant need to normalize the impairment that perpetuate exclusion and marginalization (Walton and Lloyd, 2012). It subscribes to the notion that transforms education and learning context to include all students and not just pasting learners with disabilities on to the mainstream school through accommodation (Ndlovu, 2019). Social Justice Model is based on the principle of solidarity and equity that understands and values disability and human dignity (Melts, Herman and Pillay, 2014).

South African democracy is built on the principle of social justice and eradication of exclusion especially through education which is the bases of Inclusive Education (Mfuthwana and Dreyer, 2018). Social justice model embraces all and views inclusion as part of equitable society and sees diversity as an important component of society and not as disability and this ideal should be promoted at inclusive schools (Meltz, Herman and Pillay, 2014). Social Justice Model subscribes to the principle that beliefs,

attitudes and values by the community are the ones that cause disability and education is a tool that could treat the prejudicial attitudes, values and beliefs in society (Meltz, Herman and Pillay, 2014).

Social Justice Model sees disability as a result of exclusionary social practices based on cultural attitudes and dispels the belief that impairments cause disability. Supporters of Social justice model believe that disability is forced upon people with impairment by dominant social structure and that discrimination and marginalization must be reduced by removing disabling barriers (Meltz, Hermann and Pillay, 2014). Donohue and Bornman (2014) argue that an average teacher in South Africa is above 50 years old and hence many of these teachers were not trained to teach in Inclusive Education system during in-service training and it would be difficult to orientate them to teach inclusive education now. Disability according to the Social Justice Model should not be used to deny access to education to the people with impairment but to promote equity in education (Meltz, Hermann and Pillay, 2014). Inclusive education is dependent on the pragmatic use of resources, pedagogical consideration, infrastructure and equity.

## **2.12. Theoretical Frameworks**

### **Bronfenbrenner`s Ecological System Theory.**

Nel (2014) says that Bronfenbrenner`s ecological systems theory approaches Inclusive Education from a systems point of view, where these systems in the society are interrelated in such a way that supports development in learners towards growth and development (psychological, physical, social and cultural development) and these systems include classroom and school environment, community and government.

These systems are interrelated in such a way that whatever happens in one system affects and interacts with other systems over time (Nel, 2014). Bronfenbrenner`s ecological theory explains how the quality and the context of the environment within which the child interacts helps him/her develop. The development and interactions become more complex as the cognitive development of a learner matures (Nel, 2014). The model explains the hierarchy of systems of influences that has a bearing on the child`s development. There are five levels of systems of influences namely: the



microsystem, mesosystem, macro-system, exo-system and chronosystem (Nel, 2014).

- *Microsystem*

This layer of the systems is the one closest and interacts with the child directly, it includes, family, peers and the classroom (Nel, 2014). The child's development is mostly influence by the environment that he closely interacts with (microsystem). The child with special needs will benefit greatly by sharing with other children without disability through horizontal learning (peer to peer) learning and through vertically learning (from teacher to learner).

- *Mesosystem*

This is a second layer in the hierarchy of ecological systems that involves interaction between microsystems such as the microsystem in the family sphere and the microsystem in the classroom sphere (Nel, 2014). The collaborative nature of parents, teacher and peers without disability will enhance the development of child with disability greatly.

- *Exo-systems*

The exo-system is a layer in the child environment that is out the child's direct interaction (Nel, 2014). The example of exo-system would be the community within which the learner finds him/herself. The exo-system's influence is indirect.

- *Macro-system*

This system in the hierarchy refers to the culture the child find himself in it has a distant collective influence it the child's development (Nel, 2014).

- *Chronosystem:*

This refers to environment influences of these systems over time Nel (201

### ***Vygotsky Socio-cultural Theory.***

According to (Shabania, Kathib, and Ebadi, 2010), Lev Vygotsky believed that children learn and develop through active participatory hands on experience and through collaborative involvement with peers, parents and teachers.

The gap between the level of cognitive development at which the child operates independently to the next level that resulted from this collaborative learning and development with peers and teachers through scaffolding is called the Zone of Proximal Development. Zone of Proximal Development becomes the Transition Bridge through which a learner develops to a new level of competency at which the child operates independently (Shabania, *et al*, 2010). Children according to this theory learn from each other (peer to peer) and through the teacher.

### **Zone of Proximal Development.**

Vygotsky describes the Zone of Proximal Development as “the distance between the actual development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under guidance or collaboration with more capable peer” (Shabania, *et al*, 2010). The Zone of Proximal Development is the gap between the current levels of development of a particular learner and next level of development that is attainable through interaction with the environment, teacher and the capable peers.

It means that pupil learn better when they in collaboration with other skilled person to internalize new concepts through scaffolding. After the learner completes the task jointly with capable peer, he/she is more likely to complete the same task individually next time and attains higher zone of proximal development (Shabania, *et al*, 2010).

Classroom setting in inclusive education according to Vygotsky theory should ensure that social interactions between children with learning disability, teachers and other peers from mainstream educational setting will play a key role in cognitive development of those with learning difficulties. This environment would increase the child’s Zone of Proximal Development.

### **Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Freire**

This is a form of pedagogy proposed by Freire to democratise education that is right-based and is dependent on the principles, multi-culturalism and liberalism with the main aim being to give power to the oppressed, underprivileged, subjugated and marginalised (Nel, 2014). It is a form of “problem posing” pedagogy according to Nel (2014) that helps to emancipate learners with barriers towards learning that reforms educational institution to make them more inclusive through the principles of equality

and anti-discrimination. Problem solving pedagogy helps create anticipatory culture to both learners and institutions, by helping institution to prepare for the type of learners enrolled and help learners with barriers to know what is expected from the institution and stakeholders (Nel, 2014)

### **2.13. Support Provision by South African Government**

Teachers need to be committed and be supported through challenges they face when teaching learners with disabilities in mainstream classroom because Inclusive Education implementation needs collaborative effort of all stakeholders to succeed (Mfuthwana and Dreyer, 2018). Ndlovu (2019) says that it is important that learners with special needs be supported in order to reduce barriers that hinder access to learning. Provision of support according to Donohue and Bornman (2014) should depend on the type of impairment the learner has in order to reduce a particular barrier to learning.

Inclusive Education policy moves away from practices that are based on diagnosis and remedy of deficits to a more holistic support that enables learners with barriers to learning to access quality education (Mfuthwana and Dreyer, 2018). Kruger and Yorke (2010) say that it is important to provide educator support for the successful implementation of Inclusive Education. In areas where support systems, resources and facilities are inadequate there is prevalence of negative attitudes from teachers of learners with special needs (Nel, Muller and Rheeders ,2011)

The support packages for Inclusive Education provided by government are based on support needs assessment information and availability of resources in the form of School Based Support Teams (SBST), at district level by District Support Teams (DBST) and special schools as resource centers (DoE, 2001). Inclusive Education teachers provide individualized support to pupils with learning barriers in the form of additional teaching services, use of assistive devices and other forms of adaptation in school (Nel Muller and Rheeders, 2011). Inclusive Education is a totally new culture, with new policies and practices of inclusive schools where support of varying intensity from low, medium and severe is given to learners, teachers and schools to meet their needs based on five specific provisions which are;

- Provision of specialized support staff to professional staff.
- Curriculum differentiation adapted to individual learner requirement.
- Provision of specialized teaching and learning materials and assistive devices and technologies.
- Continuous guidance, training and mentoring of teachers and staff in towards inclusive education.
- Promoting on-going environment access (DoE, 2001).

### **Institutional-Level Support Teams or School-Based Support Team**

School Based Support Team (SBST) also known as Institutional Level Support Team (ILST) is established and based at school level and its establishment is the responsibility of the principal. Department of Education (DoE, 2014) introduced Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support Strategy (SIAS) as an instrument used by teachers to assess learners and identify those with special needs and provide appropriate support in collaboration with other experts such as learning support teacher (Dreyer, 2013). Institution- level support team (ILST) provides Inclusive Education support at school level and at district level and District-Based Support Team provides support at district level (Mfthana and Dreyer 2018). South African National Department of Education has started to introduce ILST in primary schools as part of implementing Inclusive Education (Nel, Muller and Rheeders, 2011).

