

**AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2014 SCREENING,
IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT POLICY IN LEJWELEPUTSWA
DISTRICT, FREE STATE**

by

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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENT WORK

DECLARATION WITH REGARD TO INDEPENDENT WORK

I, **MATOLO FLORINA MANTHEME**, identity number _____ and student number _____, do hereby declare that this research project submitted to the Central University of Technology, Free State for the Degree: **DOCTOR OF EDUCATION**, is my own independent work; and complies with the Code of Academic Integrity, as well as other relevant policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the Central University of Technology, Free State; and has not been submitted before to any institution by myself or any other person in fulfilment (or partial fulfilment) of the requirements for the attainment of any qualification.

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother Morongoe Francina Letsoela, my role model and the one in a million educator, visionary and greatest education philosopher I have ever known.

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My soul magnifies the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my saviour, for He has seen the lowliness of His maidservant (Luke 1: 47 - 48). My special acknowledgements go to the following people:

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ABSTRACT

This research evaluated the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in the primary and secondary schools of Lejweleputswa District, Free State. The study sought to evaluate the policy by exploring the nature of the SIAS 2014 policy; examining how the introduction of the policy leads to an all-inclusive and more effective teaching and learning process; and determining how educators screen, identify, and assess barriers to learning as well as supporting learners with barriers. To this effect, a sequential explanatory mixed-methods research design was used to answer the research questions and satisfy the research objectives. The target population was educators in primary and secondary schools in the Lejweleputswa District. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 320 male and female participants from both primary and secondary schools for the quantitative strand of the research. The quantitative data was collected using a structured questionnaire which elicited responses from a total of 250 educators comprising of 66 (26%) males and 184 (73.6%) females by means of variables of closed-ended items which were measured on a seven-point semantic differential scale specifically developed by the researcher. The respondents were from 89 (35.6%) primary schools and 161 (64.4%) secondary schools. A purposeful sampling technique was also used to select seven school principals and five members of the District Based Support Team which added to a total of 12 participants for the qualitative part.

Guided by relevant literature, the sections of the fifty-five questionnaire items measured the educators' inputs about the SIAS 2014 policy framework; rationale and principles; implementation of screening, identification and assessment of learning barriers; as well as the implementation of support. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse data on the educators' scores about the extent to which they implement the SIAS 2014 policy. For the inferential statistics part of the quantitative strand, nine hypotheses were formulated which were tested through *t*-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Descriptive statistics revealed that the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy was modest. Inferential statistics revealed that there was some statistically significant difference in mean screening scores of learning barriers between male and female educators and between primary and secondary schools. However, no statistically significant difference in mean screening scores

of learning barriers between educators' teaching experiences was established. A further inferential statistics revelation was that there was some statistically significant difference in mean identification and assessment scores of learning barriers between primary and secondary schools while there was no statistically significant difference in mean identification and assessment scores of learning barriers between male and female educators or between educators' teaching experiences. Inferential statistics also revealed that there was some statistically significant difference in mean support scores of learners with barriers between primary and secondary schools while there was no statistically significant difference in mean support scores of learners between male and female educators or between educators' teaching experiences.

Two structured interview schedules based on the findings of the descriptive and inferential quantitative data analysis were conducted. The verdicts of the school principals and DBST members accounted for the quantitative diagnosis which generally established that the SIAS 2014 policy implementation is generally not effective owing to a number of factors such as insufficient educator training and development; educators' excessive workloads; and insufficient DBST resources to support schools.

Informed by the research findings and the Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of social systems, the researcher developed a SIAS 2014 Specialist Support Model. The model emphasises the importance of every individual who plays an active role in the school life of a learner to maximise support of learners who experience learning barriers. The recommendation is that there should be a full-time School-Based psychometric assessor who will coordinate the SIAS 2014 policy processes for learners who experience barriers to learning.

