

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIES AND  
CHALLENGES FOR EDUCATORS.**

**BY**

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**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Masters degree  
in Educational Leadership, Management and Policy in the School of Education  
(Edgewood Campus)**

**Durban, South Africa**

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**2015**

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

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CHALLENGES FOR EDUCATORS**

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**2015**

## **SUPERVISORS STATEMENT**

This mini dissertation is submitted with / without my approval

.....  
Dr. S.D. Bayeni

December 2015

## DECLARATION

I, Pauline Cooke declare that:

i) The research entitled, “Inclusive Education Policy Implementation: Strategies and Challenges for Educators” is my original work.

ii) This dissertation has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any University.

iii) This dissertation does not contain other person’s data, pictures, graphs or other information unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then

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vii) This dissertation was submitted for the Masters in Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

**Signed** .....

**Date:** .....

**P.J. Cooke (201510203)**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge the following people who have made it possible to finish this study:

- ❖ To my Creator, our Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that He has been with me in times of despair and difficulty and has seen me through thus far.
- ❖ To my supervisor Dr. S.D. Bayeni: I salute you Sir. I have learnt so much from you. You have taught me, amongst other things, when feeling stressed, to take time out and do something different. You motivated me every step of the way and I am eternally grateful.
- ❖ To Prof. V. Chikoko, Dr T.T. Bhengu, Dr. Mthiyane, Dr Myende and Dr Naicker, you all have guided me on this journey, I am grateful and your input was invaluable.
- ❖ To my special friends Joy Seidle, Kim van Ballegooyen, Kathryn Hasselman, Axel Batsch, Richard Jacobs, Greg Connell, Bronwyn Lally and Terene Webster, Audrey Clark, you generously gave of your time to assist me, your support is appreciated.
- ❖ To all the principals and teachers where I conducted my research, I would not have come thus far without your valued support.
- ❖ To the Department of Education SEMs, your support was greatly appreciated.
- ❖ To my school Principal, Mr D.R. Unger, your motivation, kind heart and consideration as well as support was immeasurable.
- ❖ To my mom, Mrs G. Klein, who stood by me all the way, your prayers kept me strong on this difficult journey. I could not have come this far without your support.
- ❖ To my husband, Romal Cooke, you did not give up on me even when I gave up myself. Your understanding and immense support is what kept me going. I could not have arrived at this point without your devoted support.
- ❖ To my children, Kesha, Tienielle, Angelique and Corrie and my granddaughter, Kayla, who fell asleep many nights on the couch, waiting for mom and Tevin, I am forever indebted to you for supporting me throughout these two years. Your encouragement, sitting late nights and tremendous support will be forever cherished.
- ❖ To my family members, Hebrew and Cecilia Marais, you've encouraged and motivated me, I appreciate all your support.
- ❖ To Mr Mei, Dianne Arumugam and Mr Kevin Earlam and all those who kept me in their prayers throughout this study, I am grateful.
- ❖ To my brothers and sisters who had faith in me, your support and motivation kept me focused.
- ❖ To my mother-law, Mavis Cooke and aunty Pabble Grewan, you did not stop praying for me, I am grateful.
- ❖ To the staff at my school, I am grateful for your support.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated firstly, to my late father, Van Dyk for his love and support throughout my academic life, he would wake me up at all hours of the night to study, without hesitation. Secondly, to my late sister, Joan Fonseca, who encouraged me, believed in me and supported me in achieving greater heights. Thirdly, to my late brother, Colin Klein, who always supported me in all endeavours. Fourthly to Theresa Klein, my late sister-in-law, who encouraged me constantly. Fifthly, to my past Principal, Bronwyn Fisher, for her moral support and belief in me, who saw what I was capable of even when I could not. Lastly, my dedication goes to my late father-in-law, Mr Charles Marias who always motivated me to achieve and my late brother-in-law, Lucky David Cooke, who would do the impossible to assist me in my studies.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ANA – Annual National Assessment

CAPS – Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

CAST – Center for Applied Special Technology

DBE – Department of Basic Education

DBST – District Based Support Teams

DoE – Department of Education

EFA – Education for All

FP – Foundation Phase

GB – Governing Body

IEP – Inclusive Education Policy implementation

INSET – In Service Educator Training

ITE – Inclusive Teaching Education

IQMS – Integrated Quality Management Systems

LSEN – Learners with Special Educational Needs

NCLB – No Child Left Behind

NGQ's – Non-Government Organisation

QMS - Quality Management Systems

SASA – South African Schools Act

SEM – Super-intendant of Education and Training

SIAS – Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

SP – Senior Phase

UDL – Universal Design for Learning

UK – United Kingdom

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

US – United States of America

USA – United States of America

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate how Inclusive Education Policy is implemented in three primary schools in the Umlazi District. The study primarily looked at educators challenges, experiences and strategies implored when implementing Inclusive Education practices. It is hoped that educator experiences, challenges and strategies employed, in dealing with diverse learners will help other educators in similar situations.

The study made use of a qualitative design as an approach. Data was collected through the use of semi-structured interviews with Super-intendants of Education Management, principals and educators in the senior phase department of the primary schools. Observations were also collected to investigate Inclusive Education Policy practices at the selected schools. The interviews and discussions were tape recorded. The data collected during the interviews and observations was transcribed and organised into themes.

The theory adopted in this study is that of policy implementation analysis. This theory posits that two factors are prevalent in policy implementation and these are *capacity* and *will*. It is important for these two factors to be considered, when implementing policies. It is priority that policy implementers have proper training, in order for them to implement the policy effectively and successfully. A lack of the understanding of policy can negatively affect the manner in which policy is implemented. The achievement of policy goals depends on those who implement the policy, who may accept or reject the aspect of change, based on support structures in place.

The main findings indicate that there are various challenges when Inclusive Education Policy is implemented. Some challenges stem from educators not being properly trained to teach diverse learners in schools. A shortage of resources becomes problematic for educators to implement the policy. Educators are in dire need of support from the Department of Education in order to cope with Inclusive Education Policy implementation expectations.

The study recommends that educators receive adequate training before the policy is implemented. Also that departmental officials visit schools, be visible and available to assist educators when they encounter challenges. A further recommendation is that educators receive prior training at tertiary level in IEP and the new curriculum, before they report to schools.



This may relieve educators of frustration and stressful factors in implementing Inclusive Education Policy.

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**CHAPTER ONE**  
**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIES AND**  
**CHALLENGES**

*‘Children envisage the future, Educators plan the way forward.’ –Pauline Cooke*

**1.1 Introduction**

The above quotation captures the essence of inclusion and invites us to think about the concept of inclusion as highlighting three major issues. The first relates to the notion of integration of diverse learners into a single school or classroom. The second relates to the imperative of change and adaptation to the needs of our clients (the learners and the public). Thirdly, it invites us to genuinely embrace and cherish our diversity and simultaneously attempt to bring the best out of the potentials of diverse needs. My reflections about a variety of literature, I have read thus far, has inspired me to look at the children, people, who have vision of their future but who need us to assist them get to their future and not our vision of it.

With the passage of Inclusive Education Policy in 2001, there were expectations that all learners would have access to education regardless of their physical abilities in terms of the Salamanca Statement (Ainscow & Caesar, 2006). To achieve this, support systems needed to be put in place. For example, the promotion of enhanced access to education could include building infrastructure, training of policy implementers, support and monitoring mechanisms (DoE, 2001, p.28). Inclusive Education Policy’s (IEP) expectations require educators to provide for different needs of learners (DoE, 2001, p. 16). However, there has been very little support to enable educators to do this.

Inclusive Education Policy is clear about the objectives and aims it wants to achieve. However, no appropriate support strategies for educators have been put in place to achieve the Inclusive Education Policy’s goals. Whilst there may be different methods to reskill educators, the study focus is specifically on the challenges experienced and strategies utilised by educators in dealing with learning challenges. “It is worthy to note that the implementers of IEP need support structures within schools in order for this policy to be effectively implemented”. Naicker (2001, p. 3), argues that teaching knowledge emerges from the interpretation of learning and learning goals. Educators are still facing an uphill task in implementing IEP and according to Jones and Fuller (2003), studies conclude that educators are key to the success of IEP implementation. “One important support mechanism is that of professional development

programmes focusing on improving leaders' knowledge and understanding of policy". (DoE, 2001, p. 28). The current Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga on 14 March 2015 reiterated, 'that together, as partners in education, we can shape the future of education in South Africa, based on quality education and skills development'. "Necessary skills and educator support to meet the demands as laid out by IEP remain a priority that educators need to acquire". (Mullick, Deppler & Sharma, 2012, p.8).

After the adoption of IEP, educators still lack skills in the implementation of Inclusive Education Policy (Dalton, 2011). Consequently, there are still problems in many primary schools in South Africa. It seems support service teams lack expertise in the deliverance of epistemological knowledge of inclusive education policies. Further, Naicker (2006) posits that it is not easy to train others in IEP implementation practices, if one does not have sound knowledge, understanding and expertise. Naicker (2006) further notes that educators' limited knowledge and skills in the preparation of suitable learning activities is a hindrance with regard to including all learners in the classroom.

Studies done by Forlin (1998) and Pottass (2005) indicate that Inclusive Education Policy is complicated to implement because educators lack knowledge and experience. As such, it is of paramount importance that challenges that educators face in the implementation of IEP are addressed. At all levels in education, challenges, for example (languages, poverty, funding, skills training of educators and many more), impact on the future education of diverse children. In this respect, the challenges that educators experience in the classroom are unique as a result of a diverse nation. Further, some challenges such as a lack of educator capacitation in teaching diverse learners, a lack of manpower and material resources requirements, a lack of appropriate facilities, insufficient support from management, a lack of department intervention programmes to empower educators and a lack of parental involvement may be only a few examples paramount to the successful implementation of IEP (Charema, 2010). Only when the above factors are addressed, may educators be motivated to implement IEP as idealised as the solution for social changes in South Africa (Stubbs, 2008). While IEP policy continues to put pressure on educators, a lack of educator capacitation in the implementation of IEP in primary schools remains a challenge. It is the demands that IEP puts on educators and lack of support given to educators to deal with learning disabilities that prompted me to investigate challenges that educators faced with regard to IEP implementation in primary schools in the Umlazi District.

## **1.2 Background to the study**

Since the release of White Paper 6 in 2001, educators still faced challenges of not being able to accommodate diverse learner needs as part of the application of IEP. Although there was widespread support for Inclusive Education Policy, educators experienced challenges because they were ill-prepared regarding planning of activities for all learners in diverse classrooms (Rouse, 2014). Educators lacked support and did not know how to provide for the various needs of learners. Yet, (IEP) holds that education should take place within a system of conventional and non-formal support (DoE, 2001, pp. 21-25). The question that remained unanswered was about how educators would be able to do that, if they were not empowered and capacitated in the implementation of IEP. In an attempt to address this concern, the Department of Education stipulated that professional development programmes would be put in place that would pivot improving leadership in strategies of policy, management and initiatives of programme implementation, of which educator support has not been forthcoming (DoE, 2001).

Policy suggests that learners with disabilities who have been found with special needs should be taught in mainstream classes. In this vein, mainstreaming, concerns educating learners with special needs in regular classes (DoE, p. 17). Studies done by Mullick, Deppeler and Sharma (2012), indicated that school leaders alluded that some educators were in favour of IEP practices while others were not because they had limited training in teaching diverse learners. In spite of the initiatives of IEP, educators still found it difficult to accommodate these learners due to the lack of knowledge and experience (Mullick, *et. al.*, p. 8). To support this view, Kaufman (2005) argues that teaching will be successful, if children were taught by specialised educators. Of a special concern, is whether learners with disabilities would cope in mainstream classes or whether educators are equipped to provide for the needs of learners and expectations of policy?

IEP points to incorporate a system that may identify and address hindrances to learning practices and accommodate for varied learner needs (DoE, 2001). Similarly, schools implementing IEP practices aimed at addressing diverse needs of learners. Since 1994, after the demise of the apartheid system, it seemed that schools have changed to become culturally diverse. Teaching learners with diversity encompasses respecting and accommodating for the human rights of all people, especially, in schools in South Africa where learners with special

needs are included in mainstream classes (SASA, 84 of 1996). However, anecdotal evidence suggested that educators continued to experience challenges in respect of IEP implementation.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

There are many policies aimed at addressing different problems related to school practice as identified by policy makers. Despite the existence of such policies, there are still many unresolved challenges that schools are still grappling with. In particular, primary schools in South Africa continue to face challenges relating to the implementation of Inclusive Education Policy (IEP). These challenges arise from non-implementation of IEP and they include but not limited to catering for different learners, insufficient resources and a lack of aid from the parents and the community, a lack of support from the DoE, the district teams and management of schools (Charema, 2010). In addition, there are educator concerns regarding the curriculum expectations and time frames regarding the implementation of CAPs in catering for diverse learner barriers and needs. To this end, Inclusive Education Policy holds that learning barriers may be reduced given that learners and educators receive the support they require (Republic of South Africa, 2001, p. 28).

Also, there may be many causes that contribute to a lack of support services resulting in challenges of IEP implementation. In terms of special schools, the (DoE, White Paper 6, 2001) stipulates that special schools will become centres of learning providing curriculum support within a District. However, professional support has been lacking. It has been envisaged further, that strengthened support services will build the capacity of schools. Yet, educator capacity is still questioned because educators still face many challenges in the classroom including, an aspect of poverty, where learners lack basic resources to meet basic needs of an inclusive classroom.

It has also become apparent that poverty challenges are seen to be an important aspect inhibiting the successful implementation of IEP because of insufficient resources for educators and learners who are the recipients of knowledge cascaded. To this extent, educators' still seem to be facing challenges with IEP, because of knowledge that is lacking in determining learner needs. In respect of the above, they initiate their own coping strategies. To add, the educators' dilemma of teaching diverse learners in classrooms, still presents challenges.

#### **1.4 Purpose and rationale for the study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges experienced by educators and strategies utilised in the implementation of IEP. Literature reveals the birth of democracy in South Africa, brought about many changes (Naicker, 2006, p. 1). These changes have placed demands on educators as they are the agents of change as the implementers of IEP. Educators on the one hand, as agents of change are confronted with challenges in the implementation of IEP (Rouse, 2014). Such implementation challenges emanate from the changes in South Africa's educational landscape, which requires educators to teach diverse group of learners. Mullick, Deppeler and Sharma (2012), recognise that knowledge which is limited, is conceived as a barrier for educators to understand the idea of change. (p. 8). These scholars further argue that 'educators lack confidence, knowledge and skills in teaching diverse learners, and these factors inhibit the successful implementation of IEP (Mullick, Deppeler & Sharma, 2012). Toward this end, educator support, training in teaching diverse children and improved knowledge and skills in IEP is vital. On the other hand, learners are being deprived of whole schooling and are marginalised because of poor training (Peterson, 2004). In this vein, Peterson (2004) describes whole schooling 'as a school culture that seeks to provide physical spaces for care and belonging, as well as, human growth'. Similarly, IEP refers to creating equal opportunities for learners (UNESCO, 2005).

The curriculum of South African schools focusses on learner achievement, unfortunately, learner performances are based on the experiences of educators who were not adequately trained in IEP and thus learners were marginalised (Alexander, 2011). To some extent, as a result of a lack of experience and training in IEP implementation, educators developed negative attitudes and learners were stereotyped and marginalised. To support this view, Mullick (2012) asserts that, Primary School educators remain impervious to IEP, wishing to spurn learners from their classrooms. This is predominantly a social phenomenon by which a minority or sub-group is excluded or marginalised and their needs or desires ignored (Curcic, 2014). Learners are the window of opportunity, waiting to experience the unknown, and as such, it is the task of support services to empower educators to deliver equitable education for all learners.

According to Forlin 1998 (as cited in Pottass, 2005), educators lack of knowledge in the implementation of IEP and personal efficacy regarding teaching learners with specific needs seems to be the biggest concern as guidelines are not forthcoming. Moreover, despite facing a challenging role of imparting knowledge to diverse learners, educators are being compelled to



prove themselves as efficient and effective implementers in Inclusive Education Policy (Madan & Sharma, 2013). The problem of a discrepancy between policy intentions and practice of policy has persisted. Therefore, there is a need to understand the barriers and challenges that hinder Inclusive Education Policy Implementation in South Africa.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

I have been an educator for 24 years and have taught in classrooms with diverse groups of learners. As Head of Department, my personal experience exposed me to the needs of the learners and educators. In this respect, learners with special needs were facing difficulties in mainstream classes. It also seemed that educators were ill-equipped to teach the learners with special needs. In this study my interest was in understanding those shortcomings and how they could be overcome in order to improve the existing practices. Reading widely, I became enlightened that some educators were insufficiently prepared to embrace and effectively deal with learner needs. I believed that this study might assist in filling the knowledge gaps with regards to the implementation of IEP. It was hoped that this study would provide a better understanding of the challenges experienced by educators and schools and how learners with special needs could be accommodated in mainstream classrooms. Therefore, it was hoped that the beneficiaries of this study would be the educators and learners.

### **1.6 Objectives of the study**

This study aims to identify the challenges experienced by educators and strategies utilised in the implementation of IEP. The aim can be subdivided into several objectives.

1. To investigate how policy has prepared educators to teach inclusive education in diverse classrooms.
2. To traverse the challenges (if any) experienced by educators in the implementation of IEP.

### **1.7 Key questions**

Main research question

1. What are the challenges of inclusive education policy implementation in classrooms?

The main research question is divided into several sub-questions.

- 1.1 How has policy outlined guidelines for educators to teach inclusive education within a diverse classroom?
  - 1.2. What are the challenges (if any) do educators experience in the implementation of Inclusive Education?
  - 1.3. How do educators manage to deal with the challenges?
- 2 What are the strategies utilised by educators in the implementation of inclusive education policy?

### **1.8 Definition of key concepts**

There are four key concepts that are briefly elucidated in this section and these are inclusion, inclusive education, mainstream and integration.

#### **1.8.1 Inclusion**

The notion of inclusion refers to a situation where schools, local authorities of various kinds, communities and various departments aim to reduce barriers by including participation of citizens (Croll & Moses, 2000). Other scholars such as Shelton and Pollingue (2000) emphasise the importance of inclusion by stating that it entails the placing of learners with learning barriers together in an educational environment for a specific time during the day. Such a placement can take various forms such as an academic, non-academic or extracurricular nature (Tshifura, 2012). In short, inclusion is about constructing a welcoming educational environment for all learners (Lewis & Doorlag, 2006). Reynolds (1989) suggests that inclusion is best regarded as a positive stance for educating groups previously excluded from mainstream society. Having briefly described what the concept of inclusion is about, the concept of Inclusive Education is also described.

#### **1.8.2 Inclusive education**

Drawing from previous discussions on inclusion, the concept of IEP, refers to the right to education of all learners, despite individual characteristics and difficulties, cultural differences or language orientation, which is respected and guaranteed. Inclusive Education draws from inclusion as contemplated in Education White Paper 6 of (Republic of South Africa, 2001). According to Frederickson and Cline (2002), inclusion is often defined as a move away from segregation of learning spaces for diverse learners. Dorn (2006) defines IEP as including

students with specialised needs in regular programmes alongside individuals who are not disabled.