The main objective of these teams is to support and to enhance the teacher skill in implementing Inclusive Education (Donohue and Bornman, 2014). ILST support's provision moves away from identifying and diagnosing problems of learners with barriers to learning but it is geared towards providing the right level of support for the teacher and the learner with special needs (Dreyer, 2013). ILST is made up of teachers working full-time, members of governing body, student representatives in institution of higher learning and some of the teachers do provide expert service at different areas of need.

The ILST studies the report submitted by the teacher detailing the type and the level of impairment that has been identified in the learner, develop appropriate program for the teacher, parent and to implement individualized support in classroom (Nel, Muar and Rheeders, 2011). The main function of ISLT is to coordinate learner, teacher and

development program then assess and evaluate reports provided by the teacher and the support already provided by the teacher and the impact of such support (Nel, Dreyer and Rheeders, 2011). ILST studies the reports and devise strategies towards addressing learning needs, mobilize resources and assets at school level to provide Inclusive Education support (Nel, Dreyer and Rheeders, 2011). Mfhuthana and Dreyer (2018) say that ILST help teachers to implement Inclusive Education programs such as curriculum differentiation, use of assistive devices and differentiated assessment strategies. Mfhuthana and Dreyer (2018) argue that teachers blame contextual factors such as inadequate skilled human resource and materials, overcrowded classes, inadequate support from BDST and ILST for poor implementation of Inclusive Education and emphasize the importance of classroom-based support such as teacher assistant.

### **District Based Support Teams**

Mfhuthana and Dreyer (2018) say that DBST together with ILST are national initiatives by South African government to provide systemic support to all schools towards implementing Inclusive Education. Nel, Muller and Rheeders (2011) argue that DBST do not function as effectively as ILST. Nel, Muller and Rheeders (2011) further say that DBST have been appointed in all districts with the main purpose been to strengthen skills of teachers towards successful implementation of Inclusive Education. It is important to train District Based Support Team's support staff to provide needed support to teachers working with learners with barriers to learning (Nel, Muller and Rheeders, 2011). Special schools were converted into resource centers, and they were incorporated into DBST and inclusive schools (Mfhuthana and Dreyer, 2018). Expertise from special schools and resource centers are intended to provide support to ILST with curricular differentiation and assessment in the district where resource center is located (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011)

Integration between mainstream schools, resource centre and support systems that are already available in that specific community is controlled by DBST (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011). DBST follows up and provides feedback to all cases referred to it by ILST (Mfhuthana and Dreyer 2018). According to Mfhuthana and Dreyer (2018) BDST provides the following services, namely;

- “Helps ILST with the development of Individual Support Plans (ISP) for resource class,
- Assists with the development of a Care Plan and Exit Plan for resource class learners,
- Assists in early identification of learners experiencing barriers to learning and provide support,
- Contributes to the development of preventative, curative and developmental support programs to reduce barriers,
- Assists resource class learners with career orientation and vocational guidance,
- Assists with the development of networks within the community for possible work-related placements (Mfhuthana and Dreyer 2018).”
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One of the six key strategies by Department of Education included in white paper 6 towards establishing IE was to convert some of special schools to resource centres that would train teacher at DBST and develop some of the special schools to cater for learners with special needs that could not be accommodated into mainstream education (Donohue, Bornman, 2014). Trained staff at special schools or resource centre should provide continuous support and training of teachers at mainstream classes (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011). Expertise and other resources from special schools include psychologists, speech therapist, occupational psychologist as well as remedial teachers to help train mainstream class teachers (Nel, Müller and Rheeders (2011).

#### **2.14. Teacher Training and Skills Development**

Mfhututhana and Dreyer (2018) argue that one of the factors that jeopardizes implementation of Inclusive Education is lack of trained teachers and unfavourable conditions in the school environment. Teachers need to possess repertoire of teaching methods to support Inclusive Education and institutional transformation (Mfhuthana and Dreyer, 2018). Donohue and Bornman (2014) say that in the old South African education system, teachers were not trained to accommodate learners with barriers to learning with regular learners in the same classroom as part of in-service training.

Effective Teacher training and skills development is paramount for achieving meaningful implementation of Inclusive Education (Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde, 2012). Walton and Loyd (2012) argue that if Inclusive Education is to be successfully implemented, conservative approaches to education which made special education practices normal should be changed at “pedagogical level”. The mindset of separate education for learners with special needs has been accepted in South Africa’s past as normal and total transformation from separate education to Inclusive Education is compounded by the fact that many teachers currently employed in South African schools are over the age of 50 years and most of them have been taught and trained in old tradition of exclusion (Donohue and Bornman, (2014).

Ahmad and May (2018) argue that teacher training in institutions of higher learning should include introductory course on Inclusive Education during their in-service training so that every teach trainee should have basic knowledge and working understating of Inclusive Education. Walton and Lloyd (2012) say that there are two approaches that could be adopted to train teachers and help develop Inclusive Education teaching skills and practices. The first approach is what he called infused approach, where Inclusive Education is not taught separately in isolation as a single course, but Inclusive Education skills and practices are spread across courses for the entire program.

The second approach according to Walton and Lloyd (2012) involves a situation where all teaching, practice and philosophy about Inclusive Education are taught as a single unit course offered as pre-service teacher training module. Teaching institutions of higher learning should equip teachers with current literature on differentiated instruction, individualised support, and individualised instructional and behavioural techniques for dealing with learners with disabilities and current educational programs have not produced sufficient teachers to manage learners with special needs (Smith and Tyler, 2011). School leaders such as principals play an important role for successful implementation of Inclusive Education, as such they should acquire knowledge, improve their competencies and understand the philosophy of inclusive education (Shareefa, 2016). Principals should make sure that there are teacher training opportunities for teaching Inclusive Education at school as part of continuous professional development (Shareefa, 2016). Positive teacher attitudes, adequate

training, ongoing adequate support will enhance teacher knowledge, skills and competencies to apply strategies and methodologies to successfully implement Inclusive Education (Mfuthana and Dreyer, 2018).

### **Web-based Learning**

Web-based technologies enables teachers to do their daily preparation and do their on-going professional development easily as it can incorporate videos, audios charts, graphs and it can also help learners with visual impairment by converting text into braille (Smith and Tyler, 2011). Teachers using both direct and online instruction, materials and resources to enhance skills development and preparation coursework usually perform better compared to those who use one or neither (Smith and Tyler, 2011). It is easier to use technology to edit, update, and adjust curriculum and even to share online resources to enhance access, convenience, interactivity and multimedia experiences at affordable cost Smith and Tyler, 2011).

Web-based resources can incorporate interactive graphs, videos, audio, charts, games and link with other resources and are presented in a standardized manner and they lack individual subjectivity. (Smith and Tyler, 2011). Teacher's skills such as differentiated instruction, individualized support could be presented in an innovative manner such as the use of chat rooms, blogs, you-tube videos and wikis in collaborative manner (Smith and Tyler, 2011).

### **2.15. Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**

Teaching methods and technology is always evolving and so is the need for continuous professional development to empower teachers with latest knowledge, skills and positive attitudes to reduce educational and social barriers (Henry and Namnhla, 2020). Inclusive Education teachers play multiple roles such as special education teachers, resource teachers, administrators and diagnostic teachers and understanding and knowledge of Inclusive Education practices is important for successful implementation of Inclusive Education and CPD helps teachers to update their knowledge, skills and practices (Ahmad & May, 2018). Dalton, *et al*, (2012) argue that effective support, positive attitudes, and adequate training are important factors that enhance successful implementation of Inclusive Education (Henry and Namnhla,



2020). Continuous development programs help to empower teachers to develop their skills and knowledge of IE practices especially teachers in early childhood education by giving them tools to manage learners with special needs and their families (Henry and Namnhla, 2020).

Teachers must conduct need analysis in order to determine personal knowledge and skills gaps in Inclusive Education that would be used to formulate strategies and content for CPD objectives (Henry and Namnhla, 2020). CPD programs may be conducted in the form of courses, workshops and peer-learning where teachers learn from each other (Walton and Lloyd, 2012). CPD programs improve material mobilization, curricular delivery and teaching techniques and they enable lifelong learning culture to be adopted amongst teachers and other stakeholders (Henry and Namnhla, 2020)

## **2.16. Learner Support Teacher**

Learning support teacher plays an important and comprehensive role in Inclusive Education when compared to the role they played in the previous exclusionary medical model (Dreyer, 2013). Learner support teacher assists teachers to adapt and plan the lesson to accommodate learners with barriers to learning (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011). In ideal settings as in many wealthy countries, the supporting teacher always accompany the teacher so that he/she teaches adapted curriculum to learners with barriers whilst the teacher teaches the standard curriculum in mainstream classroom (Mfuthwana and Dreyer, 2018).