Keywords: Assessment of barriers to learning, barriers to learning, bioecological model, identification of barriers to learning, inclusive education, LURITS system, policy implementation, screening of barriers to learning, SIAS 2014, support of learners with barriers.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Inclusive education system that enables access to quality education seems to be a global quest that unfortunately is not yet achieved by many countries. Effective or ineffective inclusive education policy implementation is internationally believed to be bearing a profound impact in many countries (Kurth, Miller, Toews, Thompson, Cortes, Hari & Wangare, 2018). The next paragraph shall discuss the international perspective on inclusive education.

1.1.1 International perspective

Countries however have not given up on making inclusive education a living reality. For example, the European Union member countries have established ways of evaluating their progress towards achieving inclusive education which is monitored through what they call a European Semester process and the Education and Training Monitor. The Monitor also provides evidence on the role of education in fighting inequalities and promoting social inclusion (European Union Commission, 2017).

Apart from the European Union milestone, efforts have also been noted in some African countries like Ghana about inclusive education. Even though the idea of inclusivity is already appreciated in Ghana, Agbenyega and Deku (2011) seem to believe that the pre-service training of educators about inclusive education is not adequate. They argue that policies on educator training institutions do not seem to effectively initiate the trainee educators in to the theory and practice of inclusive education. As a result, inclusive education in Ghana may not be effectively practiced due to educators whose training and development have been compromised by education policies that do not seem to facilitate effective inclusive education practice (Botts & Owusu, 2013; Kuyini & Mangope, 2011). Still in the African continent, Kenya is next to be discussed.

Kenya is also one country that shows interesting engagement in the inclusive education. Kenya is noted to have registered a remarkable progress towards providing education that provides quality education to its learners. However, not much progress has been registered regarding inclusive education reform. Some of the challenges hindering Kenya from having an effective inclusive education include ineffective implementation of inclusive education policies; lack of intensive training and development of educators about what inclusive education entails; lack of funding for educator resources; and lack of involvement of all stakeholders. Even though inclusive education may not be a foreign phenomenon in Kenya, the entrusted custodians do not seem to be having similar interpretation of how inclusive education classrooms and contexts should be conducted or managed. The diverse interpretations of inclusive education could be a reason why educators in most classrooms are left stranded and not systematically capacitated on how they could identify barriers that prevent their learners from achieving. Inclusive education in Kenya is not always hampered by lack of knowledge of educators or officials, but by lack of necessary funding to assist in intervention on learning barriers (Adoyo, 2007; Kochung, 2011; Ojiambo, 2009). Moving further, not only Kenya is facing challenges of effective implementation of inclusive education, but also Namibia has some challenges which shall be discussed in the next paragraph.

In Namibia, the practice of inclusive education does not also seem to be a smooth sail. At the apex of the challenges faced by the Ministry of Education in Namibia is the implementation of the inclusive education policies. The Namibian government strives to provide quality education to all citizens regardless of their economic status, gender or race; however, this may not seem to be achievable as long as educators in Namibia are still not adequately trained to address the needs of learners who require extra support. Shortage of resources such as learning aids for learners who need some special learning support as well as inadequate training and development of educators about identification and support on learner diversity are some of the contributory factors to an ineffective implementation of inclusive education policies in Namibia. Educators are not equipped with necessary skills that may enable them to work efficiently in an inclusive education environment. Majority of them may not confidently claim to be skilled in supporting learners who experience learning barriers in their classes so as they may also achieve (Hausiku,

2007; Madrid, 2015; Zimba, Möwes & Naanda, 2011). Moving further south of the African continent, the next paragraph will focus on the background of inclusive education in South Africa which is going to form the basis of this research.

It is against the above international perspective of inclusive education discussed that the researcher gains a profound idea that in as much as countries have adopted the idea of providing quality education that is inclusive, it seems as if the implementation and practice of inclusive education is still a challenge in many countries. The disparity between inclusive education policy theories and implementation may be the reason for a minimal achievement. This research shall explore the South African situation about the status of one inclusive education policy and its practice. The next paragraph shall elaborate on this aspect.