### **1.8.3 Mainstream**

The term ‘mainstream’ in the context of this study refers to the practice of educating learners with special learning needs in regular classes during specific time periods based on their skills. This means regular education classes are combined with special education classes. Schools that practise mainstreaming believe that students with special needs who cannot function in a regular classroom to a certain extent ‘belong’ to the special education environment’ (Bradshaw, 1998). Having briefly discussed the practice of combining learners with special needs and those who do not have such needs, it makes more sense to next discuss the term ‘integration’.

### **1.8.4 Integration**

This term integration means combining learners with special challenges with learners in mainstream classes. In this light, learners who experience learning challenges are grouped and taught with learners in regular classes. Sometimes, different countries use different terms to refer to the same phenomenon. For instance, in the United States of America (USA), the term ‘mainstreaming’ is used while in the United Kingdom (UK), the term ‘integration’ is used. According to Madan and Sharma (2013), integration refers to combining learners with special needs from different places and environments in regular classrooms. In this instance, the readiness of the learner is a priority.

## **1.9 Delimitations of the study**

This study was on schools that were found to be struggling more than other schools. Therefore, the study was limited to these schools which I believed would provide me with in-depth knowledge about how educators in these particular schools, dealt with Inclusive Education Policy implementation. The study was conducted in three primary schools that were located in the Umlazi District in Durban. Two of the three schools were from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and were set against poor socio-political-economic environments and many learners had experienced social dilemmas amongst other challenges. Many learners did not have parents and took care of younger siblings. Some came from dangerous environments. Many learners endured poverty and experienced health related problems. The other school was more affluent, an x-Model C school which consisted of diverse groups of learners and educators representing the demographics of the school. This school was symbolic of a true South African

nation, experiencing the same difficulties as other schools, where much was to be learnt. My interest was to ascertain whether educators from the x-Model C school experienced similar constraints and challenges as their counterparts. All three schools had existed for over 50 years and were born into the apartheid era prior to 1994.

### **1.10 Outline of the study**

This research study has been organised into five chapters and the outline of each chapter is presented below.

#### **Chapter One**

This chapter serves as an orientation of the study. It introduces the study by providing the background to the study, the rationale and purpose of the study. The statement of the problem, research questions and the significance of the study are also discussed.

#### **Chapter Two**

This chapter reviews literature on various issues relating to Inclusive Education. Some of the issues include providing highlights brickbats and bouquets of IEP implementation. Towards the end of the chapter, a theoretical framework is presented.

#### **Chapter Three**

Chapter Three covers the research design and methodology that was employed in conducting the empirical inquiry.

#### **Chapter Four**

This chapter provides a detailed description of the data presentation and discussion. A number of themes were generated during the analysis and such themes were used to present and discuss the data.

#### **Chapter Five**

This is the last chapter and it presents the findings of the study that were derived from the analysis of the presented data. However, before the findings are presented and discussed, a summary of the study is discussed. Drawing from the findings, recommendations are made.

### **1.11 Chapter summary**

This chapter presents the main phenomenon under study. Research questions are used as strategy to uncover the problems associated with the phenomena.

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIES AND**  
**CHALLENGES**

*‘Children are the window of the hour glass...awaiting opportunity to prosper.’*

– Pauline Cooke

**2.1 Introduction**

I begin this chapter by drawing from a metaphor reflected above and it depicts a particular meaning about this study generally and this chapter in particular. The meaning behind this metaphor is that so much had been said in literature about learners receiving equal education in terms of IEP practices. Now, visions need to be implemented in order for learners to reap the rewards of an IEP system.

The previous chapter introduced the study and mapped out what the whole dissertation was about. All the main sections of the dissertation were lightly touched on with an aim of giving an overview about what the research project entailed. This chapter aims to review literature around IEP implementation. This chapter consists of two main sections. The first is literature review and the second is the theoretical framework. The literature presents scholarly debates on the study topic. The theoretical framework will be used as a tool to provide the background to this study. The purpose and focus of this chapter is to highlight studies done by researchers with regard to IEP Implementation. In this chapter relevant literature from scholars is provided, focussing on IEP and key debates on this topic. The Policy Implementation Analysis Theory underpins this study as a framework. This theory will inform the whole study and explain behavioural practice.

To some extent, it seems that implementers have a lack of capacity building and this poses as a huge problem. It is expected that people who are expected to implement policy acquire a range of skills. In this study educators and principals need to acquire skills and expertise and be developed on how to implement policies. In terms of my study, school principals, Governing Bodies (GB) and the Department of Education (DoE) need to work collaboratively to provide for the needs of all learners. In this chapter, literature is evaluated and purposively utilised to add to the understanding of the research problem. It is also used to establish the importance of the inquiry which may assist to improve the theoretical understanding of the research issue. This chapter explores various relevant theories and trends on IEP Implementation. I conclude

this chapter by arguing for IEP and practices to assist school managers, educators, learners and schools accommodating for diverse learners.

## **2.2 Exploring international and national trends on IEP Implementation**

The literature or scholarship on IEP helps us to understand the challenges faced in the process of its implementation. Based on that, South Africa can draw lessons on how they dealt with those challenges. Two short case studies from Malaysia and China have been used to explore operationalisation of the IEP implementation.

Malaysia's move towards IEP was recognised by its participation in workshops and conferences. Perhaps, this lesson may be learnt in South African education, that workshops and seminars are vital to empower educators to provide for various learners. Inclusive Education Policy ideologies focus on incorporating all learners in education (NCLB, 2002). However, in South Africa, this seems to be problematic because educators in South Africa fail to incorporate all learners in classrooms because they are not sufficiently trained to meet IEP expectations (Pottas, 2005). In this regard, perhaps South Africa could learn from the initiatives of the international community to improve educator skills which could help reduce educator challenges (Mohd & Jelas 2012). Similarly, in China, Inclusive Education practices have been accepted and are practised where diverse learners are being catered for. While in South Africa, it seems that diverse learners have not been sufficiently catered for because they are integrated into mainstream classes which intensifies educator's experiences and causes challenges based on a lack of IEP training. Therefore, educators experience many challenges pertaining to diverse learners, large classes and special needs learners in mainstream classes. Hence, IEP is connected to local culture (Malinen, 2013). In this regard, South African IEP implementation practices fall short because South Africa has diverse cultures and this makes it difficult and problematic for educators to meet all learner needs as a result of incapacitation.

Although the South African Education legislation has stipulated that all learners receive equal education, challenges are still experienced by educators because of the diverse cultures and lack of support structures for the educators. According to Perumal (2005), many proposals for quality education in South Africa have been put forward since 1994. Despite Professor Kader Asmal launching Education White Paper 6, 2001, with the intention of meeting international standards and trends, few improvements have been realised in South African Education in terms of bringing about change to meet international standards. Although, educational change

was forecasted, endorsing equality, equity and redress, this seems not to have led to improvements in education. To this extent, Gorton (2009) argues that while all change does not lead to improvement, it is not likely to occur without change. Therefore, reviewing the current education system may bring about positive change. Further, it seems that unless change is realised, there is no knowing whether a proposed innovation is better than current practice. Change is inevitable; as soon as it is embraced, only then may the educational paths in the implementation of policies in South Africa become clearer.

### **2.3 IEP Implementation Themes**

In order to give direction, I have arranged the literature under the following headings, presented according to the following themes; Implementation, Policy landscapes, History of Inclusive Education, Theories of IEP, Development of IEP in South Africa, Teacher attitudes towards IEP, Educator Challenges in the Implementation of IEP, Barriers to IEP Implementation and Strategies to address challenges.

#### **2.3.1 Implementation**

Schools are agents of change and knowledge and skills of implementation are needed daily in myriad ways in schools and districts. The term implementation is not new and it concerns how political and economic issues impact on policy implementation and how policy is implemented at institutional or administration level (Conteh, 2011). On the other hand, Bardach (1977) holds the view that policy implementation became pertinent by the introduction of a top-down approach. On the other hand, theories and assumptions of this approach claim that this approach did not assist practices in terms of how policy was delivered in democratic societies.

However, Pankake (1998) views IEP as taking action, planning programmes, embracing aspects of change and supporting individuals responsible for delivering projects. Critics who support a bottom-up approach to policy implementation are of the view that policy implementation starts with people responsible with public administration, where district officials liaise with organised societal interests (Barret, 1981; Elmore, 1981; Klijn, 1996; Kickert, 1997). Some scholars view implementation studies as being found central to public administration, organisational theoretical knowledge and public management research and political science studies (Schofield & Sausman, 2004). In this regard, the education department, district support teams, school managers and educators all have a vital role in the implementation of IEP. Furthermore, some scholars have the assumption that policy



interpretations have an impact on how policy is cascaded as this influences implementers knowledge of the policy problem (Pulzl & Treib, 2007).

In this respect, educators' lack of knowledge regarding IEP implementation has an impact on the execution of IEP as meaning and understanding is limited (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001, p. 213). According to Jenkins (1978, p. 203), implementation studies in a broader sense, 'can be characterised as studies of policy change'. Similarly, educators form the frontline as the first implementers of policy and are expected to make it happen, that is to implement by putting change efforts into action. In order for schools to implement policies, support structures from partners in education is required. In this respect, partnerships in the deliverance of equitable education for all in terms of IEP, is a priority in order for successful implementation of policy.

### **2.3.2 Key debates about policy: Policy landscapes- What is currently known or practised?**

South Africa has come a long way in terms of meeting standards of the first world countries in terms of IEP Implementation against competition with first world countries (Dalton, 2012). Prior to 1994, the South African system of education was stifled in terms of the apartheid era. With the demise of the apartheid era in 1994, on the standpoint of a democratic country, South Africa has gained resurgence by instituting IEP practices in place in terms of policy requirements to meet international expectations (Dalton, 2012).

Extensive international, continental and national literature has emerged on IEP Implementation in the last twenty years. Internationally, theories on IEP implementation have been highlighted in discussions with regard to the development of policy and practice (Naicker, 2006). Moreover, the Education for All (EFA) programme from the United Nations is an important element of future goals in part because education is regarded as vital for human development and the acquisition of education for all learners is important worldwide (UNESCO, 2005). International policies and declarations such as the World Declaration on Education for All, (UNESCO, 1994) and Dakar Framework for Action, (UNESCO, 2000) have provided the path for national initiatives for IEP implementation. According to Perumal (2005), 'Education for All (EFA) started in the 1990s in Jomtien, Thailand and was reiterated at the Salamanca World Conference for Special Needs Education Access and Quality in Spain in 1994 and continued in the Dakar conference in Senegal in 2000. The Jomtien conference positioned

education at the top of international interests and this was an attempt to curb the decline of basic education which had taken place in the 1980s (Ladbrook, 2009).

With respect to IEP in Nigeria, the education of people with special needs has not been taken seriously at policy planning levels. This is because no concrete step had been taken with regard to IEP because integration remained the focus of planning and special education programmes (Garuba, 2003). Therefore, educators and learners were disadvantaged with regard to equity in terms of IEP skills training and learning. Nationally, since the demise of the apartheid system of education in 1994, the government of South Africa has introduced many policies providing for equal education to all South Africans (Dalton, *et. al.*, 2012, p. 2). In this regard, provision has been made for learners with disabilities within the development of IEP, which is provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (DoE, 1996a). However, government officials have not followed through with IEP stipulations, and as a result, educators lack skills training and knowledge in IEP and fail to provide effectively for learner needs (Pottas, 2005). Further, Section 29 of the Bill of Rights stipulates that everyone can receive equal basic education. It seems the basic rights of learners and teachers are stifled as a result of a lack of support structures in place.

Wildeman and Nomdo (2007) argue that ‘despite an enabling environment created by the IEP its implementation in South Africa is slow and partial’. Further, all schools are governed by The South African Schools Act (SASA, 1996b), which has its focus on issues of the redress of past injustices in educational provision in order to uphold the rights of all learners. This means that education should be a right for all members of society. In this regard, learner needs in South Africa is still not taken care of in any significant manner. More than 65 years ago the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) asserted that education be provided to everyone. This stance to education was reaffirmed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child (United Nations, 1989). These principles were embraced and formed the cornerstone of our Bill of Rights (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). Therefore, it makes more sense if measures geared toward providing the rights of all learners in terms of equal education to *all* learners are seriously taken.

### **2.3.3 The history of Inclusive Education Policy**

The historical development of inclusive education has been discussed for many years into the twentieth century. The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2015 Conference on Inclusion BC took place in

Vancouver, Canada in May 2015. In that conference, 18 speakers presented talks on the history of inclusion and IEP practices (Bodnar, 2015.). In the 1950s, the rights of children with developmental disabilities receiving education was an issue and that led to a movement to mobilise the community to come to aid to ensure that all children received an education (Bodnar, 2015). Initially, it was believed that slow learners could not learn. At the time the government paid very little interest in their education. To that extent, parents took it upon themselves to create learning centres in church basements and sometimes homes (Bodnar, 2015). Thereafter, in 1955 parents created a provincial organisation which grew into the BC, (Inclusion BC, 'British Columbia'), is an organisation association for Community Living. Governments then slowly accepted responsibility for funding. Soon the governments then agreed that public schooling should be available to all learners with disabilities (Bodnar, 2015).

At first, educational programmes developed by the school boards were separate, later parents were encouraged to call for including learners in general education classes. (Bodnar, 2015). The movement towards IEP for learners with special needs began in the 1960s (Foreman, 2005). The move towards IEP came in the late 1980s worldwide. This culminated in declarations regarding discrimination against disabled persons, in 1975.

To this extent, IEP was discussed at UNESCO (1994). According to Ainscow and Caesar (2006), the Salamanca Statement was a significant document regarding learner needs. The Salamanca Statement accommodated for learners despite their differences (UNESCO, 1994). The statement argued that mainstream settings which incorporated learners with differences was an effective measure curbing discriminatory attitudes (UNESCO, 1994). The Salamanca Statement prioritised education for children that were marginalised as well as learners with special educational needs and those with disabilities.

Over a period of years it became evident the the United States altered their system of education to include learners with disabilities. It became evident that, prior to 1975, very little focus was paid to learners with disabilities within regular classrooms (UNESCO, 2000). It seemed after the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed in 1975, that learners with disabilities were integrated into mainstream classrooms (UNESCO, 2000). This strategy was utilised to encourage involvement of disabled learners with regular learners. It became evident that after some time this attempt was regarded as not successfully accommodative of inclusive practices (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987).

According to Fuchs and Fuchs (1994), there was a movement that ensured that learners with disabilities were fully included into US general education classrooms. In this regard, educational institutions were developed and improved (Hitchcock, *et. al.*, 2002). Prior to 1994, within the apartheid era in South Africa, learners were discriminated and education was subjective. With the demise of the apartheid system and the introduction of democracy in 1994, all South Africans saw an opportunity for development and growth. Since 1994, new developments in education came into practice with the establishment of South Africa's founding document, the Constitution of South Africa Act No, 108 of 1996. The provision for all learners is part of this process.

Currently, in South Africa, legislation practices continue to improve to accommodate diverse learners in order to meet first world countries in the implementation of IEP with the introduction of Curriculum Assessment Policy (CAPs). Through the CAPs document, the DoE (2011) seems to assist principals and educators in terms of the curriculum (Dalton, *et. al.* 2012). However, meeting CAPs needs is problematic for some learners, as many come from disadvantaged communities and educators face challenges with little resources (Stubbs, 2008). Furthermore, educators face various challenges in the implementation of IEP, also school funding is negligible. Hence, learners and educators fail to meet CAPs requirements. Now, however, Habib (2015) claims that 'reduced funding for public education threatens to erode the gains that have been made in IEP education'.

#### **2.3.4 Development of Inclusive Education in South Africa**

Since 1994, government policy altered from an apartheid framework to providing services to South Africans on an equitable basis (Dalton et al., 2012). The provision of education for learners with disabilities has been part of that process. The development of an IEP system can be traced back to the nation's founding document, the Constitution of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). In Section 29 (the Bill of Rights) states that everyone has the right to basic education. Furthermore, Section 29 of the Bill of Rights stipulates that access to basic education, which includes basic adult education and further education, is seen as a right which accrues to all peoples. It further states that it is the duty of the state to make such an education progressively available and in doing so it should not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including disability. This education must be available and accessible to all persons (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

The policy broadly attempts to systematically address the diverse needs of all learners. All learners are regarded as being capable of learning and as such the key aim of White Paper 6 is for there to be a significant conceptual shift in the approach to both learners and education. It recognises that there has been an inability of the education system to accommodate the diverse range of learning needs, which in turn results in a breakdown of learning. Therefore, IEP will be made a reality predominately through conceptual change rather than through large scale institutional change.

In summary, the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support, (SIAS), which provides guidelines for the successful establishment of IEP, by defining the processes of identification, assessment and enrolment of learners in special schools, reduces the unnecessary placement of learners in special schools. Guidelines on early identification and support, the determination of the nature and level of support required by learners and identification of the best learning sites for support all form part of the SIAS strategy. Also, included in the strategy are guidelines regarding the roles of both parents and educators in implementing the strategy (Dalton, 2012).

As stated above, the SIAS strategy was designed and implemented to define and enable policy. However, as noted by Wildeman & Nomdo (2007), the implementation of IEP in South Africa has been slow and partial despite these attempts. In this respect, educator training programmes appear to be inadequately addressing this need. The result is that educators find themselves in situations in which stress is a major characteristic. Moreover, learners with disabilities have been found to be lacking in progress.

Despite policy initiatives, the implementation of IEP in South Africa is fragmentary (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007). The reasons for this may relate to the education system, insufficient support structures and social problems (Stofile, *et. al.*, 2006). A lack of educator training programmes results in educators not achieving learner goals. As a result educators become stressed. Therefore learner progression is stifled (Engelbrecht, Swart, & Eloff, 2001; Chataika, *et. al.* 2012; Engelbrecht, 2006). The issue of curriculum differentiation is fundamental to the implementation of IEP practices. Similarly, educators may plan activities to meet the needs of learners with barriers. Learners who experience barriers to learning may also then be catered

for and have their needs met in inclusive settings. It was with this motivation that led to UDL workshop in July 2011, at the University of Cape Town.

South African IEP strategies, as described in the previous section, 'IEP in South Africa', seek to compare learning systems that will support the necessary alterations in the curriculum. It is becoming necessary for educators to provide for the needs of the ever increasing number of learners with diverse needs and it now their responsibility to manage barriers. This is reflected in international countries for example in the USA where equal opportunities for learners is encouraged (Brazil, *et. al.*, 2001).

Education systems have an increased responsibility to ensure that learners whose needs are different are taught effectively through IEP methods. It is perceived that learners want and need to learn in ways that are accessible to them and they need to have various choices for demonstrating what they have learned. Also, families recognise that learners with different needs have the right to equal opportunities to learn, and equal access to the general curriculum. Educators, therefore, need effective structures in place that integrate different methods of learning including, the choices of materials to be used. This outcome will only be accomplished through new approaches to educational design. UDL is a model that addresses the type of learner needs that occur in the IEP system. This includes learners in regular classes and those with challenges (Rose & Meyer 2002). Understanding and implementing UDL, therefore, can be of great interest to educators, administrators and education support professionals around the world (Dalton, 2012).