Technology and teacher or learner assistants are some of the tools used by teachers to provide high quality Inclusive Education (Ahmad & May, 2018). Learning support teacher provides continuous support in the role of information consultant, agent for change and also as a collaborative team leader in Inclusive Education as compared to the previous role he/she played as a remedial and special class teacher (Dreyer, 2013). Lorna M Dreyer (2013,) defines the functions of learning support teacher as the following.

- “Learning support teacher compiles resource files,
- Helps teacher with programmes and differentiation,

- Learning support teachers also consulted with class teachers and parents,
- And gave input at Institutional Level Support Team (ILST) meeting,
- They are responsible for diagnostic testing of learners' scholastic ability,
- and management of referrals to special schools.”

### **2.17. Collaboration**

Shareefa (2016) says that for Inclusive Education to succeed it needs positive relationships among all learners and all stakeholders for its effective implementation. Walton and Lloyd (2012) argue that collaborative participatory teamwork between teachers will help them to share Inclusive Education skills and learn from one another. Cooperation and collaboration between all stakeholders is important for the successful execution and provision of support towards Inclusive Education implementation (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011). Collaboration between principals, teachers, parents and other members of the community is vital for creating positive attitudes and wide acceptance of Inclusive Education and its practices (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011). ILST should be a collaborative team that works with all stakeholders including parents and teachers to facilitate and implement teacher and learner objectives, teaching plans and programs that would help reduce barriers to learning (Ahmad & May 2018).

Members of the community with needed expertise such as speech therapist, psychologists, or audiologist need to collaborate with Inclusive Education practitioners and form a resource base in the community coordinated by DBST (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011). The department of education should help in the early identification of learners who experience learning difficulties in order that anticipatory approach toward individualized Inclusive Education program is instituted (Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer, Skarlind, 2011). Ahmad and May (2018) say that for better administration of Inclusive Education, collaboration between teachers and occupational therapists, psychologists, nurses and others should be established. Shareefa (2016) emphasizes the need for teachers to collaborate with other stakeholders such as parents, students, members of school management team and other members of the community as a way of ensuring that all learners including those with disabilities are integrated and supported.

## **2.18. Resources and Inclusive Education Implementation**

Poor economic situation in South Africa resulted in many parents failing to afford private specialised education where they could take their children with barriers to education and as matter of necessity, government and other stakeholder should provide quality Inclusive Education and adequate support to mainstream schools (Nel, Müller and Rheeders, 2011). Funding according to Ndlovu (2019) is an important factor that enables students with disabilities to be included in professional learning institutions. Student with disabilities usually need individualised assistive devices to reduce learning barriers such as motorised wheelchair, hearing aids, braille in order to navigate around higher learning institutions that are not adapted to their individual needs.

Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer, Skarlind, (2011) argue that poor and inadequate implementation of Inclusive Education in South Africa is closely related to inadequate deployment of needed resources, lack of support, overcrowded classroom and lack of teacher training. Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer, Skarlind (2011) say that Inclusive Education requires adequate financial investment that should be properly deployed to priority areas that are determined by need analysis gap. Uneven resource distribution across rural and urban areas where rural areas receive low funding and meagre resources than urban areas with abundant resources result in poor teacher quality compared to quality of teachers in urban areas (D'Amant, 2012). Donohue and Bornman (2014) argue that inadequate Inclusive Education funding by South African Department of Education, unclear guidelines and inadequate incentives are the cause of poor Inclusive Education implementation.

### **Conclusion.**

International community including South Africa through international bodies and organizations undertook to provide quality education to all learners including learners with barriers to learning. Most countries responded to this ideal by adopting Inclusive Education where curricular content and structure is modified to educate all learner including those with special needs. South African government through published "Education White Paper 6-special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education

and Training” introduced Inclusive Education as government policy as a system where learner with barriers to learning are included in mainstream classroom (DoE, 2001).

Inclusive Education is a transformed system that caters for all learners with diverse needs and positive teacher attitudes is very important towards its implementation. Common challenges faced by teachers towards implementation of Inclusive education include lack of teacher’s skills, lack of adapted facilities, curriculum difficulties and stakeholder’s awareness and time constraints. Various strategies including curricular differentiation, differentiated presentation, assessment and differentiated environment are used by teachers during Inclusive Education. Teacher support in mainstream schools is provided by SBST or ILST at school level and DBST and Resource Center at district level. Continuous development programs could be used to provide teacher with skills about inclusive practices and collaboration with other stakeholders. Inclusive Education needs careful deployment of funding and other resources to be achieved.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Chapter three of this study discusses the methodology used to answer the research question posed to determine ways to unlock teacher's knowledge, skills and practices towards teaching and implementing Inclusive Education in mainstream primary schools of Capricorn District in Limpopo Province. Research methodology illustrates the route map used by the researcher to conduct the research process (Kumar, 2011). In this chapter we discuss the research methodology, research design, research approach, research paradigm, research strategy, target population and sampling technique, data collection and analysis methods and data validity and ethical considerations used by the researcher to reach the research objective and answer the research questions.

#### **3.2. Research Methodology.**

Research Methodology is a process used by the researchers to answer the research question using either qualitative or quantitative approach (Kumar, 2011). Research Methodology is used to understand the world we live in by employing specific methods (Henning, van Rensburg and Smit, 2013). Research Methodology according to Henning, *et al*, (2013), produce findings and data by using coherent methods to answer research objectives and research questions. Researchers according to Chigada (2014) use methodology to plan approach to solve research problem. The researcher uses research methodology to provide clear indication of how to achieve research objectives (Malhotra, 2012). Methodology focuses on steps adopted in the study to answer research question and to explain the rationale for using the chosen steps states Kothari (2012). Methodology focuses on individual steps, procedures, processes, and tools used by the researcher to answer research objectives (Mouton, 2012). This study followed qualitative research methodology to answer research objectives and the research questions.

The research philosophy and approach influence the way the research question is answered (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, (2009, 136). Saunders *et al*, (2009) say that two broad approach categories used in research process are qualitative (interpretivism) approach which is inductive in nature and quantitative (positivism)

approach which is deductive in nature. Quantitative research approach according to Bryman, Bell, Hirschsohn, du Toit, Masenge, van Aarch and Wagner (2014) makes use of statistical techniques when collecting and analyzing data and theory is developed deductively using natural science models. Bryman, et al, (2014) further argues that quantitative research approach is positivist and objective, and nature of reality is external to the researcher.

While qualitative research approach according to Bryman *et al*, (2014, 30) is based on participant's words and observations and data is derived from multiple sources of data including observation, interviews and questionnaires. Collected data is analyzed and theory is built inductively through social reality as interpreted by the participants. Bryman *et al* (2014) say that the context within which thick, deep and rich data from participant's point of view is a corner stone of qualitative research and is followed by flexible investigations (analysis) to develop theory inductively and the researcher is involved with the participants of the research. Barbie (2014) says that qualitative research examines why particular patterns exist and describes the implication of those patterns on the phenomenon. A qualitative research approach was used in this study and a case study methodology was adopted.

### *Research Paradigms.*

Bryman *et al* (2014, 14) say that major primary paradigms in research positions include the following: interpretivism, positivism and realism. Bryman *et al* (2011) further states that positivism uses objective instruments of science and statistics to deduct the objective reality whereas interpretivism uses participant's words, observations, and non-verbal expressions to deduce reality. Saunders *et al*, (2009) states that there are four major philosophical approaches to research: Interpretivism. Positivism, Realism and Pragmatism. There two major research approaches based on the qualitative and quantitative principles namely Interpretivist/ constructionist paradigm and positivist (Natural science model) paradigm respectively. They differ on general orientation in terms of the role of theory, epistemology, ontology, and axiology. Qualitative methodology according to Bryman *et al* (2014) is based on induction, constructivism and interpretivism principles to arrive on theory. "Induction is a process of drawing inferences out of observation" (Bryman *e. al* 2014, 11). The research strategy,

philosophy and approach are guided by the research question (Saunders, et al 2009,136)

Table 3.1: Difference between quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

Areas	Quantitative	Qualitative
Principal orientation of the role of theory to research	Deductive empirical testing of theory	Inductive generation of theory from data
Epistemological orientation	Natural science model, in particular positivism	Interpretivist
Ontological orientation	Objectivism	Constructionist

Source: Bryman et al., (2014, 30).