1.1.2 Background of inclusive education in South Africa

The South African Minister of Education, Angie Motshekga, says education and curriculum have an important role in realising the democratic aims of the SA Constitution (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2011). This means any SA education policy must be a vessel for improving the quality of life of all citizens and unleashing the potential of each person.

In order to ensure that all learners are able to access quality education that will help achieve the Constitutional aims of SA, the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS Strategy, 2008) was introduced by the Department of Education (DoE) in 2008. The policy aimed at providing a standardised procedure for identifying, assessing and providing programmes for learners who may be in need of extra support that will enable them to access quality education (DoE, 2008). In addition, a Draft Policy on Screening, Assessing, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) was introduced in 2014 by the DBE with the purpose of providing a policy framework for the standardization of the procedures to identify, assess and provide programmes for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation and inclusion in schools (DBE, 2014). Even though the South African government

through the Department of Education has promulgated the above-mentioned series of documents which are meant to make inclusive education a success, there are still some practices in schools which seem to be counteracting the aim of inclusive education in most South African schools. Some of such ill-practices are outlined in the next paragraph.

There are schools which never establish Learner Profiles for learners in order for them to know beforehand the socio-cultural backgrounds of the enrolled learners. As a result, no screening, identification and assessment of learning barriers experienced by learners never occur. This means intervention on learning barriers for learners who experience barriers is never prevailed. In some schools, when it coincidentally happens that a learner displays a learning barrier, the educators of such a learner tend to ignore those signalling codes of a cry for help, but may rather orally remark about such a learner to fellow educators and then label and or develop a negative attitude towards them (Dalton, McKenzie & Kahonde, 2012; Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel & Tlale, 2015). Moreover, it has also been observed that an appalling number of learners are still unable to acquire the required amount of knowledge concepts in order to be promoted to the next grade. This instance of underperformance of learners with barriers has also been identified by Rossi and Stuart as cited in Ntsanwisi (2007) who assert that many children are often retained, drop out of high school or lose confidence because of the learning barriers they experience. It is against the above background that the researcher suspects there is a problem with or about inclusive education that needs to be discussed further. The next paragraph will present the statement of the problem.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

An effective educational policy has to be implementable. As such, the policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) is said to be a provision of standardisation of processes involved in supporting learners who experience learning barriers at primary and secondary public schools. It provides educators with standardisation of procedures for screening, identifying and assessing learning barriers and then supporting learners experiencing those identified and assessed barriers. The policy is meant to provide educators with procedures they

should follow whenever a learner experiences barriers to learning so as no learner is unable to access quality education. Primary and secondary school educators are entrusted with the effective implementation of the policy in order to prevent learner dropout and high failure rate (DBE, 2014). However, the researcher's informal observation as a secondary school educator, School-Based Support Team (SBST) coordinator, Head of Department in one secondary school in Lejweleputswa Free State province, and a holder of a Master's degree in Policy Studies in Education, is that there are schools which are still faced with continuous learner dropout and poor academic learner performance in the Lejweleputswa District. Furthermore, the general tendency of educators when a learner displays a learning barrier is that they do nothing to help the learner experiencing the barrier or, they orally remark about such a learner to fellow educators and or also, label and develop a negative attitude towards such learners.

Given the above prevailing circumstances in schools noted by the researcher, it is not clear to the researcher whether or not educators are not capable of implementing the SIAS 2014 policy effectively so as learner dropout and poor performance can be curbed and; whether or not the policy itself is not feasible enough for educators to implement it effectively so that learners who experience learning barriers are supported accordingly. It becomes imperative therefore to evaluate the implementation of the policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) 2014 in Lejweleputswa Free State. The following descriptive and evaluative problem-questions need to be answered by this empirical study:

- **What is the nature of the SIAS 2014 policy?**

The answer to this question will assist the researcher to compare the knowledge and understanding of the sampled population about the SIAS policy with the actual content analysis of the SIAS policy.

- **How does the introduction of the SIAS 2014 policy lead to an all-inclusive and more effective teaching and learning process?**

The question seeks to establish how educators perceive the SIAS 2014 policy in terms of it being or not being a usable procedure for screening, identifying and assessing barriers to learning and then supporting learners experiencing barriers to learning.