### **2.3.5 Teacher attitudes towards IEP in South Africa**

Different beliefs and attitudes and concerns of teachers can influence the practice of IEP, the quality of educational materials and teaching learners receive internationally (Leyser, & Tappendorf, 2001). According to Gary, *et. al.*, (1997), educators in mainstream classes who are not capacitated in IEP are afraid to teach learners with disabilities and develop negative attitudes towards IEP because it is perceived that academic standards would be lowered. Furthermore, meagre access to resources and specialist support affects teacher confidence and attitudes toward IEP (Bennett, DeLuca, & Bruns, 1997; Wolery, Anthony, Snyder, Werts, & Katzenmeyer, 1997). It is argued that when teachers are empowered with IEP knowledge they seem to accept the change (Avramidis, Buylis & Burden, 2000). Similarly, LeRoy and Simpson (1996) reported when educators experience

challenges with students, especially those with special needs, with a positive attitude, their confidence to teach them is likely to improve which changes their negative attitudes.

Many studies investigating educator attitudes in IEP were done in Western countries (D'Alonzo, *et. al.*, 1997). Although they provide significant information for IEP practices in developing countries, these studies do not adequately address issues that are relevant to South Africa. This study is therefore important in examining teachers' concerns and attitude toward IEP practice in South Africa, including Ghana.

### **2.3.6. Overview of studies of educator attitudes towards IEP**

Recent studies have focused on educator attitudes towards IEP. An American study by Vaughn, *et. al.* (1996) concentrated on the attitudes and perceptions of mainstream and special educators which indicated that educators who were not participating in IEP had strong negative feelings about IEP practices. In addition, it was found that educators perceived that decision makers had little knowledge of classroom realities. However, other studies indicated that educators who were embracing IEP practices were more receptive to IEP and yielded more positive attitudes. According to Villa, *et. al.* (1996), in studies where teachers had active experience of IEP practices, contradictory findings were reported which favoured including children with Special Education Needs in the ordinary school. The above researchers note that educator commitment emerges after educators have gained mastery of the skills required to cascade IEP because their confidence levels increase. According to LeRoy and Simpson (1996), teachers' negative or neutral attitudes at the beginning of an innovation such as IEP practices may change over time as a function of experience and the expertise that develops through the process of implementation.

Similarly, the findings of Avramidas, Bayliss and Burden (2000) of a UK survey indicate that where teachers who had been implementing IEP programmes for some years, held more positive attitudes than the rest of the sample who had little or no such experience. In this respect, it seems that if educators are supported and capacitated in the implementation of IEP, their mind-sets may change and positive attitudes may emerge through confidence, experience and expertise. The goals for South African educators should be to achieve the above milestone through collaboration of all stakeholders within the South African context and structure, where challenges become barriers of the past.

### **2.3.7 Educator challenges in the implementation of IEP**

South Africa has followed international trends with the implementation of IEP by providing a unitary system of education for all, particularly in terms of Education White Paper 6, 2001. However, since democratic South Africa is part of the third world countries, problems experienced in the implementation of IEP practices are slightly different. South Africa advances from a colonial system of government to a democratic one in 1994 brought about new opportunities for expansion within education for the country. Contrarily, this expansion and new endeavours cannot eradicate past hardships as South Africa is still a developing country. South Africa's history mirrors many developing countries in Africa with a history of illiteracy, discrimination, civil war and a very unstable economy (Donohue & Bornman, 2014).

South Africa's unstable economy is in part responsible for the stunt in the implementation of IEP practices (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). Inadequate funding has presented many concerns with regard to IEP implementation. In spite of initiatives of Education White Paper 6, which states that the funding strategy that is proposed in this White Paper is a realistic one that takes into account the country's fiscal capacity... the important features are its emphasis on cost-effectiveness and exploiting the economies of scale that result from expanding access and provision within an IEP and learning system. To date, funding has been limited and insufficient to meet the dire needs and challenges experienced by educators and schools (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). According to Sukhraj (2009), the dominant source of funding is donor funding and government has made no substantial contribution from the national budget to date to facilitate implementation. In this regard, Sukhraj (2009) further posits that in the IEP model the capacity and competency of key role players, adequate funding and a uniform stance of national implementation are key determinative factors. Sukhraj (2009) argues that this will determine as to whether IEP will effectively and qualitatively address the needs of the greater population.

In many countries of Africa key factors that cause IEP challenges have remained the shortage of resources, inadequate facilities, a lack of training of educators in IEP implementation, absent support of parents, overcrowding of classes and a lack of support from the District based support teams (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). In this regard, the situation in rural areas is far more extreme where the scarcity of basic resources is much needed. Other challenges stunting the development of IEP in South Africa are social conditions, legislative redress and lack of



professional development for educators, full service and mainstream schools ill-prepared (Naicker, 2006).

The struggle for democracy emanated from a dark history of violence prior to 1994 where conditions within the country and social conditions have been rooted in these challenges (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). Learners' inability in the classroom to level other peers sometimes results in frustration which incites violence. This frustration often results in harm to them for example, culminating in suicide as a lack of negative self-worth. Educators' lack of knowledge as to how to deal with these situations, results in them bearing the brunt of learners' volatile frustrations (Forlin, 2001). Thus, arguably, if educators' received amicable support from the District based Support Team (DBST), these situations would be avoidable.

Mainstream and full service schools are not prepared and still face challenges of teaching learners with diverse disabilities, in particular because educators have not had professional development programmes to meet their needs (Ntombela, 2011). According to Sukhraj (2009), educators do not have faith in IEP as a result of a lack of support from the department of education officials as they are always unavailable. Educators go to District Offices to speak to District Officials concerning challenges only to be placed on an appointment list (Sukhraj, 2009). District Officials should be visible in schools to assist with challenges of IEP, but this is not happening. Some schools have taken it upon themselves to employ educator assistants to assist slow learners or separating them into groups so as to give individual attention to learners. In South Africa, most schools cannot afford this. This culminates in learners being disadvantaged.

#### **2.4 Challenges to IEP Implementation**

Reading widely indicates that challenges in education within the South African context were identified from a number of aspects. Some challenges were located in the curriculum and in the education system as a whole. This includes, lack of skills training, few resources and negative attitudes and stereotyping of differences, an inflexible curriculum, inappropriate communication, inadequate support services, educator overload and parent non-involvement. A major challenge to IEP implementation is attributed to the assumption that educators lack sufficient skills training in IEP (Stubbs, 2008).

#### **2.4.1 Lack of skills training**

Research done by Hay, Smit and Paulsen (2001) indicates that there are many barriers that prevent effective implementation of IEP in South African schools. For example, ‘a comprehensive study revealed that educators in South Africa have a definite lack of knowledge about issues relating to inclusive education’. The greatest barrier is change. Furthermore, educators perceive IEP implementation as an aspect of change which is difficult to deal with because of diverse learners (Stubbs, 2005). As agents of change, educators are expected to embrace that change as they are the first implementers of IEP programmes. As change occurs it seems that more changes are required. Therefore, school operations need to be adjusted and management of schools need to monitor the change process. Educators are resistant (negative) toward change as a result of a lack of skills training and lack of knowledge and capacity (Stubbs, 2008). According to Jones and Fuller (2003), many studies conclude that educators are key to the success of IEP implementation yet educators are still left without educational support which is an important barrier in terms of skills, knowledge or attitudes needed to work with diverse learners. In addition, a major barrier is the lack of human and material resources.

#### **2.4.2 Few Resources**

Many schools in South Africa remain concerned about their schools meeting expectations and delivering effective teaching and learning because of very little financial support allocated to schools (Stubbs, 2008). Despite provisions of Education White Paper 6, which stipulates that there should be increased access to learners outside of the education and training system and the optimal use of limited resources, very little seems to have been done to accommodate these shortages. Limited professional development in terms of educators utilising variant methodological strategies to cater for special needs is evident. A huge concern, according to Mullick, *et al.* (2012), is that there are very little allocations made for assistive devices for learners with special needs and a general shortage of teaching-learning materials in schools. According to Bornman and Rose (2010, p. 7), ‘A general lack of support and resources as well as the prevailing negative attitudes towards disability all contribute to the general bewilderment in South African schools towards IEP’. Furthermore, if educators do not have the necessary skills and techniques to teach, this may encourage negative attitudes.

### **2.4.3 Negative attitudes and stereotyping**

South Africa is a rainbow nation and with this prestige comes the difficult task of teaching diverse learners equally. The problem arises when educators are ill-equipped to cater for the diverse needs of the learners. This incapacity and feeling of hopelessness induces negative attitudes and resistance in educators as a result of them not being able to meet demands set (Pottas, 2005). As a result, educators tend to stereotype, marginalise and fail to teach learners based on their inability to meet expectations (Alexander, 2011). To support this view, Mullick (2012) asserts that ‘primary school educators remain resistant to IEP, wishing to exclude various students from their classrooms’ (Swart, *et. al.*, 2002, p.185). These negative attitudes can reinforce barriers to successful IEP implementation. Some of the barriers include the language challenges, the lack of support as well as an inflexible curriculum. According to Pottas (2005), research findings have indicated that educator beliefs and attitudes are critical in ensuring the success of IEP implementation. This is due to the fact that beliefs and attitudes are likely to affect educators’ commitment to implement it. According to Avramidis and Norwich (2002), research findings regarding factors that influence educator attitudes are discussed in terms of child-related, teacher-related, and education related factors.

### **2.4.4 Inflexible curriculum**

Although, the new curriculum has high expectations to meet the needs of all learners, the curriculum comes short in terms of accommodating special needs and capacitation of the educators who are meant to implement this policy (Naicker, 2006; Dalton, 2012). Furthermore, Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001, p. 31) stipulates that ‘central to the accommodation of diversity in our schools, colleges, adult, early childhood learning centres and higher education institutions, is a flexible curriculum and assessment policy that is accessible to all learners, irrespective of the nature of their learning needs’. Yet, educators still struggle to accommodate learners with special and diverse needs with regard to the content of learning programmes. Educators struggle with the management and organisation of classrooms, teaching styles, pace and time frames of the new curriculum (CAPs) and the completion of the curriculum based on a lack of knowledge as to how to accommodate learners who fall behind (Alexander, 2011; Rouse, 2014). Also the changing curriculum to some extent affects educators’ output of knowledge since they are not being trained for it. As the curriculum changes occur, so is the need for educators to be subjected to professional development programmes. In addition,

concerns have been raised to the effect that the curriculum is not an adaptive one for special needs and diverse learners (Potass, 2005; & Alexander, 2011). Seemingly, an inflexible curriculum and educator's lack of communication between various stakeholders have escalated the barriers educators experience in the implementation of IEP.

#### **2.4.5 Inappropriate communication**

A lack of communication seems to be the major cause of the failure to implement IEP in South Africa. The major factor hindering IEP implementation in South Africa seems to be focused on clarity and inappropriate communication to the grass root level, being the school leaders and educators. Bornman and Donohue (2014) argue that the major factor hindering the implementation of IEP practices is the lack of clarity in the Education White Paper 6. In this respect, DBSTs ought to be the anchor for effectively cascading the procedure of the IEP implementation process. Important suggestions or proposals, as stipulated in White Paper 6, were that communication efforts should be more effective in the sense that DBSTs should provide curriculum, assessment and instruction support in the form of illustrative learning programmes, learning support materials and assessment instruments to special schools and specialised settings. Since, communication is lacking between stakeholders (DoE officials, DoE support teams, principals, Governing Bodies (GBs) and parents), the barriers to (IEP) implementation seem to escalate and a greater number of learners are disadvantaged, while educator challenges continue to rise.

It is evident that the lack of communication between stakeholders poses a great threat to the successful implementation of (IEP) in South Africa. Scholars (Stofile, 2008; Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007) foresee a number of strategies that could be adopted to address identified barriers, constraints and challenges with regard to sound IEP implementation practices in primary schools in South Africa.

#### **2.4.6 Inadequate Support Structures**

White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) stipulates that it will strengthen the education support service; that it will have at its centre new DBSTs; that these will strengthen and build the capacity of educators and schools to recognise and address severe learning difficulties and accommodate a range of learning needs. This support has either not been forth-coming nor has been inadequate (Nel, Muller & Rheeders, 2011). Educators continue to persevere with little epistemological knowledge. Furthermore, support structures from the DoE have been limited,

leaving educators to their own devices (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Rouse, 2014). Thus, inadequate support structures and a lack of intervention from District Support Teams, hinder educators in meeting IEP demands.

#### **2.4.7 Inadequate policies and legislation**

In order to move towards IEP implementation and thinking practices, the mind-sets of stakeholders need to be congruent towards achieving desired goals (Frankel, *et. al.*, 2010). According to Naicker (2007), to achieve this milestone every policy intervention needs to ensure human rights ethos prevails. In this respect, stakeholders are deprived of the epistemology (theory of knowledge) to be taught and the ontology (nature of reality) is, stakeholders ought to be sufficiently empowered and trained to cascade policy requirements which are still in question, as inadequate policy directives hinder the move towards achieving the goal of equal education for *all* children. Naicker (2006) reiterates the view that the whole trend needs to move from a static to a passive view of knowledge towards a more adaptive and active one where educators are directly empowered and capacitated to meet policy requirements.

The adaptive view of educators, practical policy guidelines, involvement of educators including capacitation, in meeting policy requirements may limit the barriers to providing inclusive education to learners with disabilities in South Africa (Polat, 2011). According to Bornman and Donohue (2014), obstacles to the inclusion of all children will thwart progress in both the developing and the developed countries. Fortunately, these obstacles may not be insurmountable, given the departmental legislation, practices and all stakeholder involvement work in education. So, all stakeholders, including parents need to be empowered, in terms of policy requirements and legislation with regard to IEP implementation.

#### **2.4.8 Non-involvement of parents**

The involvement and support of parents in working as partners in education with the school in the education of their children is vital to the success of learners' education. Parents are the first educators of their children and need to portray an inclusive role with the school in learner's education (Engelbrecht, *et. al.*, 2001). The practice of IEP requires the support and involvement of the community and especially parents as they are considered to be models for their children (Pottass, 2005). Yet, in some circumstances, parents tend to leave the education aspects of their

children solely to the educators. According to Mullick (2012), ‘The non-supportive view and commitment of the community and parents, sometimes creates challenges for the school leaders and educators in attempting to build support for acceptance of IEP and diversity in their schools. Despite the initiatives made by the schools to parents to become involved in their child/ward’s education, schools are faced with challenges, as many parents still remain resistant and unaccommodating, to compromise their time. Parents fail to realise that learning from each other reaps more rewards. To this extent, school principals and educators look to formulate strategies to address these challenges alone.

## **2.5 Strategies to address challenges**

Within the context of South Africa, positing diverse cultures, there are many constraints that inhibit the successful implementation of IEP practices (Alexander, 2004; Kivedo, 2007). The way forward for South Africa is to envisage, perhaps strategies that could possibly enhance the current procedures and practices. Some of these strategies may include local authority, professional development, funding allocations, parental involvement and school resources.

### **2.5.1 Department of Education intervention: Local Authority**

Principals and educators are responsible for implementing IEP at school level. However, they do not have the authority to devise solutions for its effective implementation (Mullick, *et al.*, 2012). Nevertheless, principals and educators do all they can to implement policy. Local authority being the provincial Department of Education support structures has a duty to capacitate stakeholders (Mullick, 2012). The provincial DoE can look to empowering schools to use the available resources by capacitating educators and principals and members of the community in the implementation of IEP. According to Mullick (2012), to work for IEP, leaders are powerless without authority to make decisions. These decisions pertain to the employment of educators and caregivers, devising and implementing or mobilising resources, enabling collaboration or local organisations, developing and conducting professional development activities and involving members of the community in school activities. To this extent the government could benefit in terms of empowerment skills and this could enhance the current status quo of education in South African schools.

### **2.5.2 Professional Development**

Educator knowledge in terms of IEP practices needs to be improved in order to reap higher educational outcomes. Educators' existing knowledge is not always sufficient for IEP practices because the demands set for the educators are ever changing and escalating (Vaughn, 1996; Ali, Mustapha & Jelas, 2006). Many educators claim that IEP forces them to enter into areas that they are unsure about (Vaughn, 1996; Ali, Mustapha & Jelas, 2006). In this way educators may feel powerless as a result of a lack of training. On the other hand, the appropriate educational background of educators does have a positive impact on IEP teaching (Meng, 2008). This is as a result of a lack of professional training. In this respect, in order for the successful implementation policy initiatives to take place, forward thinking in terms of Department Support structures need to be prioritised. This could be achieved through professional development of educators. Further, if schools have sufficient resources and professional development practices are in place, IEP implementation could be successful.

### **2.5.3 Increased resources**

Schools and educators find it difficult to meet IEP needs largely as a result of a lack of resources. According to Stubbs (2008, p. 41), 'the social model is about changing the system to fit the student, not the student to fit the system'. Therefore, the changes in the educational system need to focus on learner needs. In that way learners may meet educational system outcomes. In this respect, Stubbs (2008, p. 15) claims that 'learners can only receive education if the following criteria or solutions are applied; they have special equipment; they have one-to-one support and they have special resources to meet learner needs'. Similarly, Stubbs (2008) posits that resources within the community need to be unlocked and used within the community.

To add, Stubbs (2008) contends that problems and solutions may be located in the society and education system. Despite initiatives utilised by schools, it is paramount that the DoE meets the expectations set by government policy and works as partners in education with schools in providing resources for effective implementation of IEP. According to Mullick (2012), 'schools need an increase in funding to appoint more educators, to reduce high educator-learner ratios, provide professional development opportunity to the educators on IEP practice, ensure access and provide inclusive friendly teaching and learning materials to *all* learners'. To this extent, teaching and learning practices in terms of IEP implementation, may improve given

that schools have a higher number of educators and material resources to cater for learner diverse needs.

#### **2.5.4 Valuing diversity**

South African schools are unique in terms of diversity. Research scholars indicate that there is a dire need to value diversity within the wider school community (Mullick, *et. al.*, 2012). A possible strategy to address the challenges experienced by educators and principals is the involvement of parents within the effective functioning of the school (Mullick, 2012). This could be done by encouraging the value of diverse cultures and recognising and accepting the differences of others. According to Mullick (2012), the involvement of parents and community in school improvement programmes is an important strategy for bringing understanding about diversity and improving responses towards IEP practices. In addition, in order to value diversity, the focus of the entire school community needs to seem to be geared towards collaboration (Reed, *et. al.*, 2000). “In this respect, collaboration in terms of the school community, could be a major stance in acceptance of differences, valuing diversity, solving problems, reducing negative attitudes and resistance in terms of diverse learner needs”. (Stubbs, 2008, p. 91).