In this study we use interpretivist/constructionist paradigm based on the following philosophical assumption of qualitative research approach and interpretivist/constructionist paradigm on ontology, epistemology, and axiology.

*Research Strategies.*

Saunders *et al* (2009, 160) says that there are seven major research strategies including phenomenological, experimental, survey, case study, action research grounded theory, ethnography, and archival research. There are three recognized research designs that characterize how research is conducted namely: descriptive, explanatory, and exploratory forms of conducting research (Saunders *et al*, 2009). This study used a case study strategy with exploratory research design. A case study according to Creswell (2013) is suitable for well-defined case or unit of study of varying complexity using multiple sources of data. Barbie (2014) says that case study is suited for conducting research in natural setting using multiple data source to develop theory in complex situations. Saunders, et. al, (2009) exploratory research design is suited for research study that seek new information and lays ground for further research. Creswell (2013) says that exploratory research design is suited in situation where the researcher wants to discover something new by working through the topic and formulate theory.

### **3.3. Sampling.**

#### *Target Population.*

Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2013) define target population as all participants, subjects or elements that meet required characteristics for inclusion in the study. Target population is a group of objects that possess information needed to answer a research question and from which a sample is drawn (Malhotra, 2012). The target population for this research study is primary school teachers (grade 1 to 3 of mainstream schools in Capricorn District of Limpopo Province). Capricorn District is situated in Limpopo province and is made up of five sub-districts namely: Molemole, Polokwane, Blouberg, Lepelle-Nkumpi and Aganang. Education Statistics South Africa (2013, 17) published in 2015, that there is a total of 646 schools in Capricorn District. The study needs to determine challenges faced by teachers with implementing Inclusive Education then recommend ways to enhance Capricorn foundation phase school's teachers with knowledge and skills to implement Inclusive Education.

#### *Types of Sampling.*

Sampling in research is a technique of selecting a representative small group of people, objects or elements called a sample from the population for conducting research. Two major sampling types in research are probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

#### *Probability Sampling.*

Probability sampling according to Bryman *et al* (2014) is form of sampling the offer equal opportunity for the subjects in the population to be selected in the sample. Bryman *et al* identified simple random sampling, stratified sampling, systemic sampling, and cluster sampling.

#### *Non-probability Sampling.*

Non-probability sampling according to Kumar (2011) is a sampling technique that is not based on equal opportunity for selection of members from the population into the sample. It is used in qualitative research methods where the total number of elements in the sample is not certain (Kumar, 2011). Bryman *et al* (2011) named the following



forms of non-probability sampling: purposive (Judgment) sampling, convenience sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling.

### ***Types of Non-probability Sampling Method.***

#### **Purposive sampling (judgment sampling).**

Purposive sampling is a sampling technique that allows for selection of participant that have relevant information to answer the research question (Bryman et al, 2014). Participants are strategically selected with the purpose of meeting research objectives.

#### **Convenience sampling.**

Convenience sampling is a technique of non-probability sampling where suitable participants are selected largely because that they are easily accessible (Bryman et al, 2014).

#### **Snowball sampling.**

Snowball sampling is a sampling technique where the researcher first interviews the participant or group of participants then this group refer the researcher to other participants relevant to the research topic (Bryman et al, 2014).

#### **Quota sampling.**

Quota sampling technique's purpose is to ensure that the sample reflect various categories of the population whereby the researcher uses certain population characteristics to determine the various quota (Kumar, 2011).

Purposive sampling technique was used in this study because the researcher needs to determine challenges faced by teachers in mainstream primary school in Capricorn district of Limpopo province towards implementing Inclusive Education. Purposive sampling is best suited for the study because we were able to identify teachers in mainstream education teaching inclusive education. A total of 25 participants was reached which included teachers from grade 1 to grade 3 and school principals.

#### ***Ethical consideration related to sampling.***

Common ethical problem during sampling is biased sample of the population from which it is drawn. A sample that does not have all characteristics of the population and is not representative of the population from where is drawn. Bryman et al (2014) says

that a good sample contains all variables and diversity found in the population from which it is drawn. It is important to sample a representative sample to ensure the integrity of the research findings. Maximum variations of characteristics of sample characteristics should be included in the sample. Researcher's point of view should be "bracketed" out as much as possible from participants during interviews especially when adopting phenomenological research so that his/ her views does not interfere with the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The researcher should be as neutral as possible.

### **3.4. Data Collection.**

Data collection method used in this study is face to face interviews which followed a semi-structured interview guide. And because of the explorative nature of the study where deep and rich data is required, researcher often posed follow up questions where clarity on certain points of data was required. Interviews according to Bryman *et al* (2014) is widely used data collection instrument for both qualitative and quantitative research approach. In-depth interviews according to Creswell (2013) elicits wide views and diverse opinions from researchers. Bryman *et al* (2014) says that there are three types on interviews namely: structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. Semi-structured interviews in qualitative research provide some form of systemization that helps in data coding and analysis (Malhotra, 2012). We used semi-structured interviews in this study to determine various challenges that teachers experienced while teaching learners with special needs and skills gaps they need to fill to implement inclusive education.

In this study we conducted open ended, semi-structured face to face interview using the interview guide systematize the interview. The researcher often asked follow-up questions to elicit deep and rich data from interviewee. The interview was conducted without undue interruptions. The average time taken to conduct each interview was 40 minutes. Each participants was assigned an alphabet from A-Z to for confidentiality. The data was then recoded on digital recorder and later transcribed to assist with the subsequent analysis.

### **3.5. Developing Data Collecting Instrument.**

#### *Interview guide Construction.*

Researcher designed and exploratory qualitative semi-structured interview guide to elicit rich deep data to determine challenges faced by teachers with learners with special needs and skills gap that hinders them to implement Inclusive Education in Capricorn foundation phase mainstream primary schools in Limpopo. The interview guide should be formulated in such a way that participant's answers help answer research question (Bryman *et al*, 2014). Researcher applied semi-structured open-ended questions as a guide but occasionally changed the order of questioning depending on contingencies. Piloting of the interview guide using two participants was done and the interview guide was then revised following insight from pilot study.

Bryman *et al* (2014) says that pilot study is to ensure that research instruments work well with participants. It helps the researcher to re-evaluate, assess and review the data collection instrument and correct parts of the instrument that are misunderstood

### **3.6. Ethical Consideration Related to Data collection**

Ethics in research concerns with moral principles and conduct when treating participants in a study. Researcher must ensure that no harm must be inflicted to participant including the researcher in the study. Researcher should maintain and keep confidentiality and anonymity on all matters between participants and research process. Consent must be sought from participants.

#### *No Harm.*

The researcher should ensure that no real or potential harm is inflicted on participant. Harm according to Bryman *et al* (2014) includes physical harm, harm to self-esteem, harm to career prospect and harm to prospect of performing any beneficial future acts.

#### *Ensuring Confidentiality or Anonymity.*

Researcher should ensure privacy of information, confidentiality, and anonymity to avoid exposing participants to harm. Failure to maintain privacy would discourage potential participants in future studies to enroll for researchers out of fear of being

exposed. They may even modify their responses to appear in good standing. In this study no names are mentioned and only codes and pseudonyms are used.

### *Informed Consent.*

Informed consent must be obtained from participants, and no one must be forced to be part of any research without his or her will (Bryman *et al*, 2014). In this study informed consent was obtained and participants signed the consent form to proof that they understand its contents. Participants gave consent voluntarily.

### **3.7. Data Analysis**

Barbie (2014) says that data analysis process involves discovering patterns that answers research questions from data. In this study we used thematic analysis to analyze data. Common recurring experiences in the form of words/ phrases and paragraph from descriptive accounts of participants derived from interviews are grouped together into categories then indexed into codes of meaning. Similar codes are then organized into themes of similar meaning. "Coding implies that, the coded data will not be presented in the original format but will be interpreted and re-presented by the researcher" (Bryman *et al*, 2014, 336). Themes are then analyzed into meanings to answers the research question. Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data. It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as an interview or transcripts. Transcribed data from interviews is analyzed by means of data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusion.