- **How do educators screen, identify and assess barriers to learning and then support learners with learning barriers?**

The responses to this question will assist the researcher to establish whether educators skilfully and competently ensure inclusivity of learners who experience barriers to learning in their daily teaching by screening, identifying, assessing the barriers, and then supporting such learners.

- **To what extent do differences between biographical variables (gender, type of school, teaching experience) and educators' responses relate to their implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy?**

This research question aims to establish whether differences in the biographical variables among educators are related to the implementation of the policy in Lejweleputswa.

- **What possible recommendation(s) can be made for the more effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy by the educators?**

The research will address this question as a means of wrapping whether the SIAS 2014 policy is feasible and implementable. Recommendations will be made about areas of the policy that need to be reviewed in order for educators to implement the SIAS 2014 policy effectively.

In order to answer these research questions, the aim and objectives below should be achieved:

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this research is to evaluate the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in the Lejweleputswa District, Free State. From the aim, the following specific objectives can be derived:

- To establish the nature of the SIAS 2014 policy;

- To examine how the introduction of the SIAS 2014 policy leads to an all-inclusive and more effective teaching and learning process;
- To determine how educators screen, identify and assess barriers to learning and then support learners with learning barriers;
- To determine the extent to which there are differences between biographical variables (gender, type of school and teaching experience) and educators' responses related to their implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy; and
- To suggest a model for the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy.

This study also has research hypotheses that will be verified.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

South African education system is in a critical period of transformation from the dual system of coexistence of both special needs education and main stream education, to a one of inclusive education system where the SIAS 2014 policy offers educators with a standardised procedure for screening, identifying, assessing and providing programmes for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation and inclusion. However, there is little knowledge about the success and future of the newly promulgated SIAS 2014 policy implementation in Lejweleputswa district schools in Free State. Creswell (2012) also confirms that research on policies assists policy makers to obtain feedback on whether the policy implementation is effective as perceived by its entrusted custodians such as public officials. Therefore, research plays a considerable role in informing the SIAS 2014 policy designers and all those involved: teachers, learners, parents and the public, about the challenges and successes of the intended and implemented policy. This research evaluates the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy and the findings from this research suggest implications for classroom practice of educators in primary and secondary schools, education and training of educators and further research. The participants in this research have also had the opportunity to reflect on their inclusive education policy implementation practice, and to reflect on ways to enhance their practice and understanding of SIAS 2014 policy.

The researcher will also convene a voluntary workshop that aims to discuss the findings of this research for all educators in Lejweleputswa district in Free State province. Institutions of higher education for training of educators and the Department of Education will also be engaged to share the findings. The findings and recommendations from this research may be used by the Department of education to improve the in-service training programmes for development of educators so as to meet the challenges faced by educators in their daily classroom practice. The researcher also hopes that this research will raise issues that will point to a need for further research, and that the findings of this research will be used as a basis for discussions that are related to inclusive education implementation in Lejweleputswa district in Free State province. The next paragraph presents the problem statement.

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

A research hypothesis is a declarative statement in quantitative research in which individuals or sites are sampled based on membership of a subgroup with defining characteristics (Creswell, 2012). The following null hypotheses will be tested in this research:

- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers' scores for male and female educators.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers' scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers' scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and under, between 6 – 20 years, and 21 years and over.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers' scores for male and female educators.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores' for educators at primary and secondary schools.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers' scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and under, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners' scores for male and female educators.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners' scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners' scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and under, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

Concepts or ideas may be understood better when literature about them is studied (Creswell, 2012). Four education policy documents constitute the evolution of an inclusive education policy regime in South Africa chronologically. This chapter examines all of them in order to give a historical background of the context from which the gestation of the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) 2014 policy emanates. The implementation approach of the SIAS 2014 policy as a public policy may be attributed to a combination of a *Procedural Approach* and *Behavioural Approach*.¹ Pulz and Treib as cited in Mthethwa (2014) argue that adequate bureaucratic procedures should be established to ensure that public policies (including educational policies) are executed as accurately as possible. To this end, public institutions should have sufficient resources, an established implementation system, clear responsibilities and hierarchical control to supervise the actions of the implementers (Pulz & Treib in Mthethwa, 2014). This implies that the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy is not just dependent on the competence of the District Based Support Team (DBST) in the Lejweleputswa District, Free State, but is also dependent on both the design nature of the policy as well as educators entrusted to implement it.