#### **2.6. Theoretical Frameworks**

Two theories are discussed in this section and these two theories serve as a framework underpinning the analysis of the data on challenges experienced by the educators as they implement IEP. The two theories are Implementation analysis theory and Complexity theory. A theory can be regarded as a comprehensive, systematic, consistent and reliable explanation and prediction of relationships among specific variables and attempts to present a full explanation and prediction of future events (Cloete, & Wissink, 2004). This study was about the challenges that educators encountered as they implement IEP. Because of that focus, Implementation analysis theory was deemed to be the most appropriate theoretical framework. This theory contends that the implementation of a policy is not an easy task. This is complicated as a result of a lack of communication and consultation between policy makers and implementers who are responsible for the implementation process. In addition, implementers’ epistemology of policy is lacking. Implementers’ seem to lack capacity building skills and are unable to deliver policy requirements.



Research indicates that implementers do not always do as told (MacLaughlin, 1987) nor do they maximise policy objectives. Hence, those who are responsible for implementation seem to respond to policy in a way that is unpredictable. This theory argues that even the best supported and planned and most promising policy initiatives depends finally on what happens at the implementation level on the ground. It depends on how implementers view and regard the policy. In this theory it is argued that effective policy implementation depends on two important factors-*will* and *capacity*.

Policy has somewhat prepared educators in terms of enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners (Donohue & Borman, 2014). However, Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) does not declare how educators should implement the policy. It does not cater for educators' directives in the actual implementation of the policy. Teachers' have the *will* to implement the policy, but they do not know how and do not have the capacity. I hear what policy says, but something is missing. Teachers' do not have the capacity to implement IEP because they are ill-prepared. This theory seems to be looking in addressing these educator implementation issues. Knowing that, I extend to enquire how educators are prepared to meet IEP Implementation expectations. Clearly, if educators are knowledgeable in the implementation of IEP, challenges may be minimal. In particular, studies highlight the different challenges faced by developing countries in the implementation of IEP. For instance, a lack of relevant research information, inadequate support services, a lack of appropriate facilities and materials, inadequate training programmes for teachers and ineffective policies and legislation (Charema, 2010).

Similarly, Hanekom (1987) contends that all (public) policies are future orientated. To this extend, there seems to be consensus in scholarly works regarding implementation of policy in that policy needs to be continuously changing for the promotion of the general welfare of society in order to meet the demands of the broader society (Carrington, 1999). In South Africa following negotiations, elections and the setting up of a new government, a culture has been established that demands participation. Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) draws attention to the above by inviting feedback from society where many submissions supported the idea of giving priority to special schools and specialised settings for qualitative improvement as a first step towards their expanded roles within an inclusive system.

I also draw from the work of Wildavsky (1979) who observes that public policies are not eternal truths, but sees public policy as a hypothesis subject to alteration until an approved one is devised. Moving toward IEP practices requires epistemological knowledge, teachers' thinking, attitudes, beliefs and practices to be supported in order for successful implementation processes to be attainable. Epistemology studies knowledge (Heylighen, 1993). In this respect, educator knowledge in terms of IEP implementation is vital. Heylighen (1993) holds the view that 'the first theories of knowledge stressed its absolute permanent character, whereas, later theories put the emphasis on its relativity or situation dependence, its development or evolution and its active interference with the world and its subjects and objects'.

Epistemological assumptions concern the bases of knowledge. Therefore, it concerns how we know and what constitutes knowledge, where knowledge comes from and whose knowledge it is (Heylighen, 1993). Hence, knowledge of how educators deal with challenges and the strategies they utilise is important and can become evident in the research process through the practices of interviews. Further, my interactions with the research participants and their environment may produce valuable knowledge concerning the effectiveness of policies and challenges experienced by educators in terms of IEP implementation, as well as the strategies they adopted to overcome the challenges.

In addition, this study also drew from complexity theories. This is because what occurs currently in schools can be explained in terms of assertions that are made in complexity theory. According to Morrison (2006), complexity theory is a theory of change, evolution and adaption, often the interests of survival and often through a combination of co-operation and competition. Furthermore, Morrison (2006) claims that the central tenet of complexity theory is the bringing together of several key constructs into a more or less unified theory and that perhaps, that is what gives complexity theory its impetus attraction.

In this, respect, IEP implementation deems to bring about change, a paradigm shift in thinking, for all learners and educationists including society at large. This change incorporates adaptive mind sets, collaborative working and achieving outcomes, visions and mission statements in terms of Education White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa, 2001). Hence, complexity theory is central in IEP implementation because it notes the unification of stakeholders working towards a common goal through collaboration of all stakeholders. The new era of democracy, in 1994, highlighted collaboration and with this stance, the new democratic government

brought about changes in the educational system where learners from rural schools became integrated within urban schools. This led to cultural convergence, where diverse learners met on common ground. This being the case, educator challenges in teaching practices became complex.

According to Meier (2005), some of the black learners who were integrated into formerly white schools found it difficult to adjust to the new educational environment because they lacked the language skills and required background to deal with the curriculum content and medium of instruction, (Afrikaans and/or English). Furthermore, white educators, representing the complement of the staff experienced challenges in terms of diversity issues because they were not motivated because they lacked the cultural diverse teaching skills (Kivedo, 2008). In view of the above, teaching diverse learners becomes complex. Moreover, IEP guidelines fall short in terms of capacitating educators to meet policy requirements. Thus, being the case, the policy implementation analysis theory and complexity theory complement each other in this study in that, the latter implies that the implementation of policy is difficult and complicated in terms of diversity, while complexity theory holds that diversity issues are complex in cultural diverse school communities.

## **2.7 Chapter summary**

This chapter has provided a review of literature on inclusive education and policy implementation. Both national and international perspectives on the issue of inclusive education and policy implementation were solicited in order to provide deeper insights on this subject. The next chapter provides a detailed discussion on design and methodological issues.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

*“Learners have a wealth of knowledge – educators learn from them and enhance their future...” - Pauline Cooke*

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The metaphor reflected above means that it is through understanding learners and the environment that they are surrounded in, that educators acquire knowledge of how to assist them. Also, educators working with what they know about learner’s experiences, in this respect can improve their own knowledge, strategise and improve teaching and learning experiences. This metaphor was borrowed from (Rouse, 2007) and I adapted it to capture the essence of what this study is about.

The previous chapter reviewed literature on the implementation of IEP and some challenges associated with it. It highlighted that educators are faced with a number of challenges and learners’ experience many barriers in learning. This study sought to investigate the experiences and challenges of educators in teaching diverse learners in the three selected primary schools in the Umlazi District. The chapter set out to explain the design and methodology as well as methods that were employed in conducting the study. This chapter is discussed under the following headings: the research paradigm; then discussion of research design and this is followed by research methodology discussion; then the research sites and sampling methods. The discussion of data generation methods is followed by the descriptions of the participating schools, methods of data analysis and issues of trustworthiness measures. Finally, the discussion of ethical issues and limitations of the study are also discussed in a detailed manner. Finally, a concluding summary will bring this chapter to a close.

#### **3.2 Research paradigm**

In educational research there are a variety of research paradigms in which qualitative and quantitative approaches can be utilised effectively. According to Denzin (2010), it is the objective of the research that determines the appropriate paradigm. Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2011), citing Kuhn (1962), argue that a paradigm is ‘a way of looking at or researching phenomena, a world view, a view of what counts as accepted scientific knowledge or a way of working in an acceptable model or pattern’. The study was located within the interpretivist paradigm. The reason for using this paradigm is because this paradigm concerns

issues of reality. A research paradigm focuses on how people view the world (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The meaning of the world is shaped and constructed by individuals, (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) and in the context of my study, I was investigating people and sought to understand their interpretations of their experiences in teaching diverse learners.

The interpretivist paradigm holds that there are multiple truths and not just one perspective of looking at experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). To get this perspective, it is necessary for me to try and understand how educators interpret their experience in teaching diverse learners. In trying to understand their interpretation, I had to spend prolonged time interacting with them at their natural setting, that is, their work place. This paradigm enabled me to understand the experiences of my participants from their own perspectives.

According to Glaser and Strauss, (1967), assumptions of interpretive researchers begin with individuals and set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them. In line with this view, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) posit that ‘the interpretive paradigm is characterised by a concern for the individual’. In addition, Lichtman (2010) holds the view that the interpretivist paradigm is always focused on trying to understand the meaning the events have for persons and their world. This paradigm was suitable for my study because it allowed me to understand the subjective epistemological world of experience of my participants. In the way they view their ontology, (nature of truth and how they perceive the world and their experiences and challenges), this may be understood through the type of methodology selected. Hence, I utilised semi-structured interviews and observations for data generation purposes.

### **3.3 Research design**

Research has an important place in education (Bell, 2005; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Also, educational research is based on the ways of thinking and methods of establishing beliefs and knowledge (Drew, Hardman & Hosp, 2008). For every research to take place there has to be a design. A research design is defined as a plan or blueprint which specifies how the data should be generated and analysed (Nworgu, 1991). It also gives a guideline as to how procedures need to be followed in any given investigation (Nworgu, 1991). In another development, Denzin and Lincoln (2011), maintain that a research design can be seen as a research strategy. In view of this line of thought, the research design adopted for this study was a qualitative research design. Such a design was deemed appropriate because qualitative

findings are always based on human experiences and stories which cannot be measured, counted or controlled (O' Leary, 2004; Cohen, *et. al.*, 2007).

In line with the view expressed above, Bogdan and Biklen (2007), argue that qualitative research can be seen as an umbrella term for several research strategies. On the other hand, Vanderstoep and Johnson (2009) note that the qualitative approach taps into people's interpretation of their experiences and its goals is to understand the in-depth view point of a research participant. In addition, Vanderstoep and Johnson (2009) assert that within the qualitative approach, knowledge is created by different people who may have different interpretations of their own experiences. In this respect, the interpretations of the challenges in teaching diverse learners for educators may differ from one educator to another.

In line with the view expressed in the above section, Blumer (1969) maintains that a distinguishing feature of the qualitative design is that people are deliberate and creative in their actions, and also that they make meaning in and through their activities. The goal of qualitative research is to provide a detailed, narrative description as well as a holistic interpretation that captures the richness and complexity of behaviours, experiences and events in natural settings. In concurrence with this view, Bogdan and Biklen (as cited in Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990), posit that the natural setting is the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument in qualitative research. In other words, the educators' experiences and challenges in making accommodation for diverse learners can only be captured through in-depth thick descriptions of what is taking place within their school setting. So, I perceived the qualitative research design to be the most appropriate as this study was conducted at primary schools as natural settings, where the educators' experiences occurred.

### **3.4 Research methodology**

According to Creswell (2014), methodology is a theory of producing knowledge up to the point of choosing methods. A research method is a tool that is used in gathering evidence. In the same development, Creswell (2014, p. 16) contends that 'research methods involves the forms of data generation, data analysis and interpretation that researchers propose for their studies.' Sekaran (2008) takes a slightly different view by conceptualising a methodology as an academia's established regulatory framework for the generation and evaluation of existent knowledge for the purpose of arriving at and validating, new knowledge. Further, a methodological process involves philosophical thinking about the whole process, for example,

in social sciences the methodology is about the people at the forefront (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

Methodology concerns theoretical approaches to research, for example a case study. Therefore, a case study was selected for this study, since it is one of the most commonly used qualitative research approaches. Hence, a case study methodology was deemed appropriate for this study because it allowed me to examine a particular instance in greater depth. According to Yin (2009, p. 18), 'a case study is a study of a case in a context and it is important to set the case within its context that is, rich descriptions and details are often a feature of a case study'. In line with this view, Verschuren (2003, p. 123), argues that, 'a case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations'. Thus, a case study was selected for this study because educators are real people and their challenges and experiences in teaching diverse learners were problematic and needed to be investigated at schools and needs to be known. This could only be achieved through the participants' participation in the study.

Within the qualitative approach this study employed a case study methodology. According to Yin (2009, p.18), a case study is 'a study of a case in a context, rich descriptions and details are often a feature of a case study.' Against this background, this case study entailed an in-depth examination, exploration and description of the challenges experienced and strategies utilised by educators in teaching diverse learners. This case study in the context of a school may provide in-depth thick descriptions of what exactly takes place in schools through the 'lived' experiences of the participants. This could only be achievable through qualitative research design. Similarly, Patton (2002) and Punch (2005) posit that case study methodology 'studies people, things and events in their natural setting'. The natural settings of a school allowed me the opportunity to interact and get into dialogue with my participants, in this way I was able to elicit deeper epistemological truths and understanding of their experiences in teaching diverse learners and challenges in the implementation of IEP.

This case study was informed by the participants' experiences at various schools in the Umlazi district in Durban. It is within the school context that I may unravel the 'real lived' situations and experiences of the participants. To this extent, Cohen, *et. al.*, (2011) claims that, 'case studies recognise that there are many factors that may be operating within a single case. Further, these factors usually require more than one method of data generation and many sources of evidence. This view is shared by other scholars such as Nworgu (1991) who postulates that

case studies employ a variety of data gathering techniques such as observations, document analysis, interviews, questionnaires and so forth. In keeping with the idea of multiple data generation methods, this case study utilised semi-structured interviews and observations as data generation methods. This section presents a discussion about research sites, sampling, data generation methods, semi-structured interviews, observations, data analysis, ethical issues, trustworthiness, limitations of the study, and finally the chapter summary.

### **3.4.1 Access to the research sites**

To gain access to the research sites, I wrote letters to the principals of the identified three Primary Schools in the Umlazi district requesting permission to conduct my research. To establish an element of trust, I provided a detailed explanation to the principals about my research inquiry, adding that the research was not going to bring the school into any form of disrepute. Bell (1991) advises us about the importance of providing a comprehensive explanation regarding the research. I also wrote a letter to the Superintendents of Education at the provincial Department of Education requesting permission, to gain access to and conduct research in its schools and permission was granted.

#### **3.4.1.1 The research sites**

The research sites comprise three primary schools whose locations differed according to their respective socio-economic backgrounds. School-A, was set in an affluent environment with many amenities. While, School-B, represented a context of semi-impooverished socio-economic background with moderate facilities, School-C was located in a very poor, impooverished setting with few amenities and facilities. The choice of the three primary schools was based on the assumption that rich in-depth data from the three sites would be gathered and that it could assist the research process with vital information.

The research participants consisted of three Post level 1 educators, (two females and one male). I chose three educators because they were faced with the challenges of teaching diverse learners and they were the primary implementers of IEP policies. Besides the Post level I educators, three principals from the three primary schools (two females and one male principal), and two Superintendents of Education (SEMs, both male), participated in the study. The addition of the SEMs was done in order to obtain first hand views regarding the department's initiatives that were taken to assist educators. Therefore, one educator and one principal were selected from each school. One SEM from the Umlazi District and another SEM from the ILembe



District were selected. The SEMs from different Districts were purposefully selected so as to ascertain whether the experiences and challenges facing educators in terms of IEP implementation within the two Districts, were similar or different.

### 3.4.2 Table of sampled research sites and participants.

The table below summarises the participants involved in my study.

<b>School</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Educator</b>	<b>SEM</b>	<b>Total</b>
A	1	1		2
B	1	1		2
C	1	1		2
SEM 1			1	1
SEM 2			1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>

### 3.5 Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used in this study to select the schools and participants. In purposeful sampling, participants were hand-picked to be included in the sample as a result of their knowledge and experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p. 156). This means that the researcher decides who will participate in the study because this type of sample is based on the researcher's judgement. As explained by Teddie and Yu (2007), purposeful sampling is undertaken to achieve representatives, to enable comparisons to be made, to focus on specific unique cases or issues, to generate theory through the accumulation of data from different sources. On the same vein, Ball (1990) maintains that purposeful sampling is used in order to access knowledgeable people, that is, those who have in-depth knowledge about particular issues'. Therefore, educators and schools were purposefully selected because of their settings. Specific considerations for the schools' selection were that urban, semi-urban and disadvantaged communities' settings would be used in order to ascertain common or uncommon challenges and experiences.

### 3.6 Data generation methods

Data generation involves the gathering of information about the case in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Data generation can be viewed as a vehicle through which the researcher

generates data that will assist in the answering of research questions. Similarly, Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2007) and Silverman (2005) define methods as techniques and procedures that are used in the data gathering process. According to Babbie (2007), the methods for generating data in qualitative research are mainly interviews.

In keeping with the ideas expressed by the scholars cited above, the methods that were employed in this study were semi-structured interviews and observations. Drew, Hardman and Hosp (2008) argue that the choice about the data generation methods depends on the nature of the study. In this regard, the qualitative research design was adopted for this study and it conformed to the case study methodological imperatives. This is because qualitative research aims to understand people and social events instead of measuring them. The qualitative approach also values the reflexivity (self-awareness) of the researcher (Gibbs, 2007). Therefore, this research used semi-structured interviews and observations with eight participants. According to Barbara DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), semi-structured interviews are often the sole data source for qualitative research projects. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, I was able to elicit vital information regarding the experiences and challenges of educators in catering for diverse learners.

Semi-structured interviews allow a framework for conversational two way communication (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In that way I had the opportunity of controlling the conversation using probing as a technique in order to elicit vital information pertaining to the study. Semi-structured interviews are data generation methods that are usually conducted on face-to-face basis between the interviewer and the participants allowing the researcher to control the process and allowing freedom for participants to express their thoughts (O'Leary, (2004).

Thus, as a researcher, I was able to maintain eye-contact during the semi-structured interviews and that was done to ensure interest and trust. Supporting this view, Schumacher and Macmillan (2006) claim that establishing trust, eye contact and being genuine amongst the things that help to elicit more valid data rather than a rigid approach. Further, Creswell (2008) posits that semi-structured interviews are appropriate because they are less formal but very effective in capturing participant's point of view.

One of the reasons for my choice of semi-structured interviews was that such a method allowed me to engage with the participants in a conversational format in order to get their views. According to Mason (2004, p. 1), 'the defining characteristic of semi-structured interviews is

that they have a flexible and fluid structure'. Maintaining this line of thought, I was convinced that by using semi-structured interviews, participants would have the freedom to express their views using their own terms in articulating, for instance, the strategies employed by educators in an effort to meet the needs of all learners in diverse classrooms.

In addition to semi-structured interviews, observations were also used as a data generation technique. Observations entail the researcher looking and noting systematically people, events, behaviours, settings, artefacts and routines (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Simpson & Tuson, 2003). This technique was chosen because it gave me the opportunity to closely observe my participants in their real life situations. In this study, observations were used to capture the instances that the tape recorder cannot capture even during the interviews process. These included facial expressions, instances of surprise, joy, body language, resentment, irritation, even anger (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Therefore, I was able to gather an in-depth, true reflection and understanding of the challenges educators face on a daily basis in teaching diverse learners in terms of behaviour and settings. Further, observations offered me the opportunity to gather 'live' data from the natural social situations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Further still, I was able to look directly at what was taking place *in situ* rather than relying on second-hand accounts (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

### **3.7 Data analysis methods**

Data analysis is a process of inspecting, transforming and modelling data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting conclusions and support decision making (Leedy & Ormod, 2005). According to Cohen, *et. al.* (2007), data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data. In the same line of thought, McMillan and Schumacher (1993) maintain that data analysis is a process where a researcher goes about to organise, analyse and interpret the data. This study focused on the data generated from eight participants. Therefore, this study used qualitative data analysis, which focuses on small numbers of people. Also, qualitative data analysis tends to be detailed and rich (Cohen, *et. al.* (2011).