### **3.8. Trustworthiness of Research.**

Barbie *et al* (2014) says that trustworthiness of qualitative research data is evaluated using Transferability, Credibility, Conformability and Dependability because of the ontological position that there are multiple realities as opposed to single realty in quantitative research where we use validity, reliability, and objectivity.

### ***Transferability.***

Transferability in qualitative research parallels external validity in quantitative research. External validity according to Bryman *et al* (2014) refers to the measure of

the extent that other researcher could replicate the research finding when done in other setting and group. Data saturation was reached following deep rich interviews that lasted between twenty to thirty minutes, as a result there is a high chance that the similar findings could be realized in other groupings with similar demographic characteristics and t times.

### ***Credibility.***

Credibility in qualitative research parallels internal validity in quantitative research where the findings match theoretical ideas and qualitative research credibility is a measure of something that is real (Bryman *et al*, 2014). It refers to the confidence in the truth regarding the data and interpretation of that data. The research is credibility is enhanced by time taken during interviews, diversity of participants and recurrence of themes found during data analysis. All participants were asked similar questions and they elicited common themes.

### ***Dependability.***

Dependability in qualitative research parallel l's reliability in qualitative research in which more than one observer or agree of findings of the research (Bryman *et al*, 2014). It refers to level of stability of data over conditions and time. The researcher asked same question to all participants. Follow up question and often rephrasing questions to ensure clarity of meaning for both researcher and participants was obtained.

### ***Conformability.***

Conformability in qualitative research parallels objectivity in quantitative research. It refers to the potential for agreement or congruency between two or more people about the relevance, accuracy and meaning about the data (Bryman *et al*, 2014). The researcher took a conscious effort to minimize her views to influence participants' views and care was taken to find similar themes when data was analyzed on more than one occasions.

## **3.9. Conclusion.**

The study was conducted using explorative qualitative research approach on interpretivist/ constructivist research paradigm. A case study strategy was used to elicit

rich deep data through face-to-face interviews using semi-structured interview guide. A purposive sample was chosen to elicit data that answered the research question deductively from participants' viewpoint. Thematic analysis was used to analyze data and finding and interpretation are discussion is discussed in the next chapter four.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the empirical findings regarding the primary school educators' knowledge and skills to implement inclusive education in Capricorn District, Limpopo Province. The findings of the study are based on data collected from face-to-face interviews with 25 purposively selected primary school educators and principles in the Limpopo Department of Education in Capricorn District. The presentation of data commences with the biographical information of the participants, for confidentiality each participant is assigned an alphabet from A-Z and the demographics/biographical information are then presented along those alphabets. The results are presented in line with the objectives of the study as outlined in chapter one as follows:

- To investigate whether the DoE skills development initiatives to develop capacity of primary school educators in teaching Inclusive Education are being implemented.
- To examine the challenges that primary school educators face in terms of Inclusive Education teaching skills development in the Capricorn District.
- To recommend ways to improve skills development for primary school educators for Inclusive Education.

#### **4.2. Biographical Information of the Participants**

This section presents the biographical information of the participants interviewed in the study. The study interviewed 25 participants in total. For the study, data was collected through face-to-face interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. In the total sample of 25 primary school educators, three belonged to the age group of 18-30 years of age, seven belonged to the age group of 31-40 years, ten belonged to the age group of 41-50 years of age and five were over 50 years of age. The biographical information is presented in table 4.1., below.

**Table 4.1.: Biographical Information of the Participants**

<b>Participa nts</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Age categories</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Educator category</b>
<b>A</b>	20 years and above	41-50 years	Female	Educator
<b>B</b>	20 years and above	50 year and above	Male	Educator
<b>C</b>	16-20 years	41-50 years	Male	Principal
<b>D</b>	11-15 years	31-40 years	Female	Educator
<b>E</b>	20 years and above	50 years and above	Female	Principal
<b>F</b>	20 years and above	41-50 years	Female	Principal
<b>G</b>	11 – 15 years	31-40 years	Male	Educator
<b>H</b>	6-10 years	18-30 years	Female	Educator
<b>I</b>	0-5 years	18-30 years	Male	Educator
<b>J</b>	11-15 years	31-40 years	Female	Educator
<b>K</b>	11-15 years	41-50 years	Male	Principal
<b>L</b>	0-5 years	18-30	Female	Educator
<b>M</b>	6-10 years	31-40 years	Male	Educator
<b>N</b>	16-20 years	41-50 years	Female	Principal
<b>O</b>	20 years and above	41-50 years	Male	Principal
<b>P</b>	16-20 years	50 years and above	Female	Principal
<b>Q</b>	11-15 years	31-40 years	Male	Educator
<b>R</b>	6-10 years	31-40 years	Female	Educator
<b>S</b>	11-15 years	41-50 years	Male	Educator
<b>T</b>	16-20 years	41-50 years	Male	Educator
<b>U</b>	11-15 years	31-40 years	Female	Educator
<b>V</b>	16-20 years	50 years and above	Female	Educator
<b>W</b>	20 years and above	41-50 years	Female	Principal
<b>X</b>	16-20 years	41-50 years	Male	Principal
<b>Y</b>	20 years and above	50 years and above	Female	Principal



### **4.3 Qualitative Data Presentation and Analysis**

The results of the study are based on the responses from the primary school educators within the Limpopo Department of Education in Capricorn District. The presentation of data is done in narrative form in accordance with the interview guide. For ease of linking of results with the research questions they (research questions) are stated again as:

- What skills development initiatives are implemented to develop the capacity of primary schools' educators in teaching in Inclusive Education?
- What are challenges faced by the primary educators in Inclusive Education teaching skills development in the Capricorn District?
- What recommendations can be made to improve the skills development for primary school educators?

The presentation of results starts with skills development initiatives to help educators to implement inclusive education.

### **4.4. Skills Development Initiatives to Help Educators to Implement Inclusive Education**

The participants were asked if they know about the skills development initiatives by government to assist educators to implement inclusive education. Two skills development initiatives identified in the interview by the primary school educators were (i) inclusive education policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support (SIAS) and (ii) policy framework to support services in education to assist learners with special needs.

For example, participants C, E, G, H and X state that: *“Education policy in South Africa provides for the increased capacity of ordinary public schools to include children with intellectual disabilities”*.

Secondly participants A, B, H, I, J K M, N P state that “SIAS aim at ensuring that all children of school going age who experience barriers of learning and disabled will be able to access inclusive free, quality education on equal basis with other learners”.

The support was also prominent from the study findings which emphasised the importance of skills development initiatives in terms of implementing inclusive education at the primary school level. Participants C, F, and H states that “the *policy framework is in place, but this has not been effectively implemented and most educators are not trained on how to develop and design learning and assessment activities to accommodate all learner including those with intellectual barriers*”.

One of the most important challenges of the skills development initiative is the fact that primary school’s infrastructure is not designed to accommodate learners with disability. For example, participants T, U, and W state “*schools are designed without wheelchair ramps, toilet facilities which does not accommodate learners who use wheelchairs and classrooms which does not have learning facilities which accommodate learners with disabilities*”.

The results support a growing body of literature which advocate that South African education system adopts inclusive education and moves away from historical policy of separate development called apartheid where majority of resources were allocated to minority white communities and negligible resources were allocated to other communities including education especially to those with learning barriers. Mckenzie (2021) argues that the pressing issue faced by education in South Africa currently is to provide free and compulsory education for children of all races and those who have learning barriers. It is evident in the data that special needs of the learners should embrace issues of economic, social, and linguistic contexts and psychosocial challenges. The results reiterate the skills development needs in the inclusive education literature that the implementation of curriculum in the schools was very sensitive and with a huge impetus for change towards a curriculum for all with an aim to empower learners with learning challenges and disabilities.

#### **4.5. System at School Level to Screen and to Identify Learners with Special Education Needs**

The participants were asked if they have system at school level to screen and identify learners with special education needs. All the participants show that the National Department of Education issued a policy document on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) which provided framework with which to standardise the procedures to identify, assess and provide programmes to learners who requires additional support.

Some of the participants acknowledged the policy framework but argue that there is a huge challenge facing school in terms of implementing the SIAS. For example, participants B, G, H and P state that “*educators in their schools are not trained to adopt the SIAS*”. In the same vein, participants D, F, Y U and X states that “*educators in their schools are not trained to use the tools to identify and assess learner with intellectual disability*”.