Of the four education policy documents, the Special Needs Education Policy will be discussed first. Secondly, the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support in

¹Chand as cited in Mthethwa (2014) states that Procedural Approach to public policy implementation advocates for the introduction of appropriate procedures in an organisational structure to control; set pace; co-ordinate, schedule timeline; monitor and manage the implementation progress of public policies while Behavioral Approach states that organisational structures, policy processes, techniques and managerial tools are as good as underlined human beings executing them whose behaviour, competency and attitude impact on implementation process.

South Africa will be presented followed by Learner Diversity in the Classroom. Lastly, Educator Support to Learners with Learning Barriers will be discussed.

1.6.1 Special Needs Education Policy

The first South African inclusive education policy is Education White Paper 6. The policy focuses on advancing Special Needs Education by establishing an education system that does not discriminate against any learners based on their learning barriers. By exploring this policy, the researcher will gain knowledge of an ideal inclusivity within the education system of South Africa. The principles of inclusive education as stipulated in the Education White Paper 6 are imperative in the education practices that prevail in primary and secondary schools which is the focus area of the study. The principles of White Paper 6 are stipulated as follows:

- Anyone can learn anything when there is sufficient support.
- Different learners have different learning needs.
- Inclusive education respects that learners are different.
- Inclusive education is not limited to formal schooling but learning also happens in the home and community, in both formal and informal ways.
- Inclusive education means changing attitudes, behaviours and the way teaching is done so that learning needs are addressed.
- Inclusive education tries to get all learners to participate fully and to minimize barriers to learning.
- Inclusive education capacitates learners by developing their potential so that they effectively add value to education processes. (Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education & MIET Africa, 2014)

Therefore, the researcher believes that studying White Paper 6 will add an understanding of the context within which the educators are supposed to be inclusive in their teaching practice as well as to what extent they are observing the principles of the inclusive education. The Department of Education realized that it was imperative to design a National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support policy for learners with learning barriers to improve teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms.

1.6.2 National strategy on screening, identification, assessment and support

This is a strategy document that forms part of the implementation of Education White Paper 6—Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System introduced by the South African Department of Education to implement the main elements of an inclusive education system in 2008. The strategy is called the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS Strategy). The SIAS Strategy is aimed at reaching out to learners whose learning needs are often ignored in the South African education system (DoE, 2008). The strategy is also in line with the Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education and MIET Africa (2014) when affirming that effective implementation of a policy on inclusive education means that schools should identify and address barriers to learning. It is further argued that educational policies that are inclusive will reduce the pressure to exclude learners for disciplinary reasons and ensure that support is coordinated (Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education & MIET, 2014). The researcher agrees with the above viewpoint because education is a life-long mode of change of negative behaviour to positive behaviour instead of only imparting and/or receiving knowledge.

The SIAS Strategy was promulgated as a means of trying to eradicate the discrepancies of how learners with barriers were identified, assessed and supported. When the SIAS Strategy was introduced, the following challenges were noted as some of the causes that prevented inclusive education in South Africa from being a possible reality:

- The number of learners who were being referred from mainstream schools to special schools suddenly escalated to a point where it became very difficult to manage.
- Insufficient resources and facilities led to some learners being deprived of the support they needed.
- There was no intense system of assessment and identification to maintain a standardised process of screening, identification and referral of learners into special schools.
- The assessment process lacked adequate involvement of educators, parents and learners.

- There was no detailed support needs assessment process which could be used to determine the nature of support required (DoE, 2008).