Inductive data analysis was employed in this study. According to Thomas (2006), the purpose of inductive data analysis is to condense raw textual data into a brief, summary format. In addition, inductive analysis allows for the researcher to create clear links between the objectives of research and the summary of research outcomes derived from the data (Thomas, 2003). I preferred inductive data analysis to other techniques because I wanted the data to speak

for itself. In contrast, in the deductive approaches, data is derived from literature reviews (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). In the context of this study, I aimed to hear and listen to the participants' views which were grounded in their personal experiences. Therefore, the general inductive approach would provide me with an easily used and systematic set of procedures for analysing qualitative data that can produce credible results. The interview responses were transcribed into written text. During the data analysis process, I repeatedly read the transcribed data in order to ascertain understanding and view common participant responses. After, reading and re-reading the transcriptions, the common responses or views were coded. In instances where new codes emerged, the coding frame was changed to accommodate the changes. The codes were categorised and developed into specific themes. To this extent, I believe the inductive data analysis approach fit the purpose of my study because the emerging data from participant responses was able to speak for itself without me imposing any pre-conceived ideas and beliefs.

### **3.8 Ensuring trustworthiness of the findings**

The qualitative approach is concerned with human behavior (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As such, it is not easy to achieve trustworthiness as human behaviour is constantly changing. In this regard, Geertz (1974) echoes that the qualitative research approach establishes trustworthiness of their findings by demonstrating that they are credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable. Within the same line of thought, Lincoln and Guba (1985) further reiterate these perceptions by proposing four criteria for evaluating interpretive research work, being credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The above perceptions represent the four indicators of trustworthiness.

#### **3.8.1 Credibility**

According to Bradley (1993, p. 436), 'credibility refers to 'adequate representation of the construction of the social world under study'. To ensure credibility, I had to secure adequate representation in terms of my participants coming from different socio-economic contexts and I also ensured that I accurately recorded what participants had expressed before and after the data had been transcribed. The transcribed data were taken to the participants to check if it was a true reflection of what they expressed. This is called member-check. In line with this view, Conrad and Serlin (2011) claim that credibility may be established if participants agree with the constructions and interpretations. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that to improve

credibility of research results, prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, triangulation and member checking should be done.

### **3.8.2. Dependability**

To ensure dependability, the technique of prolonged engagement in the field was used. That assisted me to accommodate for perceivable changes that may have arisen. Dependability refers to ‘the coherence of the internal process and the way the researcher accounts for the changing conditions in the phenomena’ (Bradley, 1993, p. 437). According to Zhang and Wildemuth (2009), the major technique for establishing dependability is through audits of the research process and findings. Dependability is determined by checking the consistency of the study processes (Zhang, & Wildemuth, 2009). During the data generation process I conducted a research audit. Another technique that I used to enhance dependability was triangulation. There are many types of triangulation. Willis, Jost and Nilakanta (2007, p. 219) indicate that ‘the idea of triangulation is to find multiple sources of confirmation before the researcher can draw a conclusion to the study’. Further, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p. 193) posit that ‘A multi-method approach provides triangulation and concurrent validity and gives a closer, more authentic meaning to the phenomenon’. In this sense, semi-structured interviews and observations were used as instruments to generate data. In that way I ensured that there was dependability of the results.

### **3.8.3 Confirmability**

Confirmability refers to ‘the extent to which the characteristics of the data, as posited by the researcher can be confirmed by others who read or review the research results’ (Bradley, 1993, p. 437). Therefore, the confirmation of these research results may assist other researchers’ to apply this studies’ hypothesis to other contexts. Therefore, in order to be consistent, I ensured confirmability by inviting my participants to read the transcribed data to confirm the results. In line with this development, Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) claim that confirmability is determined by checking the internal coherence of the research product, namely, the data; the findings and the interpretations and the recommendations.

### **3.8.4 Transferability**

According to Zhang and Wildemuth (2009), transferability refers to the extent to which the researcher’s working hypothesis can be applied to another context. In this way, I ensured that descriptions of the data were detailed enough in order for other researchers to utilise the

products of this research for their studies. So, to ensure transferability, I had to ensure that I provided thick descriptions of every step that I had taken and that the context of each research site was properly described.

### **3.9 Ethical issues**

Ethical issues are important when conducting research because researchers face a dilemma as to the demands placed on them as well as protecting the rights and values of their participants. Creswell (1998, p. 132) emphasises that, a qualitative researcher faces ethical issues while collecting data when he is in the field as well as at the time when data is analysed. Cavan (1977, p. 810) too, expresses the same view and emphasises that ethics in research is important when dealing with people. During the research process the researcher needs to respect the rights of other people and treat people with respect.

This study focused on the rights of the participants and observed the two principles of non-maleficence (do no harm) and autonomy on one hand and anonymity and beneficence on the other (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmais, 1992; Oliver, 2003; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The participants were guaranteed that their responses in the study would be treated with confidentiality and that it would be used for the purpose of the study and not for any other purpose. The participants were also guaranteed that if they were not comfortable in answering any questions, they were free not to do so. They were also assured that there was no right or wrong answer.

To respect the principle of autonomy of the participants, they were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study anytime should they wish to do so and also that there would be no negative consequences for withdrawing. Before they would be interviewed, the nature and purpose of the study was explained to them. Once they understood what the purpose of the study was, they signed informed consent forms. Signing them was an indication they understood what they were putting themselves into. Further, participants were guaranteed that no harm would be caused to them just because they were participating in the study. In addition, it was important that their identities were protected and their privacy respected.

According to Cohen, *et. al.* (2011), indicates that ethical issues may arise from different areas under study by social scientists stemming from the different methods that are being used to

collect valid and reliable data. Therefore, ethical issues are the principles and rules to be considered by the researcher before conducting research and during the research processes' (Babbie & Monton, 2006; Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007). The above scholars further maintain that official permission is a priority that needs to be obtained from the stakeholders in order to conduct research. So, before conducting the interviews, I ensured that all ethical considerations were adequately addressed. I followed the following procedure in order to conduct the research. First, I applied to the University Ethical Committee to request ethical clearance to do the research. This committee had to be satisfied that the manner in which I would conduct research complied with all ethical procedures.

Secondly, I also applied to the gatekeepers, namely, the Department of Education KwaZulu-Natal. The KZN DoE gave me permission to conduct the study in the three schools. I also wrote letters to the SEMs as gate keepers at a District level and also requested them to participate. The same was done for school principals and educators. After I had introduced the study to each participant and they had agreed to participate and had signed the informed consent forms, I also informed them that the interviews would be tape recorded for purposes of capturing accurate data. They also agreed to that before I interviewed them.

Participants were informed that their anonymity was guaranteed and that *pseudonyms* would be used to hide their identities. Codes were therefore used when presenting the data. For instance, the first school was known as School-A; the second school was recorded as School-B and the third was captured as School-C. Principals were recorded using the same format, that is, Principal-A referred to the Principal of School-A; Principal-B referred to the Principal of School-B and Principal-C referred to the Principal of School-C. The same pattern was used for educators. For instance, Educator-A referred to the educator from School-A; Educator-B referred to the educator from School-B and Educator-C referred to the educator from School-C. Therefore, throughout this report, principals, educators and schools are reflecting the codes I have explained above.

### **3.10 Limitations of the study**

The parameters of my study comprised of a specific geographical location, being the Umlazi District, in the KwaZulu-Natal province of Durban. Choosing three primary schools in the Umlazi District of KwaZulu-Natal is a difficult task, when there are numerous primary schools within our province and this can be regarded as a limitation. This is because the findings from

only three primary schools cannot be generalised on the entire population of primary schools in the district. However, the data to be collected would provide an in-depth perspective of the feelings, emotions and attitudes of educators, with respect to teaching diverse learners, including practices regarding implementation of IEP.

### **3.11 Chapter summary**

This chapter has provided a detailed description of the research design and methodological approach and methods that were used to generate data that would address the research questions. The chapter has given details about a number of issues including the sampling methods; details about where the study was conducted; who the participants were; how the data was generated and analysed as well as the discussion about issues of ensuring trustworthiness of the findings. The next chapter provides details about data presentation and discussion.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

*“Children learning but living on the edge, envisioning a brighter future”- Pauline Cooke*

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In writing this chapter, I am drawing from the metaphor reflected above. This metaphor for me means that the teaching and learning experiences of educators depicted that learners were being taught but challenges were faced which inhibited successful learning because educators did not know how to deal with some situations. Despite challenges faced, educators persevered with the best interests of the learners at heart in order to provide a brighter future for each learner. The previous chapter presented a discussion about research design and methodology. This chapter focuses on the discussion of findings based on the challenges faced by educators in the implementation of (IEP). The chapter starts off with an introduction and explanation of the participants involved in the study and a brief description of the school profiles. This is followed by a detailed description of the findings.

As a reminder to the reader, the data were gathered by conducting semi-structured interviews with eight participants: two Superintendents of Education Management (SEMs); one from the ILembe District and one from the Umlazi District; three principals (Principal-A, Principal-B and Principal- C) and three educators (Educator-A, Educator-B and Educator- C) selected from three schools from different socio-economic backgrounds. Two schools were from poverty stricken communities, while the third school was from an affluent community.

The reason for selecting schools from different socio-economic backgrounds was to establish whether educators in these schools experienced similar or different challenges when they endeavour to implement IEP. All semi-structured interviews took place after school hours and at different times during the week. Each semi-structured interview session lasted for about 45 minutes. The interview with one SEM took place at his office and the other, SEM at my school. The interviews with the principals took place in their respective offices at their schools. Educator interviews took place at their schools. To guarantee the confidentiality of the schools participating in this study all schools were anonymised by giving them codes in the place of the real names. For example, they were named School-A, School-B and School-C, respectively.

## **4.2 Profiling of the research sites**

The three schools differed according to their socio-economic backgrounds. School-A was located in an urban environment, within a residential environment. The parents of learners were of a middle-income population group. It comprises two extremes. Three quarters of the parents were able to pay school fees while the other quarter of the parents struggled to pay. The school enrolled learners from different socio-economic backgrounds, for example, wealthy families, middle class and families' representative of below the breadline.

### **School-A**

In School-A there were 923 learners and it was headed by a male principal. The school had three phases, the Foundation Phase (FP), Intermediate Phase (IP) and Senior Phase (Sp). Grade R occupied a separate building on the premise. School assemblies were on held on different days. In School-A, a new reading room had recently been constructed to assist struggling learners. Teaching assistants would give reading lessons to them separately. School-A had two computer rooms. One was used by FP learners while IP and SP learners shared the other computer room. The school had one gate. There were surveillance cameras installed around the school. There were 3 administration staff and 10 maintenance workers. The total staff complement was 60. The school pass rate was 98%.

### **School-B**

School-B had an enrolment of 1056 learners. The school catered for the local community which consisted of a low income group. This school was situated amidst a poor environment. The school was 55 years old. The parents struggled to pay school fees. Violence and gangsterism was rife in the community around the school. There were different building blocks; one building which was a double storey was used for Grade 1 and Grade 2 learners. A middle block, which had a single storey building, housed Grades 4 to Grade 7. The third block housed Grade R and Grade 3 learners. Further, the school assembly was held under a shelter. The old kitchen was used for extra lessons. Two security guards were stationed at the gate. An alarm system was positioned at the administration block only. All the classrooms had burglar guards. School-B was headed by a female principal. There were 29 state paid educators and 3 School Governing Body paid educators. The school had an average pass rate of 98%, which it had maintained for a number of years.

## **School-C**

In School-C there were 687 learners and the school served an impoverished community. It was surrounded by flats where alcohol abuse, rape and a drug abuse were reported to be rife. Learners were fed at school with the assistance of feeding schemes organised by the church communities. The arrangement of the buildings consisted of a single block, which was a double storey. Grade 2, Grade 3 and Grade 4 were accommodated at the lower level of the building while Grade 5, Grade 6 and Grade 7 occupied the upper level. Another single block, housed one Grade 6 and one Grade 7 class. Another single block housed two Grade 1 classes. The principal's office downstairs was small and cramped. Her office upstairs had been under renovation for a long time and was still not complete. School-C had no hall or staffroom. The foyer was small and was also used for staff meetings. The school assembly took place on a grass patch. There was no alarm system in place. I noticed one security guard (a woman) at the entrance of the broken gate. The security guard was paid by the school. The pass rate was 92%. There was no proper fencing around the school, only around the immediate block. This fencing was also falling apart.

### **4.3 Themes that emerged after the analysis**

After analysing data using the inductive approach, there were two major themes that emerged, namely, the challenges of inclusive education policy implementation and strategies of inclusive education policy implementation. Within the first theme are seven sub-themes namely, (a) Lack of Training of Educators (b) Lack of Resources (c) Limited Funding (d) Lack of parental involvement (e) Large numbers of learners in classes (f) Physical resources: Infrastructure (g) language barriers.

#### **4.3.1 Challenges of inclusive education policy implementation**

There are many challenges that emerged from the data analysis. The data analysis showed that there were six dominant challenges to the implementation of IEP implementation and these have been listed in Section 4.3 above. The discussion that follows provides a detailed description of each of these challenges.

##### **4.3.1.1 Educators lacked training on Inclusive Education Policy (IEP)**

All the participants were first asked if there were any challenges that they encountered in implementing IEP. In fact they all emphasised that there were many challenges that they faced on this issue. When the participants were asked why educators experienced challenges in the

implementation of IEP within the classroom, seven out of eight participants echoed similar views. Three principals, two educators and two SEMs, responded to this question by stating that educators were not fully prepared to implement IEP in diverse classrooms. There was only one participant who expressed a different view. The three principals and one educator mentioned that educators' lack of preparedness became a challenge for educators and that the problem was a result of a lack of training in IEP. The two SEMs expressed similar views stating that educators lacked training in IEP and that it posed a major challenge for educators. On this issue Principal-A responded in this way:

*Educators have not been trained in the implementation of IEP. They experience challenges because they have not been trained to implement IEP with regard to diverse learners. Many learners come into the school from different backgrounds, different levels and different places and this is a challenge for educators. They have not been trained for that type of child.*

Principal-C expressed a similar view that educators experience challenges in IEP implementation because educators were not adequately trained. She said, "Educators have not been trained to implement IEP". She added that 'educators struggle with regard to teaching learners from diverse backgrounds because they lack skills in catering for learner needs'. In keeping with this perception, the principal of School-B echoed similar views when he also reported:

*Educators have not received training in IEP implementation. There was no real formal training (Principal-B).*

Talking about the same issue, SEM-2 expressed a view similar to those of the principals that the educators lacked adequate training in IEP implementation. This is what he had to say in this regard:

*The number of the frequency of workshops for mainstream educators has been reduced. Many educators experience challenges in IEP implementation because they lack knowledge and training in IEP implementation.*

In the same vein, SEM-1 inferred that educators experienced challenges in IEP because the majority of current educators were never exposed to IEP training. In the same line of thought, Educator-C reported that they experienced challenges because they had not been prepared or capacitated for and trained in IEP implementation. This is what Educator-C had to say:

*We did not get IEP training and most of the educators did not get this training. It is impossible to identify learners in the classroom if you did not do IEP in college. We are not trained for IEP.*

The views expressed in the above extract were confirmed by Educator-B who mentioned that educators had not been trained in IEP. Therefore, they experienced challenges because they wanted to assist slower learners but did not have the knowledge and skills to do so. These extracts from the interviews seem to indicate that educators lacked training in IEP implementation. All seven participants (two SEMs, three principals and two educators), seemed to be in agreement that educators faced challenges because they were not fully prepared to implement IEP when teaching diverse learners in mainstream classes.

It is evident that, from the perspectives of the educators and the SEMs, the educators lacked skills that would assist them in IEP implementation. This view is shared by other scholars in this field who argue that teacher training programmes do not appear to be adequate in addressing educator needs and that has resulted in IEP challenges (Engelbrecht, Swart & Eloff, 2001; Engelbrecht, 2006; Chaitaika, *et. al.*, 2012). To add on this debate, Stubbs (2008) opines that a major barrier to IEP implementation is attributed to the assumption that educators lack sufficient skills training in IEP. In this theme, a lack of training seemed to be understood as a dominant focus in IEP implementation challenges. Based on the discussion of the theme it seems that a lack of training in IEP must be taken as priority, in order for IEP challenges to be addressed.

#### **4.3.1.2 A lack of resources**

In response to the question as to why educators experienced challenges in the implementation of IEP, five out of eight participants responded to this issue. Participants indicated that they experienced challenges in the implementation of IEP because they lacked resources. These participants were (One SEM, three principals and one educator). All five participants had similar views. This challenge was perceived as such because it affected teaching and learning practices. The lack of resources was put at the top of their agenda. This is what Principal-C said:

*It is very difficult to manage because we do not have sufficient resources. With IEP you need lots of resources.*

A similar view was expressed by Principal-B who said:

*We are under resourced. We are barely surviving. We cannot employ specialists. We cannot shoot ourselves in the foot and employ and then half way down the line we have to let the person go (Principal-B).*

On the same issue, SEM-2 also said that a lack of resources was a challenge for educators with regard to effective IEP implementation. SEM-2 raised a concern that the lack of resource issues presented challenges for educators with regard to learner progression. Still on the issue of a lack of resources, one educator also shared the same perception and highlighted that they experienced challenges because they had insufficient resources. This is what that educator had to say:

*It's the resources. If we have the resources and assistance from the DoE, Deputy Principal, HODs, parents and all stakeholders, if we work hand in hand, it will be easy. It is difficult if you have no resources (Educator-C).*

In addition, Educator-C mentioned that the educators experienced challenges in the implementation of IEP because they did not have all the resources they needed. Educator-C put it this way:

*They tell you, Miss I can't give you these [books]. Where do you go for resources? Even now, we don't have all the resources we need. We are trying with the little that we have. We don't have everything. We are still suffering. We are a poor school in the area. We are still short of resources.*

The issue of the lack of resources was identified as critical in the study conducted by Stubbs (2008). Furthermore, a study conducted by Stubbs (2008) concurred with the participants' views which indicated that they could not implement IEP because they lacked resources. A lack of resources is in line with a study done by Slee (1997) who posits that implementing IEP requires the 'grafting of traditional special education practices and additional material resources'. This scholar further argues that material resources needed in the classroom include educator aids, stationary, books curriculum programme materials as well as items that can assist teaching methods. According to Slee (1997), the resources that learners need should be alongside them in mainstream classes in order for IEP practices to be successful. Another study done by Wildeman and Nomdo, 2007 has shown that Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) does not take it seriously that resources are pertinent to IEP implementation and alludes that this is an attempt to avoid added costs associated with policy changes.

Drawing from the work of Pottas (2005), it is evident that there are aspects that pertain to the South African situation which impact on educator expectations. These aspects may be

attributed to a lack of resources in South African schools. The lack of resources, as pointed out by Ngidi and Sibiyi (2002), does hinder effective learning. In support of this view, Agbenyega (2007), in a related research conducted in Ghana, identified that concerns pointing to resource issues and skills training strategies need to be a priority in order for successful IEP implementation to be realised. To this extent, reading widely on a lack of resources, inferences are that, if institutions are resourced and highlight that learners receive quality education, no-one may be left behind.