These narratives suggest that there are persistence challenges in the adoption of SIAS at the school level, more especially in the ordinary public schools. It is also of concern that the adoption of SIAS is hindered by unpreparedness of educators and schools due to lack of training. Unfortunately, as indicated by participants D, F, Y U and X as in the above statements, lack of training negatively affects the performance of public schools in terms of adaptation and implementation of SIAS at school level. Poor implementation of SIAS at school level continues to hinder full implementation of inclusive education at public schools. It is evident in the narratives that lack of adoption of SIAS hinders public schools to implement inclusive education in the country.

The results of the study agree with the literature reviewed that screening and selection of learners with special needs is not one size fits all process and various methods can be employed to screen and assess learners with special needs. Other scholars such as Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) and Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) generally argue that schools should be given the opportunities to select appropriate screening methods, if possible, this must be done on a broad scope, because screening does not have to be done only when teachers are in a one-on-one session with a learner. There are other scholars who argue that screening should also take place through group testing either in large group or small groups through activities and discussions (Ainscow and César, 2006).

On one hand, both the results of the study and literature review commonly agree that learners who are identified to have learning difficulties should be subjected to either assessment or evaluation with the permission from the parents. It is argued intensively in the literature that assessment of learners with special needs should be done in such a way that it will determine a learner's current academic achievements and educational needs (Cole, Waldron, and Majd, 2004). On the same note, Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) and Demeris, Childs and Jordan (2007). Demeris, Childs and Jordan (2007) argue that an assessment should cover the following skills areas "intelligence, language, auditory and visual skills, motor skills, social/emotional adjustment, academic achievement and physical health and development.

#### **4.6. Understanding of the Term Curriculum Differentiation**

The participants were first asked about their understanding of what curriculum differentiation concept entails to make sure that as the conversations of the study continue both the researcher and the participants are talking about the same concept. From the conversations with the primary educators in the current study four major themes could be identified regarding their understanding of the concept by the participants. Firstly, participants A, E, G and H defines the concept as "*the structuring of lesson plans, assessment activities and rubrics to accommodate learners with special educational needs*".

Secondly, participants B, D, J, I, K L and M defines the concept as "*the process of modifying or adapting the curriculum based on different learning abilities of the learners*".

Thirdly, participants N, O, P, S and T defines the concept as "*a way of teaching in which educators proactively modify curriculum to accommodate learners with special needs*".

Lastly, participants U, V, X and Z states that "*curriculum differentiation means modification to regular curriculum by adjusting process, skills, content and learning environment to accommodate learners with special needs*".

The above definitions provided by the participants agrees with what other scholars within the discipline describe as curriculum differentiation that address curriculum content, skills and competences and assessment activities (Ainscow and César, 2006). Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) argue that the curriculum

development should be continuous and dynamic process with teachers playing a major role in their own school. On one hand Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) argue that curriculum differentiation should enable teachers to teach learners with learning difficulties to develop knowledge and skills so that they can live in the community as independently as possible. Other scholars such as Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyon and Kaplan (2007) and Ainscow and César (2006) advocate that government should change both the curriculum and physical infrastructure so the people with special need could be integrated in regular school. This understanding describes curriculum differentiation as a form of multi- learning mode that facilitate inclusive education. This is a more accurate understanding of the concept.

#### **4.7. Understanding of the Term Differentiated Curriculum Content**

The participants were asked about their understanding of what curriculum differentiation content entails from the conversations with the primary school educators in the current study two major themes could be identified regarding their understanding of the concept by the participants. Firstly, some of them showed a one-directional understanding of the concept, i.e., understanding it to mean packaging of curriculum content that accommodate learners with special needs. For instance, Participant A, C, F and G stated that: *“Oh, curriculum differentiated Content comprises the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students need to learn based on the curriculum”*.

Participant H, L M and N *“also focused on how learners make sense of the content”*.

The second understanding above encompasses what previous authors describe as the correct, inclusive curriculum which include the various mode delivery such as video, readings, lectures, or audio and a curriculum whereby learners can choose the best medium of learning based on their interest.

The results support a growing body of literature which advocate that the content of the curriculum should comprise of the knowledge, concepts, literacy and skills learners should learn. On other hand, there are scholars such as Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002), Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) and Demeris, Childs and

Jordan (2007) which argue that differentiating the content of the curriculum should include the use of various mode of delivery formats such as videos, readings, audios and normal class teaching. Ainscow and César (2006) also argue that in some cases, the curriculum content may be shared using graphic to address through groups, or different techniques for solving complex equations. Other scholars such as Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) and Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) advocate that there is a need for learners to take time to reflect on and digest the types of learning activities offered by the teachers before moving on to the next segment of the lesson. It is argued that this process has the potential to enable learners to do self-introspection to assess what they do and don't understand. Ainscow and César (2006) also argue that this process can also be used by teachers as a formative assessment opportunity to monitor the learning progress of the learners.

#### **4.8. Understanding of the Term Differentiated Learning Environment**

The participants were asked about their understanding of what differentiated learning environment entails to make sure that as the conversations of the study continue both the researcher and the participants are talking about the same concept. From the conversations with the primary school educators all participants share common understanding of the term differentiated learning environment. For example, participants J, I K and Z states that “*differentiated learning environment could be created when educators proactively plan various approaches to what learners need to learn*”.

Participants D, G, H and K states that “*differentiated learning environment encompasses how learners learn and they will show what they have learned in order to increase the likelihood that each learner will learn as much as a learner can as effectively as possible*”.

Participants F, L, V and X states that “*differentiated learning environment is evidence in classroom when an educator approach teaching and learning from different ways*”.

Participants B, O, P and Z states that “*differentiated learning environment is when the educator create a conducive teaching and learning environment that accommodate all learners including those with special needs*”.

The results of the study commonly agree with the literature reviewed that the concept differentiated learning environment is a complex subject, because teachers understand and approach this concept differently. But in practice, teachers have the freedom to differentiate the methods that learners can use to access key curriculum content without changing the learning goals or outcomes. Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) argue that in this instance, learners can acquire new information and ideas through reading independently or with a partner, doing online research and/or through group work.

#### **4.9. Understanding of the Term Differentiated Teaching Methods**

The participants were asked about their understanding of what differentiated teaching methods entails. It was observed from the conversations with the primary school educators that all participants share a common understanding of what this concept mean. For example, participants G, H, K and M states that *“differentiated teaching methods is when educators apply different teaching and learning methods in class”*.

Participants B, C, I, M and W states that *“differentiated teaching methods include the adoption of visual, auditory and oral teaching, playing videos, charts and illustrations within texts, giving verbal and written directions to tasks”*.

Participants D, H, J, K and V states that *“differentiated teaching methods include the adoption of relevant physical objects in order to contextualize the teaching”*.

Participants B, H, N and P states that *“differentiated teaching methods is teaching and learning environment which cater for a learner with mixed learning abilities”*.

Participants D, H, U and Z states that *“educators can use different methods of differentiation such collaborative learning, progressive tasks, digital resources, verbal support and ongoing assessment”*.

The results commonly agree with the literature reviewed that the main purpose of differentiation is to accommodate all learners during the learning process. Scholars such as Ainscow and César (2006) and Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) commonly argue that thoughtful differentiated teaching has the potential to unlock the learning challenges of the learners in classroom, because it will consider differences in learner's readiness and interest, taking each learner's learning profile into consideration, using formative assessment to monitor progress towards and beyond learner learning goals, using open-ended tasks to facilitate learners work at different levels and at their own pace.

Other scholars such as Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) and Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) also recognise flexible pace learning as another effective curriculum differentiated teaching method. These scholars argue that tasks are required to be completed in a fixed period, which normally disadvantages the slower paced learners and favoured faster learning learners. Other scholars advocate for collaborative learning in the form of group work in order to encourage shy learners to be active in class (Ainscow and César, 2006). Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) argue that forming a mixed-ability of groups will give an opportunity for high achievers to help low achievers to learn and collaborate on projects where they learn from each other through peer-to-peer learning.

On one hand, there are scholars such as Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002), Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) and Demeris, Childs and Jordan (2007) who argue that verbal dialogue is crucial to curriculum teaching method of differentiation. They argue that teachers teach the learner according to his learning abilities and adapt and support to various academic levels. Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) also support the above scholars that if teachers can use targeted questioning should elicit varying responses in learners of differing learning abilities. There are other scholars who advocate for more multiple learning outcomes of the tasks (Ainscow and César, 2006). On the same note, there are scholars who argue for open-ended types of the question to allow learners to explore their potentials (Cole, Waldron, and Majd, 2004).