Given the above-mentioned challenges, the researcher acknowledges the importance of intense studying of the SIAS Strategy in order to establish whether the discrepancies that were identified by the Department of Education which led to the evolution of the SIAS Strategy in 2008 have indeed been cleared up in the Free State, Lejweleputswa District, through the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The implication of SIAS 2014 policy is that educators should acknowledge the need to change classroom practice because there is learner diversity in their classrooms.

1.6.3 Learner diversity in the classroom

In this section, learner diversity in the classroom will be explored in three literature phases: the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), Responding to Learner Diversity in the Classroom, and the International perspectives of Inclusivity in Education. The following paragraphs briefly explain how IQMS is used to measure teacher performance in an inclusive classroom.

1.6.3.1 Integrated Quality Management System

The Collective Agreement Number 8 of 2003 of the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) also acknowledges the need for inclusivity in education practice. This 2003 collective agreement, known as the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), promulgates a lesson observation instrument that is designed for educators in practice for Development Appraisal, Performance Measurement and Whole School Evaluation. The first Performance Standard of the IQMS is a Creation of a Positive Learning Environment” through observing learner diversity as one of the four integral criteria for the fulfilment of Performance Standard number 1 (ELRC, 2003). The IQMS has four rating scales whereby 3 means a good performance and 4 means an outstanding performance in all the performance standards. Educators are rated good performers in creating a positive learning environment if they acknowledge and respect individuality and diversity. Similarly, educators are rated outstanding performers if they use inclusive strategies and promote respect for individuality and diversity.

The researcher agrees with the rating of an outstanding performer, but suspects that the IQMS rating score of an outstanding performer will only be achieved by an educator who is competent enough to use the inclusive strategies such as screening, identifying and assessing learning barriers and then supporting learners who experience learning barriers. The implication here is that the educators are regarded as fully competent if they only use inclusive strategies. Whilst acknowledgement and respect of learner diversity are imperative for individual educators' performance, the researcher argues that the performance should also include competence in screening, identifying and assessing learning barriers and supporting learners with learning barriers.

1.6.3.2 Guidelines for responding to learner diversity in the classroom

The Guidelines for Responding to Learner Diversity in the Classroom emphasizes the need for educators to include all learners in their classrooms. Educators are urged to have a clear understanding of the concepts of diversity in their classrooms and curriculum differentiation. Educators are expected to be competent in differentiating curriculum content, teaching methods, assessment, and learning environment (DBE, 2011). The researcher agrees with the need for educators to be able to embrace diversity in their classrooms as well as differentiation of curriculum aspects. Therefore, the evaluation of the implementation of SIAS 2014 policy will give an insight into whether the educators are able to implement the policy through the extent of their upholding learner diversity in their classrooms and their ability to differentiate curriculum content, teaching methods, assessment and learning environment for learners who experience learning barriers. Learner diversity is a worldwide phenomenon; hence the following section gives international perspectives on inclusivity in education.

1.6.3.3 International perspectives on inclusivity in education

The importance of screening learners with learning barriers has also been confirmed internationally. For example, a study investigating learning disability screening practices in the United States of America (USA), Ohio Adult Basic Education programmes over a four-year period have proved that the rate and quality of screening learning barriers increased as soon as

there was effective implementation of policies and professional development (Johnson, Reynolds & Salzman, 2012). Regarding the USA, Halfon, Du Plessis and Inkelas as cited in Hourcade and Pool (2011) report that the state and federal policy and legislation reflect the provision of educational intervention services which has resulted in a growing number of effective programmes designed to find, identify, track, and serve children at risk for developmental problems. In India, Acharya (2009) notes that collaborative efforts on learner support can facilitate academic success and instil a sense of belonging in them about their school (Acharya, 2009). According to Sightsavers as cited in Hansen, Siame and Van der Veen (2014) in Zambia, the Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) of 2011 has recognized the need to enhance the inclusion of learners with special education needs (LSEN) in the mainstream school system. The researcher acknowledges all the efforts of the South African Department of Basic Education and those of other countries in making inclusive education a reality in their respective countries because it is through a collaborative approach that quality education can be provided for all globally. Quality education is realized when educators provide effective support to learners with barriers. The following section highlights educator support to learners with barriers.