In this theme the challenges contributing to a shortage of resources seemed to be a prominent focus in IEP implementation. It emerged that a lack of resources seemed to be a challenge for educators when implementing IEP and that it resulted in stressful situations and frustration due to a lack of resources. Participants held the perception that if they had stakeholders' support, perhaps IEP implementation would be a little easier. Participants mentioned and shared a similar view that in order for them to implement IEP, schools were in dire need of many resources.

#### **4.3.1.3 Limited funding**

In response to the question posed to the participants about why the challenges were experienced by educators in the implementation of IEP, two principals and two SEMs commented on this issue and had similar views. The two Principals and two SEMS were in agreement that challenges were experienced by educators in the implementation of IEP because schools were not provided with sufficient funding. In this respect educators were unable to obtain the resources that they required. Principal-A responded in this way:

*Schools are not given sufficient funds to be able to go out and buy what they need. In comparison to schools in the UK where whatever schools need to assist children in mainstream and the struggling children that have barriers to learning, they have all the equipment they could possibly need.*

Principal C-added:

*Financially, schools get very little from the Department of Education. That is the budget. It concerns your location. We are unable to get the resources as we would like to; so that's very scarce, very scarce.*

The funding strategy as outlined in White Paper 6, 2001, reflects a 20 year developmental perspective. However, 21 years later, it seems that the educators still face challenges that hinder IEP implementation, regarding funding. On this same question, SEM-2 commented saying that

there was a need for school budgets to be increased. He mentioned that educators experienced challenges in IEP implementation because funding allocations are too little. This is how SEM-2 put it:

*The budget cuts are of concern. If you take one district alone in which I work [ILembe District], the formal budget was twenty-one million. At present it's been cut down to six. Schools are given a portion of the budget. We don't have the necessary budgets and the capacity to see educators through. The budget is very meagre and should be strengthened.*

Similarly, SEM-1 mentioned that funding poses as a great challenge. This is how SEM-1 put it:

*The challenges will always be there but in the mainstream, it is the question of funding of these institutions. In my circuit [Umlazi] we only have two full-service schools and these two are not sufficient according to the number of learners that need this special education and at the end learners must be integrated. As a result there are those learners who have special needs but still kept in the normal schools, of which maybe further damage might be taking place.*

In the same vein, SEM-1, inferred that there was clearly a need for funding to assist with challenges faced by educators to compensate effective, quality education for *all* learners.

The issue of budgets as a contributory factor in inclusive education has been highlighted in the literature. According to Sukhraj (2009), a large facet of funding comes from donor contributions and government has not specifically allocated funds toward facilitation of IEP implementation. In this regard Sukhraj (2009) further posits that sufficient financial allocation evenly distributed on a national scale is necessary in order to serve the needs of the entire education population on a national level.

From participants' responses, insufficient funding seemed to be a dominant challenge. Participant responses indicated that educators faced challenges that hindered the implementation of IEP. Also, participants expressed the view that insufficient funding was of concern because it caused them to fail to implement IEP successfully and this presented a challenge for teaching and learning. As a result of insufficient funding, educators experienced challenges in the implementation of IEP.



According to Stubbs (2008), the issue of funding presents a challenge to the implementation of IEP and is very emotive. To this extent, reading widely on the issue of funding, inferences are that, if institutions are adequately financed, the challenges faced by the educators relating to IEP may be addressed. This is in line with the views expressed by Stubbs (2008, p. 74) who hypothesises that ‘funding systems can facilitate or inhibit IEP.’ Thousand and Villa (1995, p. 66) qualify the resource issue and argue that resources include all the aspects that are pertinent to support educators so that IEP implementation is successful and these include material resources, funding as well as assistance from department support services. According to Bornman and Rose (2010, p. 7), ‘A general lack of funding contributes to the general bewilderment in South African schools towards IEP.’ Furthermore, inferences that can be drawn from the above discussion that is, if educators do not have the necessary tools to teach, this could encourage negative attitudes and stress.

In this theme the challenges contributing to the shortage of resources were highlighted with regard to IEP implementation. Based on the views of the participants, a lack of funding seemed to be a challenge for educators, in successfully implementing IEP. Participants shared similar views relating to a lack of funding in schools, which hindered IEP practices. Evidently, if educators do not receive sufficient support in terms of funding, this may render negative outcomes, for both educator and learner performances with regard to IEP implementation.

#### **4.3.1.4 Lack of parental involvement**

Participants’ responses in interviews indicated that the educators experienced challenges when they sought parental help in the implementation of IEP. Three participants, three principals were in agreement that educators faced challenges with regards to parental involvement because there seemed to be a lack of parental responsibility. A lack of involvement of parents presented challenges with regards to school-parent communications which resulted in stressful factors for educators. It emerged that parents were not supportive; some were illiterate and other parents made no contact with schools. Principal-A had this to say:

*Yes we do have parent challenges. Nowadays, a lot of our parents are working. There are also many families out there that are made of single parents, largely single mothers even more now with gran’s, who are looking after the children. So a lot of our parents and grandparents are illiterate and cannot assist with homework and a lot of our children are left to fend for themselves.*

It seemed that some challenges pertained to ‘absent parents’ because most of the times, learners were left in the care of grandparents who were illiterate and not capacitated to assist slow learners. In this light, participants mentioned that it was very difficult without the support of the parents because homework was not checked or done. This is what Principal of School-B had to say:

*Our main problem here is absent parents. They don't supervise homework. They are not on top of their game. Mom works at night. Dad has left. Children are left on their own with no-one to supervise their homework (Principal-B).*

In the same light, Principal-C added that there were many IEP challenges because some learners had special needs and parents did not work with the educators in order to assist learners with barriers to learning. This is what Principal-C said:

*There's no motivation at home. Homework is not being done. How do you get through to a child who has come from that type of environment? There are many challenges and if only our parents were supportive it would help a great deal. If parents could just understand that education is priority.*

Educator-B was in agreement with the above views and mentioned that there was very little parental involvement and support from parents. This is what Educator-B said:

*There is no support coming from the parents. The children are not getting any help at home. So the expectations of the educator are to teach; to do the corrections, to do remedial work; to do discipline; to do everything and it's very hectic for the educator. The breakdown seems to be coming from a lack of parental assistance and involvement.*

However, it transpired from the participants that parents were not involved in learner performances because parents did not assist learners at home. According to the educators, this challenge was so severe that it caused much stress because they received no support from parents. Also, when parents were asked to come in for appointments to discuss learner performances, they did not. A lack of participation of parents was a challenge for educators because it had an effect on the performance of learners. A concern was raised that if parents' input was very little, the output may also be very little. It was mentioned that parents were unsupportive and unresponsive which presented challenges for educators.

This assertion made in the above paragraph is in line with the views expressed by Mullick (2012) who contends that the non-supportive parents sometimes create problems for principals and educators who are encouraging support to embrace acceptance of IEP implementation and the array of cultures in the school. In another study conducted by Engelbrecht, *et. al.*, (2001),

it indicated that there was limited contact between parents and schools and that parents' lack of understanding of learner capabilities, further broadened the gap between parent-school partnerships. My view is in support of collaborative efforts to involve all stakeholders in planning a way forward for effective IEP implementation.

#### **4.3.1.5 Managing large class numbers**

In interviews with participants, managing classes with large numbers of learners was viewed as a major challenge with regard to IEP implementation. Four participants out of eight expressed similar views. The participants were two principals and two educators. These participants were in agreement that the large numbers of learners in the class was difficult to manage and problematic and posed as a great challenge because it created stressful situations. On this issue, the two principals and two educators mentioned that teaching large numbers of diverse learners in a class was a challenge for educators with regard to IEP implementation. For instance, Educator-B had this to say:

*It's the number of learners in the classroom. I think when teaching learners in a diverse classroom, we should not have such huge numbers. We are sitting with forty plus in the classroom. That's very stressful for any educator. The numbers are the biggest stress factor for educators. This comes with the challenges of discipline, academic performance and deadlines that have to be met; it's fairly stressful for educators.*

Educator-A also mentioned that challenges for educators were experienced in the implementation of IEP, and that the challenges were linked to large classes. This is what he said:

*I have 32 children [learners] in my class. This is a battle for reason. How do you expect somebody to understand every single situation for 32 children? (Educator-A).*

In line with this perception, Monks and Schmidt (2010) maintain that the number of learners in classes can be problematic as educators may find that they need to change their methods of teaching, which sometimes impacts on educational outcomes outlined. Similarly, Principal-C was in agreement with the above views of the two educators and mentioned that educators have large classes and that it was a challenge for the educators because it was difficult for them to accommodate slower learners because they had to meet curriculum deadlines. This is what Principal-C had to say:

*There are forty plus in a class. That's, too much for the educators and it's difficult for them to cope. Educators are moaning and groaning. On the other hand, IEP can work with smaller numbers. The large class size numbers does not allow educators to give much attention to slower learners.*

Still on the issue of educators experiencing challenges regarding IEP implementation, Principal-A expressed a similar view to that of Principal-C and mentioned that the numbers of learners in classrooms were too large. This situation brought about stressful situations that resulted in many challenges with regard to IEP implementation. Principal-A said:

*The ratio of learner-educator is extremely large. I don't believe that an educator can cope with 40 children in a classroom and still worry about children who need extra assistance and help with barriers. I think classes are too big. I think our classes are too large in the South African School and that's the first thing that needs to change.*

This view expressed above is in line with that of Correa (1993) who posits that when classes are large, it becomes difficult for educators to perform classroom activities because they would need to spread their attention attempting to give each learner individual attention. It seemed that educators experienced challenges in IEP implementation; as a result of classes that are too large, that seemed to have a negative effect on effective teaching and learning. In this theme the participants' views indicated that educators faced challenges with regard to large numbers of learners in classrooms. This is in line with a study done by McCabe (2003) and the one conducted by Xiao (2007) which indicated that large class sizes is a challenge for educators because it prevents teachers from using more individualised curriculum and teaching methods. Furthermore, a study conducted by Engelbrecht (2004) suggests that challenges may be experienced by educators where educator-learner ratios are high. According to Engelbrecht (2004), this is so because there are textbooks and other resource shortages with limited provisions for schools.

The participants' views indicated that they experienced challenges when teaching large numbers of learners in the classroom. Perceptions were that it was a challenge for them to implement IEP because of the large numbers of learners in classes. Participants also mentioned that it was difficult for them to cope. It emerged that the challenge of the large numbers of learners in classes did not allow the educator to give individual attention to slower learners.

#### 4.3.1.6 Physical Resources

In response to the question posed to the participants about challenges educators experience in the implementation of IEP, two principals were in agreement that the physical infrastructure in schools presented challenges for IEP implementation. Participant responses were similar. For instance, Principal-C mentioned that they did not have proper facilities for a learner who was confined to a wheelchair. She highlighted that the desks were small and not suitable for him. The classroom was upstairs and was a challenge to accommodate him. Principal-C expressed herself in this way:

*We have challenges with infrastructure. We had a physically disabled child in a wheelchair. It was difficult for him to come into the classroom. We have no ramps. He had to slide into a desk. It was difficult for him.*

This challenge was also confirmed by Principal-B who said that:

*We do not have ramps and rails for disabled learners. The physical environment is not conducive for IEP implementation regarding learners with disabilities.*

In the interviews, Principal-B also mentioned that the school did not have a hall. In this light they experienced challenges because they had to have their assembly under a shelter as it was mentioned in the school profile. In the same development, Principal-C mentioned that they too did not have a school hall. This was a challenge for them because they had to have their school assembly on a grass patch.

Some participants indicated that they experienced challenges in IEP implementation with regard to the physical environment of their schools. According to Wildeman and Nomdo (2007), schools are eager for infrastructure facilities to be improved in order to accommodate for learners with physical challenges. These scholars further assert that infrastructure facilities include the buildings. In keeping with this notion of infrastructure, Education White paper 6, (DoE, 2001) stipulates that ‘an aspect of the development of learning settings that the Ministry will give urgent attention to is the creation of barrier-free physical environments.’ However, it is disturbing that to date schools continue to experience challenges with regard to infrastructure.

Participant responses indicated that educators experienced challenges with regard to school physical infrastructure. It emerged that the physical environment, for example, school buildings and classrooms were not conducive for effective IEP implementation practices. Furthermore, where schools had learners with disabilities, the physical conditions became a challenge. For

example, there were no ramps for learners in wheelchairs. Participants also indicated that the schools did not have adequate buildings for example, a school hall, and that posed a challenge because school assemblies had to take place on a grass patch and under an outside shelter, with regard to School-C and School-B respectively.

#### **4.3.1.7 Language barrier**

The question as to why educators experienced challenges in the implementation of IEP was posed to participants. Four participants (three principals and one educator) were in agreement that educators faced challenges with regard to language. For instance, Principal-A highlighted that they experienced language challenges due to the fact that many of their learners came to their school from different places. He inferred that they experience these challenges with regard to language barriers because different schools had different language policies. Similarly, Principal-B shared the same perception and said:

*We experience language barriers. We code switch so learners can understand. The child that is first language Zulu sometimes cannot understand the high standard of English.*

This was also confirmed by Principal-C who mentioned that their learners have challenges with English. She expressed that the challenge was that the majority of their learners were from the Umlazi and Lamontville Townships and English was not their mother tongue. That situation posed a challenge for the educators who were English first language speaking. In line with the previous citation, Educator-A expressed the view that there were challenges in teaching diverse learners with language barriers. He further stated that educators were teaching English as their first language and they experienced challenges because many learners were second language speakers. Educator-A corroborated the views of Principals-A, Principal-B and Principal-C by saying that:

*The massive differences in language make the implementation of IEP extremely difficult for somebody who cannot comprehend or understand the language of the child. I think it's also that the lack of knowledge is what puts us in the situation that we are in. We, for the most part do not understand each other's language. We as teachers [educators] face challenges with regard to language barriers. I think what makes the implementation of IEP so challenging is that you have a majority race, Black race who speak a language which a lot of teachers [educators] do not understand (Educator-A).*

Educator-A added:

*When learners do not understand you, you get frustrated and then you get stressed out and you get angry. Some learners speak a language which educators do not understand. It becomes frustrating because you wonder why they do not understand. You wonder why they are not seeing what you are seeing and that just heightens stress. It is a challenge and becomes frustrating because what the child is seeing I don't see. We are experiencing challenges in reality with regard to different languages in the classroom.*

The description of language challenges as expressed by participants was in line with the views expressed Mullick, Deppler, and Sharma (2012) who posit that language is a major barrier to success of IEP implementation for learners in primary schools. My view is that various policies in South Africa need to address these language challenges that educators face in order for IEP to be successfully implemented. Another study conducted by Gollnick, *et. al.* (2002) supports this view and the findings emphasised that educators of that time were faced with an overwhelming challenge to prepare students from diverse cultural backgrounds to live in a rapidly changing society.

Seven participants out of eight posited that educators faced challenges with regard to language barriers. Participants expressed concerns regarding the language aspect which they said affected the culture of teaching and learning. In this respect some concerns hindering the implementation of IEP was that there were learners in schools who experienced learning challenges because the language of learning was not their mother tongue.

#### **4.3.2 Strategies of Inclusive Education Policy Implementation**

As was mentioned in the first theme, participants experienced various challenges in the implementation of IEP in teaching diverse learners. In this theme, participants provided a number of strategies that they utilised to address challenges in primary schools in the Umlazi and ILembe Districts. As legislated, the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001), one of the strategies to be used included Professional development programmes which focuses on the development of effective leadership in policy. In this theme I intended to find out first if there were strategies that they used to improve the implementation of IEP. The data showed that there were strategies and these included the following; (a) Coping strategies: Trust and affection (b) Reflection, Prayer (c) Remedial reading (d) parent communication and involvement (e) Learner Referrals (f) Peer mentoring (g) stakeholder support and community involvement.

#### **4.3.2.1 Coping strategies: trust and affection**

A question was posed to educators as to how educators managed to deal with IEP implementation in dealing with diverse learners. Two educators were in agreement that they used coping strategies or mechanisms such as trust and affection in dealing with diverse learners in the implementation of IEP. It was found that participants devised their own measures and strategies to deal with the implementation of IEP. Participants mentioned diverse strategies that they adopted to address challenges of IEP implementation. For instance, Educator-A responded by saying that he did not know if his strategy was effective or not, but managed to deal with IEP implementation by trying to win over his learners. This is how Educator-A responded:

*I don't sometimes, I don't know if we truly do. I think as an educator you deal with it as best you can. But I suppose, you deal with it within the scope of how you feel in your classroom. For example, in my classroom I'm very light-hearted amongst my learners. I'm light-hearted because it gets the child [learner] to open up a little more. So, I try to make learners look at me as a human being, so that they are less likely to cram up and be afraid to do things. I laugh with my learners and admit to them when I make a mistake. I always encourage them to do more and that's my way of doing things. I believe you can control a child through two methods, love and fear.*

Educator-A added that if you can get the children to love you enough, they will try and change because they would not want to disappoint their educators. In the same development, Educator-C responded a little differently to the question and remarked that they try to manage as educators. Educator-C said:

*Educators try, but it is not easy. So, teachers find it hard to manage to deal with all of these challenges.*

#### **4.3.2.2 Prayer and reflection**

Still on the issue of how educators managed to deal with IEP implementation, in teaching diverse learners, Educator-A added that he used prayer and reflection as coping strategies. Although Educator-A did not mention the word reflection, his responses indicate that he reflected on the situation before responding to it. This is how Educator-A expressed himself:

*In terms of personal coping strategies, I can honestly tell you how I cope is through prayer. I sometimes actually find myself praying. I will pray when a child [learner] makes me angry. I pray for strength not to act irrationally, because I think sometimes you can snap in the heat of the moment. You can lose your cool. Other times I'll just delay my responses to a child purposefully. I will physically stop myself from giving a*



*response, sit back, look at the child [earner] and assess the situation. I will remind myself, this child comes from a broken home or this child has a temper that needs to be controlled. So when I remind myself I then tell myself this is the best approach.*

The responses from educators revealed that educators devised various strategies as coping measures in managing to deal with diverse learners in the implementation of IEP. Educators indicated that the strategies they utilised as coping measures was having the ability to get learners to trust them as well as show them affection. This strategy seemed to allow learners to be comfortable and work better. Another educator used prayer and reflection as a coping strategy. This educator implied that the strategy of prayer allowed him to have strength to deal with difficult situations. This strategy of reflection gave him the opportunity to reflect before taking action. The two participants mentioned that by using these coping strategies, they managed to deal with diverse learners in the implementation of IEP.

#### **4.3.2.3 Peer mentoring**

In the same line of thought, educators were asked what strategies they thought were most effective as coping measures in the classroom. Two out of three educators (Educators B and C) were in agreement that peer mentoring was a coping strategy that was effective in the implementation of IEP. Educator-A responded with a diverse view.