#### **4.10. Understanding of the Term Differentiated Assessments**

The participants were asked about their understanding of what differentiated assessments entails. From the conversations with the primary school educators shows that participants have a common understanding of what this concept mean. For example, participants G, K, L, and M state that “differentiated assessments involve different types of assessment strategies which unlock the potential of the learners”. Participants D, H, W and X states that “differentiated assessments should cater for different learning needs, interest and abilities”.

Participants D states that “differentiated assessments show identify and address strength and weakness of the learners”.

Participants F states that “differentiated assessment should include instrumental planning and ongoing assessment”.

The results of the study agree in principle with the literature reviewed on what differentiated assessment mean. Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) define the concept differentiated assessment is a continuous process that is used by the teacher to determine the strength and the need of learner by gathering data from multiple sources during the learning process. On one hand, one commonly agreed definition of the concept differentiated assessment is a process where the teacher modifies the assessment to match the learner profile to enhance learning. It is common knowledge that different learners will learn and process knowledge at different pace and the teacher should be able to use differentiated assessment respond to the diverse learning requirements of different learners in a classroom (Ainscow and César, 2006). By differentiating assessments, teachers help learners of different learning profile to demonstrate their competencies in their own ways (Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński, 2002).

#### **4.11. Challenges Faced by Educators with Inclusive Education Implementation**

The participants were asked to explain their perception of the challenges faced by educators when implementing inclusive education at public schools. From the conversation with the researcher, the participants showed three types/categories of challenges associated with inclusive education. Firstly, type of challenge related to

abilities of educators to implement the inclusive education. Participant G states that “most of the educators did not receive training and as such they are having difficulties coping with learners with diverse learning abilities” in the same vein, participant D states that “educators who are not trained experience difficulties individual cases and overcrowded class”. Participant A identified inadequate educator to adopt and implement inclusive thinking and techniques”.

The results of this study furthermore indicate inadequate infrastructure development to accommodate learners with disabilities as the second challenge that hinders the implementation of inclusive education. Participant D states that “*lack of school infrastructure such as classrooms with wheelchair ramps, toilet facilities that accommodate learners with disabilities and classrooms with teaching and learning facilities that accommodate learners with intellectual disabilities*”. Participant A states that “lack of teaching and learning facilities has the potential to hinder the implementation of inclusive education”.

Both the results and literature reviewed commonly agree that there are many challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of inclusive education at school, but it is worth noting that these challenges differ from one school to another, and from one country to another. Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) states that quality of education includes physical infrastructure, curriculum content, teacher quality and the relevance of teaching aids. Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) argue that the curriculum offered to the learners with diverse needs must provide them with knowledge and skills to live independently within the society. Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) argue that the school infrastructure and curriculum should change to accommodate learners with diverse needs. These authors also argue that integration of disabled learners into the regular schools will not be achieved without modifications of the curriculum and the pedagogy.

Other scholars such as Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) and Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) argue education must be in a secure environment and need financial recourse to realise it. These authors advocate that education system must set achievement targets and devise mechanisms and strategies to achieve the policy and curriculum objectives.

#### **4.12. Effects of Inclusive Education on other Learners without Learning Barriers**

The Participants were asked about the effects of inclusive education on other learners without learning barriers. This will help the researcher to understand the complexities that are associated with the implementation of inclusive education in ordinary public schools. The Participants indicated to the researcher that teaching and learning of gifted learners and learners with intellectual disability will never be at the same pace if teaching takes place in the same learning environment. For instance, Participant C states that *“gifted learners get bored if a teacher pitch teaching and learning in way that accommodate learners with special needs”*. Participant F states that *“also indicate that learners with special needs will struggle to understand, if the teacher pitch the teaching and learning activities in such a way that it will accommodate gifted learners”*. The Participants acknowledged the importance of creating a conducive learning environment that accommodate all learners including those with learning barriers.

The results of the study partially disagree with the empirical findings of the previous research conducted worldwide. Some of the participants indicated that it will be difficult for gifted learners to learn in the same environment with learners with learning barriers, while literature reviewed document studies which examined the performance of gifted learners and learners with learning barriers in one class and found that depending on the teaching method these learners can learn together. Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) undertook a study comparing children in regular school others in special education. Children in regular schools matched with children in special education from grade 2 onwards and they were followed-up for a period of 4 years. Two years later the results of competency were inclusive, children in regular schools developed better in mathematics than those in special schools except those children in special schools for with mild mental. After 4 years, the competency gap between those in regular schools and their peers in special school was greater.

Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) studied the development of children with mental retardation or behavioural and learning difficulties by comparing them in cognitive and non-cognitive areas. He then concluded that the Dutch policy *Weer Samen Naar*

*School* ('Back to School Together Again') forms an overlap between those learners in regular schools and those learners in special primary education. Jepma (2003) used Dutch cohort data from his study and found that 55% of children in special education could be taught in regular schools and the rest could not be taught in regular schools because of the severity of their problems.

Markussen (2004) studied a group of 777 students that with mild special needs education in Norway at a secondary school. He found that those students with complex learning disability, emotional and psychological problem are less likely to succeed at high school as compared to those students with mild special educational needs. Besides that, performed better in lower grades are more likely to succeed in higher grades. Students with special needs receiving education in regular classes proved to be more likely succeeding in secondary school compared to students receiving special need education in special classes.

#### **4.13. Summary**

This chapter outlined and discussed the empirical findings from the qualitative interviews. The findings, discussion and an analysis were presented with the intention to answer the research questions. The findings are interpreted against literature and theoretical frameworks. Statements were divided into categories of understanding of skills development initiatives, differentiated learning environment, differentiated assessment, differentiated teaching methods and challenges faced by educators in implementing inclusive education. The conclusions, recommendation and implications of the study will be outlined in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the study conclusions and gives recommendations. The conclusions are presented as per the themes outline in Chapter Four above.

#### 5.2. Conclusions

This section presents the summary of results of the study. The presentation is in line with the research objectives as outlined in the first chapter

**Skills development initiatives to help educators to implement inclusive education:** The results of the study identified two skills development initiatives which are inclusive education policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) and policy framework to support services in education to assist learners with special needs. Mckenzie (2021) shows that the pressing issue that faces education in South Africa currently is to provide free and compulsory education for children of all races and those who have learning barriers. It is evident in the data that special needs of the learners should embrace issues of psychological, economic, linguistic and social context.

**Systems at school level to screen and to identify leaners with special education needs:** The result of the study shows that *National Department of Education issued a policy document on screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS) which provided framework with which to standardise the procedures to identify, assess and provide programmes to learners who requires additional support.* Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) and Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) argue that schools should be given the opportunities to select appropriate screening methods, if possible, this must be done on a broad scope, because screening does not have to be done only when teachers are in a one-on-one session with a learner. There are other scholars who argue that screening should also take place through group testing either in large or small groups through activities and discussions (Ainscow and César, 2006).

**Understanding of the term curriculum differentiation:** The results of the study identified four major themes which explain the concept curriculum differentiation. Firstly, this concept is defined as the structuring of lesson plans, assessment activities and rubrics to accommodate learners with special educational needs. Secondly, this term is defined as the process of modifying or adapting the curriculum based on different learning abilities of the learners. Thirdly this concept is defined as a way of teaching in which educators proactively modify curriculum to accommodate learners with special needs. Lastly this concept is defined as curriculum differentiation means modification to regular curriculum by adjusting process, skills, content and learning environment to accommodate learners with special needs. Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) argued that curriculum development for learners with diverse learning needs should be a continuous and ever changing process were in teachers play a central role at school level On one hand Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) says that curriculum differentiation be used to enable learners with barriers to learning develop knowledge and skills to interact independently with the society. Other scholars such as Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) and Ainscow and César (2006) advocate that government should alter both the curriculum and, physical and environmental factors to enable learners' wit diverse needs to participate in learning. This understanding describes curriculum differentiation as a form of multi- learning mode that facilitates inclusion of all learners in education.