1.6.4 Educator support to learners with barriers

Erradu (2012) believes that any mitigating activity and attention given to a specific learner who struggles to acquire a body of knowledge are fundamentals of learner support. Furthermore, Landsberg and Matthews (2016) view learner support as an act of meeting the needs of learners in an institution. The SIAS 2014 policy is designed in a way that enables school educators in schools to be conversant with the support needs of learners so as to effectively deliver the curriculum (DBE, 2014). Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Moolla, and Sylvester (2014) also affirm that providing support services for teaching and learning is an important strategy for building schools' capacities to recognize and address several learning difficulties.

However, other sources have discovered that implementation of inclusive education policies does not seem to be easy in South Africa. For instance, Donohue and Bornman (2014) maintain that South Africa's inclusive education policy is characterised by both high levels of conflict and

ambiguity. Furthermore, Wildeman and Nomdo as cited in Donohue and Bornman (2014) state that at present, there are no educators who are able to teach learners of different learning needs in one classroom without having their workloads profoundly increased. Similarly, Prinsloo as cited in Ladbroke (2009) attests that the challenges of an inclusive education system include the way policy documents are assessed to check the extent to which they protect human rights and the way inclusive teaching strategies are monitored. Ladbroke (2009) further identifies the aspect of inadequate training of educators as one of the factors that hamper the effective implementation of inclusive education policies by stating that the educators are not adequately trained or developed to foster inclusivity in schools. The researcher agrees with these views of the above-cited sources because educator training and competence are imperative for the effective policy implementation. This implies that the implementation challenges of the SIAS policy as an inclusive education policy may also be prevalent among educators. The following section discusses research design and methodology that was implemented in this research.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section gives an overview of the research design and methodology that were used. Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2011) say that a design is an overview of how a research will be conducted. The prevailing contextual research factors as well as the hypothesis may form the basis for the choice of a research design. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue that research design describes all the relevant steps that will be followed when research is conducted. Similarly, Creswell (2013) suggests that research design should include site and population sample; types of data to collect; specific instruments and types of scales. However, McMillan and Schumacher (2010) note that educational research has constraints which include methodological difficulties because it measures complex characteristics as well as thinking and problem-solving skills. The following section highlights the research design for this study.

1.7.1 Research design

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) classify research designs into four major categories, namely quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, and analytic. They have further identified the types of designs that fall under each category as shown in the table 1.1 below:

Table 1.1: Classification of research designs

Research Designs				
Quantitative		Qualitative	Mixed method	Analytical
Experimental	Non-experimental	1 Ethnographic 2 Phenomenological 3 Case study 4 Grounded theory 5 Critical studies	1 Explanatory 2 Exploratory 3 Triangulation	1 Policy analysis 2 Concept analysis 3 Historical analysis
1 True experimental 2 Quasi-experimental 3 Single-subject	1 Descriptive 2 Comparative 3 Correlational 4 Survey 5 Ex post facto 6 Secondary data analysis			

(Source: McMillan and Schumacher 2010).

Of the above-listed categories of research designs and their types, the mixed-methods research design is discussed in greater detail because it is the design that was implemented in this research. Gay *et al.* (2011) suggest that the mixed-methods research design combines quantitative and qualitative approaches by including both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study. Additionally, the mixed-methods design is meant to use both the quantitative and qualitative approaches in a complementary way in order for a researcher to arrive at a more profound understanding of the phenomenon that is being researched.

The following is a summarised list of characteristics of the mixed-methods research design as advocated by Creswell (2012):

- A justifiable motive for mixing the research methods;

- A collection of both quantitative and qualitative data but prioritizing one form of the data collection; and
- Alignment of data analysis to the type of design chosen (Creswell, 2012).