Educator-B posited that peer mentoring was a coping strategy that she utilised which and was effective. In this regard, Educator-B had this to say:

*Well the coping measures/strategies that are used by a lot of teachers [educators], including me is peer mentoring. We allow the learners that are coping well to assist the weaker learners. Indirectly the stronger learners assist the weaker learners. We also have group work, within the group. Within the group you find there are stronger ones, then those learners who come with their different strengths and abilities. Together they contribute, and the strategies in terms of the academic side, is peer mentoring.*

On the same issue, Educator-C also seems to think peer mentoring is an effective strategy with regard to coping measures in the implementation of IEP. She responded by saying that her copying strategy is to identify weaker learners and then mix learners according to their abilities. Educator-C said:

*If you don't understand their abilities, sometimes we try this method where we put learners in a group; we mix them according to their different abilities, so they can help each other. We try to put learners according to their abilities so that those who are*

*weak can be assisted by those who are able stronger. Prior we used to separate weaker learners from stronger learners. The weak ones on one side, but that in that case it did not work. But if you have a mixed group after you identify them, then we mix them according to their abilities.*

The participants' responses indicated that peer mentoring seemed to be an effective coping strategy in the classroom. It emerged that stronger peers seemed to assist the weaker ones. It was also noted that by mixing learners in group work, the weaker learners seemed to benefit from the learners that coped a little better. Educators also indicated that separating weaker learners from average learners was a strategy that did not work. Educators reiterated that mixing learners according to their abilities in the classroom, where they are mentored by peers, seemed to be an effective strategy. Educators deduced that peer mentoring as a strategy in the implementation of IEP was most effective as a coping measure in the classroom.

#### **4.3.2.4 Parent communication and involvement**

When the participants were asked about coping strategies were effective in the classroom in teaching diverse learners, Educator-B also mentioned that communicating with the parents was an effective coping strategy in the classroom. Educator-B expressed herself in this way:

*We communicate a lot with the parents. We inform the parents of challenges in the classroom. We have a communication book. We inform the parents after the first, second and third term of learner performances. The parent is eventually called in. If we feel learners are disruptive, after three warnings parents are called in.*

Still on parent communication and involvement, the question of what strategies were in place that management had embarked on to ensure that educators received support regarding IEP implementation, was posed to the principals. The responses of two principals (Principals-B and Principal-C) were similar. Principal-A expressed a diverse view.

Principal-B mentioned that she invited parents in to school to give them input regarding problems at school and as to how their children were coping. Principal-C shared his view and said:

*We have an open door policy. The parents can come in at any time to speak to the teachers [educators] but they have to make an appointment. We have had workshops with parents, which they thoroughly enjoy because we workshop them on how to help their children [learners] at home. What we've actually done at school for every parent, especially with reading, which is the foundation of learning, is to have them fill in a*

*library form. They are then able to get a library card to register their children at the library. We capacitate parents with the pronunciation in reading, giving them suggestions and what to do at home, especially with the little ones [learners]. We also encourage the parents to come into the classroom and they can sit and see how the lessons are taught.*

The ideas expressed in the above extracts indicated that communicating with parents and involving them in school matters seemed to be an effective coping strategy in the implementation of IEP. Participants found that by using this strategy of involving parents, they were able to assist their children [learners] at home with homework. This strategy by principals and educators of communication and involvement seemed to encourage an ethos of collaboration, teamwork as well as working as partners in education. This coping strategy of parent communication and involvement, in the implementation of IEP, seemed to empower parents to communicate more with schools and become involved.

#### **4.3.2.5 Learner referrals and assessment**

In keeping with the same line of thought, when participants were asked about the coping strategies that they considered as being effective measures in the classroom when teaching diverse learners, participants' views were similar. In response to this question, five participants (Three principals and two educators), indicated that it was helpful when learners were referred because such learners were able to receive the appropriate assistance that they require. Principal-A responded in this way:

*There are so few psychologists that are available to us. So, what we do is, we have a number of places that we recommend to parents to have their learners assessed. We use a nearby location to have our children [learners] assessed quite a lot. We have just tapped into somebody new at a hospital, in the centre of Durban, where they have psychologists where we can get help. Sometimes the assessment is done free.*

On the same vein, Principal-C mentioned that they had many learners with special educational needs [LSEN] and because the DoE does not help much, as a strategy to assist educators the school, working with parents refer learners to be assessed. Principal-C added:

*I have been fortunate in that there is a psychologist that I refer the parents to and he is able to assist me.*

The above responses indicated that the strategy of referring learners for assessment was an effective strategy as a coping measure. The data indicated that principals and educators received positive feedback after learners had been referred and assessed because participants

mentioned that psychologists were helpful. Referring learners for assessment seemed to be an effective strategy utilised by principals and educators because it emerged that psychologists and social services provided assistance. Participants posited that once learners had been referred and were assessed they then knew how to assist diverse learners and were able to use the appropriate resources. In the same light, Principal-B also shared the same perception of Principal-A and Principal-C. She mentioned that when learners have learning problems in the classroom, as a strategy to assist educators, the school worked with parents in order for learners to be referred for assessment. She maintained that it was an effective strategy because they receive help. This is how Principal-B expressed herself:

*Whenever a parent is called to school, the parent is always assured that she will get input from the teacher [educator] in the presence of her child. So all four of us, parent teacher [educator], learner and myself, give input into the problem and decide a way forward. I call in social services and refer the child to be assessed. They are of assistance.*

In the same development, Educator-C also expressed that referring learners for assessment was an effective strategy when teaching diverse learners and that it made their work easier. She indicated that once learners have been referred and assessed, she was more knowledgeable and was able to use the appropriate resources. Educator-C responded in this way:

*It makes work easier because I am then able to identify my learners who are experiencing learning problems. I then am able to use the appropriate resources. If learners have special needs it is good to refer them to the relevant places. They can help those learners. We identify special needs learners and refer them for assessment.*

In the same breath, Educator-B also implied that referring learners is an effective strategy as a coping measure in the classroom when teaching diverse learners. Educator-B said:

*If a child [learner] is having an academic problem, we call parents in together with the SMT and we make a recommendation for that child [learner] to be assessed. If it is a severe academic problem, we recommend that the child [learner] see a psychologist. Maybe that child [learner] might have to be assessed. But the recommendation comes from teachers' input, other teachers as well together with SMT. We call the parents as a last resort and we ask the parents to get outside help.*

#### **4.3.2.6 Professional Development: Workshops and INSET**

Responding to the question about the strategies that were in place that management had embarked on to ensure that educators received support regarding IEP implementation, five

participants (two SEMs and three principals) shared similar views. It emerged that some views regarding strategies in the implementation of IEP were different. The principals stated that educators were encouraged to attend professional development workshops and INSET (In-service Education and Training) programmes. Principal-A indicated that the management of his school had professional development and INSET strategies in place to assist educators with challenges. This is what Principal-A had to say:

*I think by sending our educators on workshops and staff development programmes we are helping them. We also have regular management meetings, which are minuted which I think is very important. At the management meetings, we speak about strategies in order to help our educators support the children who need support in our schools. This is called learner support. We highlight children who need support and try and help our educators and show different ways which they can deal with learners that do need the extra assistance. It is on-going support.*

In the same development, Principal-C had a similar view to that of Principal-A in that she mentioned that the management of her school also had strategies in place in the form of workshops and staff development programmes to assist educators with IEP implementation.

Principal-C expressed herself in this way:

*We do assist the teachers [educators], internally by having workshops and teachers [educators] give demonstration lessons at the workshops. We meet, we have staff development. At the meeting teachers [educators] request what they would like to be developed on. So we have development once a week, but at times you are not able to have it regularly.*

In the same light, Principal-B shared a similar view with the other principals and inferred that the strategies management had in place was to have briefings every morning. On the other hand, Principal-B held a different view in comparison to the other principals mentioning different strategies that she utilised. She mentioned that she regularly gave her educators moral support in dealing with diverse learners regarding IEP implementation. This is how Principal-B remarked:

*We have our briefings every morning. Some teachers [educators] come with ideas. I always encourage the educators. I say when things get too tough in the classroom, step outside and come to the toilets, something like that. Just to get away from using physical means to ease the tension and frustration. That's one way I do things. We try to support educators. Very often, every day as a manager, I go down and I always check up on the educators and find out how they are doing. I chat to the teacher [educator]. So they*

*feel at least I have some involvement, that I share their problems. When teachers come with a problem, I really do try to help them. They understand there is support.*

On this same issue, SEMs were also asked what strategies had been put in place to assist educators with challenges in the implementation of IEP in diverse classrooms, both SEMs seemed to agree that strategies were in place, but differed regarding their views about types of strategies that were in place. This is how SEM-1 expressed this view:

*Yes, it's the workshopping. It's taking educators for workshops but they might not be sufficient because these workshops are one day or half a day. In the mainstream it's the workshops and there is also assistance in terms of NGO's. They are playing a critical role in assisting us. In fact the learners with special needs were not catered for before but gradually there are attempts to assist educators in the implementation of IEP.*

SEM-2 also agreed that strategies were in place but differed in responses with regard to the types of strategies in place to assist educators with IEP implementation. SEM-2 pointed out strategies in IEP implementation concerning human and material resources. Reflecting on the strategies, he expressed that:

*Former Kader Asmal wanted Education White Paper 6 brought into the mainstream. Following that with the limited resources we were able to place full service schools within each circuit. There would be one or sometimes two schools that would probably have resources. Schools on that circuit which number anything between 30 and 40 can access the resources there. Further to that there is one person placed at the circuit office that takes charge of all the circuits within management. So if you take a circuit office that probably deals with about two hundred and eighty schools, there is a broad strategy there in place now.*

The responses given by the principals regarding the strategies that management had in place to support educators in IEP implementation, revealed that the perceptions were similar. The three principals indicated that there were professional development strategies with regard to workshops, management meetings and INSET programmes in place in schools to assist educators with regard to IEP implementation. According to Servage (2008), 'professional development is crucial to improve student learning'. It emerged that professional development and INSET programmes were strategies used by schools to capacitate and support educators. Similarly, the SEMs also reiterated that there were strategies in place, organised by the DoE, for example, where a full service school was placed in a circuit to assist other schools and educators in the implementation of IEP. It emerged that the DoE had also placed a person at the circuit office that took charge of all the other circuits within management. It was noted that

the strategies for IEP implementation put in place by the management of the DoE, differed in comparison to the strategies put in place by the management of schools.

#### **4.3.2.7 Community/ Stakeholder Support**

Still on the issue of strategies that management had put in place to support educators in IEP implementation, four participants (three principals and one educator) were in agreement that strategies concerning community or stakeholder support had been devised. In response to this question about strategies, Educator-B mentioned that they tried to get the community involved and that they had people from outside agencies coming in to assist learners with reading. In this way management puts in place strategies to assist educators. This is how Educator-B put it:

*Reading is the root cause of many problems. We find that if a child cannot read, it impacts all learning areas. So, teachers [educators] at this school try to get outside agencies coming in to assist learners with reading.*

In the same development, when responding to the question about strategies in place to assist educators, Principal-A shared the view of Educator-B. Principal-A mentioned that, as a strategy to assist educators, his school management sources volunteers from the community to assist the school with reading programmes. In this way his school was able to have remedial reading done by volunteering members from the community. This is how he responded:

*By trying to source volunteers from outside the school, I believe it is a really good way of bringing in people to assist our educators. The 'Shine Ladies' come in to assist with reading. A gentleman comes in to assist with mathematics. Teacher assistants come in to assist educators and are very valuable.*

In the same light, in response to the question about management strategies in place to assist educators regarding IEP implementation, Principal-C indicated that she had liaised with stakeholders in the community to assist the school. She indicated that one of her strategies was to have a feeding scheme where stakeholders in the community assist the school by feeding indigent learners. Also another strategy was to encourage stakeholders in the community to provide indigent learners with clothing. This is how Principal-C put it:

*I must admit, that somehow we have had stakeholders coming on board. Our children [learners] are being fed during the week. We actually feed about 150 children [learners] from a total of 700. Many of these learners are orphans. There are companies that offer the learners clothing. I just received quite a bit of jerseys that have*

*been made for the indigent learners. I also have educators on staff members that provide counselling services to our learners.*

The data from the participants revealed that schools and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZNDoE) had strategies in place to assist educators in the implementation of IEP but the KZNDoE had not engaged with this strategy. Similarly, it seemed that the KZNDoE was still not doing enough to assist educators in the implementation of IEP as highlighted by one SEM. It emerged that educators, principals and SEMs had planned, liaised and organised their own strategies to assist educators. Furthermore, Loreman (2007) argues for the involvement of the community in schools as one of the pillars of support for IEP. Ainscow (2005) also acknowledges the community-school collaboration as one of the key levers for change. Therefore, it is clear that more needs to be done, regarding strategies to assist educators in the implementation of IEP. Perhaps only then, with firm strategies in place, may educators' challenges be sufficiently addressed through collaborative efforts.

The data from the participants indicated that various strategies were utilised to address challenges in the implementation of IEP. Regarding the participants' responses it is noted that educators, principals and schools at large had been left to their own devices to devise strategies to assist educators in the classroom. This policy has two major components, elaborated in two sets of guidelines:

The National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (DoE, 2008) guides IEP by defining the process of identification, assessment, and enrolment of learners in special schools. My contention is that this support strategy to assist educators in the implementation of IEP does not seem to have materialised. My view is that although the SIAS strategy provides guidelines for support for educators, it seems that these strategies have not been implemented effectively. According to Malinen (2013), without support, it is unlikely that the teachers' experiences become discouraging in their nature. The IEP implementation is considered the *most appropriate strategy for addressing the diverse needs of all learners*, in South Africa. Questionably, without the appropriate tools necessary to implement IEP, which includes strategies to address challenges experienced by educators, our South African learners and educators may continue to be disadvantaged.

In this theme, educators, principals and SEMs seemed to have adopted strategies to combat challenges in the hope of assisting educators in managing to deal with diverse learners. It



seemed that most of the strategies adopted by educators and principals in the implementation of IEP were similar. Participant responses indicated that strategies that they had implemented added positively to their experiences because they received support. These strategies adopted seemed to work. Perhaps, to deal with their challenges, sharing their resources could be a possible strategy that could encourage collaboration.

#### **4.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the analysis of the results collected through semi-structured interviews among eight participants. This chapter indicated that the educators faced many challenges in the implementation of IEP and that the learners were struggling to learn. This chapter also indicated that participants devised various strategies to address challenges experienced in the implementation of IEP. To this end, it is imperative that more needs to be done to assist educators with challenges under discussion in this chapter. The next chapter concludes the study by presenting the findings and making recommendations.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### STUDY SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*“The summit in education is perceivable for all learners with stakeholder support. There lies hope...” – Pauline Cooke*

#### 5.1 Introduction

The metaphor used in introducing this chapter has a meaning that has been drawn from both literature and the data. The meaning behind this metaphor is, reaching high standards for all learners is possible if all involved in the school community environment co-operate, participate and work as a team in achieving positive outcomes for all learners. There is hope that every learner can excel at their varied levels. This is possible for every learner, given stakeholder’s work positively toward one goal.

This study investigated IEP implementation and the challenges and strategies of educators in teaching diverse learners in three primary schools in the context of the Umlazi District in Durban. Chapter Four has provided a detailed account of the data presentation and discussion. In this chapter, I present and discuss the findings of this study drawn from the data presented in Chapter Four. Based on the findings presented in this chapter, recommendations are then made. The discussion of the findings is guided by and based on the following key research questions. The research questions were:

1. What are the challenges of IEP implementation in classrooms?
2. What are the strategies utilised by educators in the implementation of IEP?

Based on these research questions, I discuss the findings in the pages following. The chapter begins with the discussion of the summary of this study; this is followed by the discussion of strategies used to address challenges of IEP implementation; then the discussion of the findings and the presentation recommendations brings the study to an end.

#### 5.2 Study summary

In this study I sought to understand what other perceptions were regarding the challenges experienced and strategies utilised by educators in IEP implementation. In Chapter One the metaphor used was *‘Children envisage the future... educators plan the way forward’*. This metaphor meant that learners looked forward to education and wanted to learn but it was the educators and stakeholder’s task to pave a smooth road forward. Educators and all stakeholders needed to lead learners in the direction of holistic development despite hurdles experienced in the implementation of IEP. This particular metaphor permeates the whole study and actually

forms part of core inspiration for me to want to conduct this study. In order to find out what I was looking for, I visited literature to check the landscape of inclusive education and its implementation in various parts of the world. The motivation for this study emanated from the literature where I noticed that most studies conducted on IEP implementation were done in primary schools. I was motivated because I was studying this in the context of huge issues around IEP implementation. Having established what literature revealed, I moved on to explore various research designs and methodologies. I realised that this study was suited for a qualitative inquiry within interpretivist paradigm. A detailed description of methodological issues was done in Chapter Three.

Having generated the data, I presented this data in Chapter Four in two major themes emerged. In the course of presenting participant experiences, I discussed the challenges experienced by educators in teaching IEP as well as some of the strategies participants utilised as coping measures. Out of that I was able to arrive at seven components of the theme, and these were; educators lack training in IEP; a lack of resources; limited funding; lack of parental involvement; managing large classes; physical resources and language barrier.

### **5.3 Findings**

The main findings pointed out that educators experienced many challenges in the implementation of IEP. These findings seemed to suggest that educators shared common concerns and challenges with regard to teaching diverse and special needs' learners in the implementation of IEP in mainstream classes and this caused stressful situations. The main challenges they experienced pertained to educators lacking training in IEP, a lack of resources, limited funding, lack of parental involvement, managing large class numbers, physical resources and language barriers. There were many other challenges that participants mentioned that also needed to be a priority.

#### **5.3.1 Challenges of IEP**

There are many challenges associated with the implementation of IEP. Below is the presentation of various challenges.

##### **5.3.1.1 Educators lack training in IEP Implementation**

On the issue of a lack of training in IEP implementation, there seemed to be a dominant focus that educators were not capacitated for IEP practices. Some participants indicated that they had special needs' learners in their classrooms and struggle to teach them because they have not

received training in IEP implementation. This was a huge concern, resulting in educators being frustrated because they lacked the skills needed to teach diverse and learner with special needs. Also some educators mentioned that some learners had academic constraints, behavioural problems and some were dyslexic and educators did not understand how to deal with those issues. Similarly, one SEM mentioned that educators have been very poorly prepared for the implementation of IEP and this may be the reason why educators currently experience many challenges in the mainstream classroom. Some principals indicated that educators were not trained in IEP; therefore they experienced many challenges and found it difficult to cope. Moreover, there seemed to be a common agreement among participants that the DoE had not fulfilled legislation outcomes promulgated in Education White Paper 6. The outcomes stipulated professional development programmes and in particular, the development of competencies for educators, necessary for addressing severe learning difficulties. As a result of a lack of training in IEP, it was found that educators became stressed and developed negative attitudes towards IEP. To this extent, it was found that educators felt powerless because of a lack of training and intervention support. It emerged that a lack of training impacted on how educators accommodate for learners regarding resources.