**Understanding of the term differentiated curriculum content:** The result of the study shows one-directional understanding of the concept. For example, some educators understanding this concept to mean packaging of curriculum content that accommodate learners with special needs. On the same note, other educators understand this concept as a comprise of the knowledge, concepts, and skills that learners need to learn based on the curriculum. The second understanding above encompasses what previous authors describe as the correct, inclusive curriculum which include the various mode of delivery such as video, readings, lectures, or audio and a curriculum whereby learners have opportunities to choose their focus based on their individual interest. Majd (2004) and Demeris, Childs and Jordan (2007) argue that differentiating the content of the curriculum should include the use of various mode of delivery formats such as videos, readings, audios

and normal class teaching. Ainscow and César (2006) agree that curriculum content be shared using graphics and different techniques to address complex situations. Other scholars such as Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) and Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) advocates that there is a need for learners to take time to reflect on and digest the types of learning activities offered by the teachers before moving on to the next segment of the lesson. It is argued that this process has the potential to enable learners to do self-introspection to assess what they do and don't understand. Ainscow and César (2006) also argue that this process can also be used by teachers as a formative assessment opportunity to monitor the learning progress of the learners.

**Understanding of the term differentiated learning environment:** The result of the research shows that educators share common understanding of the term differentiated learning environment. There are educators who define the concept as proactively planning of various approaches and setting to deliver curriculum objectives to learners. Other educators define differentiated learning environment to include how learners learn through multimodal approaches to learning such as the use of online resources and graphics to increase prospect effective learning. Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) argue that in this instance, learners can acquire new information and ideas through reading independently or with a partner, doing online research and/or through group work.

**Understanding of the term differentiated teaching methods:** The result of the study indicates that educators share a common understanding of what the concept differentiated teaching methods mean. The result of the study defines the concept differentiated teaching methods is when educators apply different teaching and learning methods in class. This concept is also defined to include the adoption of visual, auditory and oral teaching, playing videos, charts and illustrations within texts, giving verbal and written directions to tasks. Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) and Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) recognise flexible pace learning as one effective curriculum differentiated teaching method. These scholars argue that tasks need to be completed during a set period, and this fact disadvantages slower

paced learners and favoured faster learning learners. Other scholars advocate for collaborative learning in the form of group work in order to encourage shy learners to be active in class (Ainscow and César, 2006). Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002), Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) and Demeris, Childs and Jordan (2007) who argue that verbal dialogue is crucial to curriculum teaching method of differentiation. They argue that teachers can support and adapt their teaching approaches to address different learning profiles at different levels of cognitive abilities.

**Understanding of the term differentiated assessments:** The results of the study indicated that educators share a common understanding of what the concept differentiated assessment mean. The results of the study define this concept as involvement of different types of assessment strategies which unlock the potential of every learner. On the same vein, this concept is also defined to cater for different learning needs, interest and abilities. Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) define the concept differentiated assessment as a continuous process used by the teacher gather information from multiple sources, during learning to determine the strength and needs on individual learner. Differentiating assessments helps teachers to demonstrate competencies of individual learner in manner that suits a particular learner (Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński, 2002).

**Challenges faced by educators with inclusive education:** The results of the study show two types/categories of challenges associated with inclusive education. Firstly, the type of challenge is related to abilities of educators to implement the inclusive education. The second challenge relates to inadequate enabling infrastructure development that accommodate learners with disabilities. Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) and Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) argue that good education variety of resources that includes financial, environmental to thrive and succeed. Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan (2007) also state that when people address quality education includes infrastructure, curriculum content, teacher quality and relevance of assistive devices such as teaching aids.



### **Effects of inclusive education on other learners without learning barriers:**

The results of the study show that teaching and learning of gifted learners and learners with intellectual disability will never be the same and it will always be challenging if it takes place in the same learning environment. The results indicate that gifted learners get bored if a teacher pitch teaching and learning in way that accommodate learners with special needs. On one hand, the same results show that learners with special needs will struggle to understand, if the teacher pitches the teaching and learning activities in such a way that it will accommodate gifted learners. Contradictory to that Cawley, Hayden, Cade and Baker-Kroczyński (2002). Children with special needs especially those with minor mental retardation perform better in regular schools than special schools. Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) agrees that children with learning and behavioural difficulties or mild mental retardation perform better in regular schools than special schools. He regards Dutch policy” *Weer Samen Naar School*” (‘Back to School Together Again’) as an overlap between children regular primary education and special school education.

In summary the study concludes that the primary school teachers in this study do understand what inclusive education entails. They have demonstrated their understanding of various components of inclusive education. Factors that affect smooth implementation of Inclusive Education include lack skills by some educators to teach Inclusive Education, limited educator support by government and inadequate infrastructure to accommodate learners with special needs. They have learned to remain positive and work hard as they continue to implement the policy on inclusive education. They need support in form of training in order to successfully implement the policy.

### **5.4. Recommendations**

The study presents the following recommendations to different stakeholders:

#### **Training and development:**

Training on development of curriculum content, assessment methods and teaching and learning methodology is needed in order to capacitate educators to successfully implement inclusive education.

## **Teacher support**

Government needs to improve teacher support by establishing and capacitating Institutional Based Support Teams, District Based Support Teams and Resource centres in all areas and encourage educators to use them regularly.

## **Infrastructure development**

Inclusion of infrastructure facilities for learners with special needs at school level will also assist the schools to successfully implement the inclusive education policy.

### **5.5. Limitations of the Study**

The following limitations are applicable to the current study:

- The study was conducted on a small number of primary school educators, in the public schools. Accordingly, the results, although they can be used to serve as guides for other similar organisations, cannot be generalised.
- The issue of bias cannot be totally removed from a qualitative study.
- Schools used in the study was taken from Education Statistics of 2013 page 17 published in 2015. It included all schools in the Capricorn district of Limpopo province. They include Schools in the following category, Pre-Grade R, Grade R, Grade 1 to 7, Grade 8 to 12. There is no statistics specific for Grade R to Grade 3.

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## **Appendix B**

### **Map**





**Appendix B**  
**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

**Dear participants**

My name is Manthata Yvonne. I am a masters student studying MDEV at University of Limpopo's Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership (TGSL). I am conducting a research and my research topic is as follows: An Investigation into Primary School Educators skills to implement Inclusive Education in Capricorn District Limpopo.

You have been selected to participate in the study and your input is valuable as it will assist the research to determine variables needed to enhance skill development for educators to successfully implement Inclusive Education. Your name will not be disclosed to anyone and information provided will be confidential. Kindly answer all questions.

Thank you

Kind regards

Ms Yvonne M Manthata

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Signature

**Demographic****1.1****Gender**

<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>	
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**1.2.**

**Your age**

<b>18yrs -30yrs</b>		<b>31yrs –40yrs</b>		<b>41yrs – 50yrs</b>		<b>50yrs +</b>	
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**1.3.**

**Educator category**

<b>Principal</b>		<b>Educator</b>	
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**1.4**

**Years of employment (experience)**

<b>0 – 5</b>		<b>6 – 10</b>		<b>11 – 15</b>		<b>16 - 20</b>		<b>20 +</b>	
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**2. The objectives 1:**

To investigate whether the DoE skills development initiatives to develop capacity of primary school educators in teaching Inclusive education are been implemented.

2.1. Do you know the skills development initiatives by government to help educators to implement Inclusive Education.? If so explain and give example.

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2.2. Do you have a system at your school to screen and to identify learners with special educational needs and if so explain?

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**3. Objective 2**

- To examine whether the primary school educators are skilled and developed in Inclusive Education in the Capricorn Circuit.

3.1. What do you understand by the term curriculum differentiation and if so explain and give an example?

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3.2. What do you understand by the term differentiated curriculum content and if so explain and give an example?

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3.3. What do you understand by the term differentiated learning environment and if so explain and give an example?

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3.4. What do you understand by the term differentiated teaching methods and if so explain and give an example?

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3.5. What do you understand by the term differentiated assessments and if so explain and give an example?

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**Objective 3**

4. To recommend ways to improve skills development for primary school educators for Inclusive Education.

4.1. What are challenges faced by educators with Inclusive Education?

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4.2. Do you have any educator support systems at school premises and if so in what form is the support system?

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4.3. Do you have any educator support systems at district level and if so explain?

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4.4. Do you attend any continuous development programs (CPD) such as workshops and further training and if so explain?

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4.5. Are there sufficient facilities, adapted infrastructure and assistive devices to help learners with disability at your school, if so explain?

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4.6. What are the effects of inclusive education on other learners without learning barriers.

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Thank you for your participation