#### **5.3.1.2 A Lack of resources**

Another finding that emerged from this study was the challenge of a lack of resources. This study revealed that schools faced many challenges with regard to the provision of resources in schools. It emerged that there was a lack of resources which became problematic because educators found it difficult with meagre resources. It was highlighted from participants that accommodating for learners with very little or sometimes no resources, was a huge challenge. Moreover, a major tension was that there was a shortage of many material resources, for example, desks, chairs and in some cases, spectacles for learners who had sight challenges. Observations in interviews also revealed that some participants became very emotional and in despair one participant held his head and said, *'I don't know what to do anymore to help my learners, with very few resources it is so difficult!'*

#### **5.3.1.3 Limited funding**

Another finding that emerged strongly was the challenge of limited funding to schools. Participants indicated that schools received limited funding and were unable to meet educational goals. Findings indicated that schools were not given sufficient funding to buy essential requirements, for example (stationery and books) needed for LSEN learners and those

struggling in mainstream classes. Findings reflected that educators had to use innovative strategies and methods to meet the needs of diverse learners in their classrooms. Another finding that emerged was that SEMs also reiterated that mainstream schools received insufficient funding. It seemed that funding mainstream schools that catered for large numbers of special needs learners seemed to be challenging because the funding allocations were limited. It was found and there were many special needs learners in those schools in need of various resources and this was problematic. It also emerged that as a result of special needs learners remaining in mainstream schools, with a shortage of funds to support them, further damage was being done.

#### **5.3.1.4 Lack of parental involvement**

On this issue, participant findings indicated that parents were not willing to participate and assist educators in teaching and learning. Educators complained that they experienced a lack of communication with parents as some parents were unresponsive and did not commit to school appointments. Some of the challenges inhibiting parental involvement in the schools seemed to stem from learners living with grandparents who were illiterate. In this respect it seemed that learners were left in the care of grandparents who were not capacitated to assist slow learners with homework or read reports pertaining to learner performances from the school. A finding that was a matter of urgency seemed to be that parents needed to work with the educators in order to assist learners with barriers to learning and this was not happening.

It was indicated that a major problem was absent parents. In this regard educators felt that parents did not supervise learner's work, and they received no motivation from home. Educators spoke strongly about this scenario mentioning that it was difficult for them because they could not do everything for the learners, for example teach, do remedial work and discipline without parental support. In this regard, educators felt that there was a breakdown in communication with parents as a result of non-involvement. Another finding indicated that language challenges brought about stressful situations especially because educators did not receive assistance from parents in this regard as most learners were second language speakers. Findings also indicated that a lack of understanding in terms of language (between educators and learners), caused educators to become stressed and frustrated when learners showed a lack of understanding.

Participants concerns also indicated that the language of learning at school was different to learner's home language and to some extent parents were unable to assist educators. Some findings reflected that language issues also seemed to escalate stress factors in terms of parental non-involvement. To this extent findings indicated that a lack of parental involvement was clearly frustrating because educators needed parental intervention at times. It emerged that educators were experiencing challenges in performing their duties without collaborative assistance from parents. Participant responses indicated that a lack of parental involvement seemed to inhibit successful IEP practices.

#### **5.3.1.5 Physical resources**

Judging from the participants' responses it was found that challenges stemmed from there being very little or a lack of support structures in place regarding physical resources (infrastructure). Findings indicated that the DoE did not assist schools with severe challenges, for example, (infrastructure) with regard to learners in wheelchairs. Schools had no ramps for disabled learners in wheelchairs. It was also difficult for learners in wheelchairs to have access to the classrooms. The reason for this was because the classrooms were not designed for disabled learners. Moreover, participants from two schools indicated that their schools had no hall. It emerged that one school had their assembly on a patch of grass. Furthermore a participant mentioned that on rainy days they could not have an assembly. This was challenging because they held assembly once a week and this was the only time that school matters could be addressed to staff and learners. Another participant indicated that they had their school assembly under a shelter, which was inconvenient because learners at times were exposed to inclement weather.

#### **5.3.1.6 Managing large class numbers**

A further finding that seemed to be a challenge was educators managing large class size numbers. Some participants were unanimous in their responses that this was problematic. Participants indicated that managing large class size numbers was stressful. Findings indicated that educators tried as best they could to accommodate all learners. However, it emerged that slower learners were disadvantaged because they could not keep up with the rest of the class. It was noted that large class size numbers hindered effective teaching in mainstream classes. The reason for this was because educators faced many challenges in the mainstream classes more especially with discipline, academic performances and meeting deadlines.

### **5.3.1.7 Language barriers**

The main challenge that educators faced pointed to language barriers. On this issue of language barriers, there was unanimity among the participants. It suggested that the language aspect affected the culture of learning. Some participants indicated that the massive difference in language made the implementation of IEP difficult. The main problem they faced was mainly related to the influx of learners from different places. As a result participants experienced challenges with regard to language barriers because different schools had different language policies. Participants mentioned that learners whose mother tongue was not English found it difficult to understand the level of English at their schools and caused challenges for educators as well as learners. It emerged that learners were unable to comprehend work and therefore failed to complete set tasks. A further challenge was that both the educator and the learner had different mother tongue languages and failed to understand each other which at times led to frustration and increased stress.

It is evident from these findings that educators experienced various challenges in the implementation of IEP. In spite of the challenges faced, educators continued to persevere in IEP practices and used various strategies to deal with challenges. It is only with stakeholder support that educator challenges in the implementation of IEP be eliminated. Sachs (2003) asserts that ‘engaging with issues of IEP implementation in schools necessitates collaborative efforts through the forging of new relationships within school communities’. To add to the above citation, Loreman (2007) also posits that the involvement of the community in schools is one of the pillars of support for IEP practices. It seems that support of all stakeholders is an important factor for successful outcomes of IEP implementation to be realised.

### **5.4 Strategies to address challenges**

In this chapter it emerged that educators experienced challenges in the implementation of IEP. Educators, Principals and SEMs, responded to questions and gave insight as to how challenges were addressed. Strategies were devised as coping measures to assist educators and principals to meet DoE expectations regarding the implementation of IEP. These are the strategies implemented by participants in the study.

#### **5.4.1 Educator strategies to deal with challenges**

Faced with various challenges in the classroom educators devised strategies in managing to deal with challenges. The strategies that educators used included (a) Trust and affection (b) prayer and reflections (c) Peer mentoring (d) Parent communication and involvement (e) Learner referrals (f) Professional Development/Workshops/ INSET (g) Community /Stakeholder Support.

Trust and affection entailed educators developing an aspect of trust and affection in their learners. In this way, learners conformed to classroom practices because they did not want to disappoint their educators. The use of prayer and reflection entailed the practice whereby participants devoted their time to prayer as a strategy that gave them strength to deal with different situations with which they were faced. It was noted that the strategy of reflection gave them the opportunity to reflect on their actions. The strategy of peer mentoring entailed the participants partnering weaker learners with stronger learners. In this way the stronger peers mentored weaker peers. Weaker learners then benefitted from the stronger peers. Participants were in agreement that the strategy of parent communication and involvement was effective. It was noted that communicating with parents and involving them in school matters was effective because parents became involved in the life of the school. Some participants mentioned having workshops for parents benefitted the learners because parents were able to assist their children at home. Principals and educators used learner referrals strategies because in their view, it benefitted the school in the sense that the learners were able to receive the assistance they needed. These responses were based on the input that principals received. It emerged that educators and principals received positive feedback from psychologists and social workers regarding learner performances. Principals and SEMs mentioned that professional development strategies were in place. SEMs and principals mentioned that educators were encouraged to attend workshops, seminars and INSET programmes which empowered educators. The findings suggest that principals and educators used community/ stakeholder support in place as strategy to deal with the challenges of IEP implementation. Participants mentioned that the schools were fortunate to receive outside agencies and volunteers to assist the school.

#### **5.5 Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings presented in this chapter, the following recommendations are made. Firstly, educators in South Africa, since the demise of the apartheid system in 1994, were



exposed to many changes in education. The new democratic system of education brought with it many changes in schools and educators found that their classrooms consisted of diverse learners in mainstream classes. In this respect, educators encountered challenges in teaching diverse learners because they felt that they were not sufficiently trained and capacitated to meet these expectations. The findings have shown that educators lacked training in IEP practices which inhibited effective teaching and learning practices in the classroom. This situation still persists in post-apartheid South Africa. In view of these findings, there is a dire need for educators to be trained in IEP implementation practices which is in line with democratic contemporary South Africa. There is a need to reskill educators to empower them to deal with managing diverse learners. This can be achieved through in-service training, seminars and workshops.

Secondly, there is a need for support service teams to be trained to assist educators in IEP implementation practices. That initiative may assist educators in teaching practices and provide various methods that can be utilised for the accommodation for special needs learners. In this way, delivery of quality education for all learners may be enhanced and learning performances improved. Thirdly, to ensure that there is a decrease in the various challenges affecting the implementation of IEP in schools, it is priority that schools need to have in their possession the necessary material and physical resources and funding required in order to meet the expectations. Attention should focus on the type of need/s as well as range of settings in schools as their allocations differ according to location. This will not only keep schools abreast but facilitate progressive teaching and learning practices and influence positive educator attitudes. It will also give the DoE a good idea of how the resources are being utilised and information regarding the degree of learner special needs in schools.

Lastly, with regard to large class size numbers, in terms of special needs learners, there is a need for specialist psychologists to be placed in schools who could focus solely on special needs learners. This could relieve the mainstream educator to focus on mainstream teaching and learning. Managing large class numbers in the mainstream class was also perceived as problematic and caused challenges for educators. An alleviation of this challenge could be to have lesser numbers in mainstream classes. To ensure that the challenges relating to language barriers are addressed, it is recommended that schools offer some of the languages focussing on the demographics of the school. Further it is suggested that educators be trained in those

various languages offered by the school. Perhaps, in this way educator challenges regarding language barriers may be addressed.

To ensure total holistic positive performances, there is a dire need for parents to be involved in the school-life of their children. To lessen educator challenges, there is a need for parents to show their commitment to the school by assisting the educators with challenges, for example, by honouring appointments, arranging therapy or counselling sessions with educators and psychologists. Furthermore, the DoE needs to hold workshops for parents to workshop them on IEP implementation, in order for them to realise the importance of their involvement in the school as partners in education. This stance could influence positive learner behaviour and performance.

There is a need for a study like this to be done in other schools, in order to highlight and broaden understanding of the extent of the challenges experienced and strategies employed by educators, when faced with teaching diverse learners in South Africa.

## **5.6 Chapter summary**

The intention of this study was to identify the challenges experienced by educators and strategies utilised in the implementation of IEP. The findings have indicated that educators are ill-prepared to meet educational outcomes in certain areas. Those areas for example, (training in IEP implementation), suggest that educators are not familiar with IEP and this seems to be problematic. Through this study, I have attempted to obtain an understanding of educators' experiences in the implementation of IEP. This was done through lived experiences of those affected by IEP implementation practices.

This study has also shown that educators experienced many challenges in the implementation of IEP and that stakeholder support was lacking. To this end, IEP implementation is achievable provided that educators, who are the engines that steer education, are supported with stakeholder involvement and commitment. The best education possible for *all* learners is perceivable with stakeholder involvement. With common mindsets, collaboration and support, there lies hope for *all* South African learners and educators.

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## APPENDIX A



07 April 2015

Mrs Pauline Judith Cooke (201510209)  
School of Education  
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Cooke,

Protocol reference number: NSS/0210/015M

Project title: Brickbat and Bouquets: A study of the strategies and challenges of Inclusive Education Policy Implementation

### Full Approval – Expedited Application

With regards to your application received on 11 March 2015. The documents submitted have been accepted by the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee and FULL APPROVAL for the protocol has been granted.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenaka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Mr SD Bayeni  
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Morojele  
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo / Ms Bangi Bhengu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

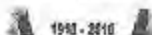
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Weetville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

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## APPENDIX B



education

Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref:24/8/3/9

Mrs PJ Cooke  
PO Box 44072  
Bluff  
DURBAN  
4036

Dear Mrs Cooke

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "BRICKBATS AND BOUQUETS: A STUDY OF THE STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 15 March 2015 to 15 March 2016.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehogile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UMlazi District

**Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD**  
Head of Department: Education  
Date: 31 March 2015

#### KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa  
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 382 1004 (beyond the call of duty)  
EMAIL ADDRESS: [nosike.connie@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:nosike.connie@kzndoe.gov.za) / [nomangisi.ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:nomangisi.ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za)  
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 382 1203 WEBSITE: [www.kzneducation.gov.za](http://www.kzneducation.gov.za)

## APPENDIX C

P.O. Box 44072  
Bluff  
Durban  
4036  
13 January 2015

Attention: The SEM

KZN Department of Education  
Circuit Office  
6 Acton Road  
Duran  
4001

Dear Sir

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

My name is Pauline Judith Cooke and I am a Master of Education (M Ed) student at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal at the (Edgewood campus). I request permission to conduct research at your office. As part of the requirements to complete M Ed, I am expected to do research.

The title of my research is: **Brickbats and Bouquets: A study of the strategies and challenges of Inclusive Education Policy Implementation.**

The study aims to explore the brickbats and bouquets of inclusive education policy implementation, focusing on the challenges and strategies experienced by educators in Primary School classrooms in South Africa.

The study will focus on three principals of schools in the Umlazi District, three educators' one from each school and one District Official. The study will use semi-structured interviews, document reviews and observations to collect data. Participants will be interviewed for approximately thirty minutes at a time that is convenient for them and each interview will be audio-recorded.

The names of the District Official, schools, principals and the educators participating will be kept anonymous and not be divulged in the final reports.

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.  
Thanking you kindly.

Yours sincerely  
Mrs Pauline Cooke  
.....

**Declaration of informed consent**

I ..... (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: **Brickbats and Bouquets: A study of the strategies and challenges of Inclusive Education Policy Implementation.**

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should I so desire.

Signature of Participant: ----- Date-----

Signature of Witness/ Research Assistant: . ---Date: ---

Thanking you in advance.

**Contact Details** :  
Cell No. :  
School No. :  
School Address :  
Email :

**Enquiries:** Ms Phumelele Ximba

Email : [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

Tel No. 031 260 3587

**DECLARATION**

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. In addition, I consent/not consent to the interview being audio-recorded.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

**SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT**

**DATE**

.....

- CONTACT DETAILS :**
- CATEGORY :**
- SCHOOL (Name) :**
- SCHOOL TEL NO. :**
- EMAIL ADDRESS :**

**Enquiries:** Ms Phumelele Ximba  
Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)  
Tel No. 031 260 3587

## APPENDIX D

432 Lighthouse Road  
Bluff  
Durban  
4036  
13 January 2015

Dear Participant

### INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Pauline Judith Cooke. I am a (Master of Education). M Ed student at the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). As part of my study, I am required to conduct research. I request your permission to participate in the semi-structured part of this research.

The title of my research is: **Brickbats and Bouquets: A study of the strategies and challenges of Inclusive Education Policy Implementation.**

This study aims to identify the strategies and challenges of inclusive education policy implementation experienced by educators in primary school classrooms in South Africa. The study will use semi-structured interviews, document reviews and observations to collect data. Participants in the study will be interviewed for approximately thirty minutes at a time that is convenient for them and each interview will be audio-recorded.

The names of the school, principal and educators participating in the study will be kept anonymous and not be divulged in the final reports.

For further information regarding my study, you may contact me on:

Cell Phone : 0833999882

Tel. No. : 031 4663889

E-mail : [paulinecooke89@yahoo.com](mailto:paulinecooke89@yahoo.com)

Or my supervisor on 031 2607026

Thank you.



**DECLARATION**

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. In addition, I consent/not consent to the interview being audio-recorded.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

**SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT**

**DATE**

.....

- CONTACT DETAILS** :
- CATEGORY** :
- SCHOOL (Name)** :
- SCHOOL TEL NO.** :
- EMAIL ADDRESS** :

**Enquiries:** Ms Phumelele Ximba  
Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)  
Tel No. 031 260 3587

## APPENDIX E

432 Lighthouse Road  
Bluff  
Durban  
4036  
13 January 2015

Dear Participant

### INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

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## APPENDIX F

432 Lighthouse Road  
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Durban  
4036  
13 January 2015

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**CONTACT DETAILS** :  
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**SCHOOL (Name)** :  
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**EMAIL ADDRESS** :

**Enquiries:** Ms Phumelele Ximba

Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

Tel No. 031 260 3587

## APPENDIX G

432 Lighthouse Road  
Bluff  
Durban  
4036  
13 January 2015

Dear Participant

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- SCHOOL (Name)** :
- SCHOOL TEL NO.** :
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**Enquiries:** Ms Phumelele Ximba

Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

Tel No. 031 260 3587

## APPENDIX H

### **Research instrument for purpose of data collection:**

#### **1. Interview schedules: Educators:**

1. How has policy prepared educators to teach inclusive education within a diverse classroom?
2. What are the challenges (if any), educators experience in the implementation of inclusive education?
3. How do educators manage to deal with the challenges?
4. What strategies do you find effective as coping measures in the classroom?
5. Why do you think some learners within a diverse classroom perform poorly?
6. How can improvements in policy be made to assist educator challenges in the classroom?
7. How can district officials assist in assuring educators and learners are receiving the best teaching and learning practices?
8. How can inclusive education implementation policies assist learners with special needs?
9. What are possible stress factors for South African educators in the implementation of inclusive education?
10. How can educator attitudes and knowledge contribute towards, effective implementation of inclusive education?
11. Why do you think educators fail to implement inclusive education successfully in the classroom?

#### **Interview questions: Principals:**

1. How have educators been prepared and trained for the implementation of inclusive education?
2. Why do you think educators experience challenges in the implementation of inclusive education?
3. What measures have been put in place to capacitate educators to deal with diverse groups of learners?
4. What are the strategies that management has embarked on to ensure that educators receive support?
5. How does management ensure educator and learner needs are catered for in terms of inclusive education implementation?
6. How has management contributed to instilling positive attitudes in educators towards embracing inclusive education implementation policies?
7. What are the challenges of inclusive education implementation in the school?
8. How has the Department of Education prepared educators for inclusive education implementation?
9. How have learners with barriers to learning been catered for in the school?



10. What factors hinder effective inclusive education implementation in the school?  
Continued...

**Interview questions: District Official:**

1. How has the Department of education prepared educators to implement Inclusive education?
2. What strategies have been put in place to assist educators with challenges in the implementation of inclusive education in diverse classroom?
3. What structures have been instituted to assist schools to meet the demands of a changing curriculum, with respect to, catering for special needs and diverse group of learners?
4. Has the department of education prepared structures to cater for learners with disabilities in the new curriculum?
5. What factors in your opinion, contribute to poor implementation of the inclusive education policies?
6. To what degree has the department of education tried to instill positive attitudes in educators to encourage successful implementation of the inclusive education policy?
7. How has the District Based Support Teams provided systemic support for all educators who need it?
8. How has the Department of Education strengthened the skills of educators to cope with more diverse classes?
9. Why is it that South African learners still perform towards the bottom of the spectrum on both mathematics and reading?
10. How can schools bring Inclusive policy to practice?