Creswell (2013) further identifies three types of mixed basic research methods as discussed below:

1.7.1.1 Explanatory sequential (QUAN-Qual model)

Explanatory sequential is a research design that focuses on quantitative data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2013). It uses descriptive statistics and group comparisons of numerical item scores. In addition, Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) maintain that the design entails an instance of a researcher initially conducting quantitative research that answers the research questions and then based on the quantitative outcome, later conducts a qualitative research that will account for the quantitative results. The two types of data are analysed separately, with the results of the qualitative analysis used by the researcher to expand upon the results of the quantitative study. A discussion about the exploratory sequential (QUAL-Quan model) will follow in the next paragraph.

1.7.1.2 Exploratory sequential (QUAL-Quan model)

Creswell (2013) indicates that an exploratory sequential research design focuses on qualitative data collection and analysis. The procedure employed in this model is a constant and comparative thematic analysis of transcripts. On the same note, the QUAL-Quan model profoundly embraces the qualitative way of research approach first, and then after acquiring a synopsis of the phenomenon, a quantitative step is embarked upon so as to further authenticate the qualitative results which had initially given a direction to the nature of the quantitative questionnaire (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

1.7.1.3 Triangulation, also called convergent (QUAN-QUAL model)

Triangulation is a model that merges both explanatory and exploratory designs. The results of both QUAN and QUAL are merged by cross-tabulating the qualitatively derived groups with quantitative variables in order to consider how merged results produce a better understanding of the phenomena that is being researched. Interpretation of the merged results produces a logical

discussion and conclusion of a researcher (Wittink *et al.* as cited in Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, Gay *et al.* (2011) state that unlike the QUAN-Qual and QUAL-Quan models, the triangulation model conducts both quantitative and qualitative researches concurrently and not in sequential phases. The two approaches may be said to be conducted in a manner that allows them to converge or come to a common point of discovery about the phenomenon of enquiry.

1.7.2 Determining the most relevant mixed-methods design

In this research, a sequential explanatory mixed-methods research design was used because it is a type of design in which different but complementary data are collected to evaluate the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The following paragraphs explain how this design was implemented.

1.7.2.1 Data collection, sampling, target population and instruments

Data was collected using document analysis, questionnaires and interviews. The SIAS 2014 policy was used to gather data for document analysis which is described by Bowen (2009) as a form of qualitative research in which a document is studied in order to make meaning of its purpose and implication. The SIAS 2014 policy was studied and a critical analysis of its contextual implications was done. Document analysis assisted the comparison of the knowledge and understanding of the sampled population about the SIAS 2014 policy with the actual content analysis of the SIAS policy.

Gay *et al.* (2011) identify a target population as a population that the researcher would ideally like to generalise results to while Creswell (2012) defines a sample as a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for the purpose of making generalisations about the target population. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) emphasise the importance of being strategic when sampling. A distinction between two general sampling strategies, namely the probability sampling and the nonprobability sampling, is essential (Bergin 2018; Creswell, 2015; Gall, *et al.*, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; McMillan, 2012; Salkind, 2018). Probability sampling means that the possibility of any one member of the target population being selected is known while nonprobability sampling means that the likelihood of selecting any one member from the target

population is not known (Bergin 2018; Creswell, 2015; Gall *et al.*, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; McMillan, 2012; Salkind, 2018).

In this research, the probability random sampling technique was used and later in Chapter four this sampling technique is discussed (cf. 4.7.1). The probability random sampling technique was chosen because it allows for every participant or group to be examined. Gay *et al.* (2011) outline the types of sampling as the random sample; simple random sampling; stratified sampling; cluster sampling; and systematic sampling. A detailed discussion of these methods of sampling is discussed in Chapter four, but for the purpose of clarity for this research, the target population is all educators in Lejweleputswa District. Stratified random sample according to the type of the school (primary and secondary) was conducted to select three hundred and twenty educators to respond to the questionnaire. This sample size is deemed ideal and a fair representation of the educator population. This choice is also made according to the suggestion of Gay *et al.* (2011) who contend that random sampling is an instance of selecting the research participants in a manner that allows each of the members of a population an equal chance of being selected to form a sample population. A seven-point scale questionnaire (cf. 4.5.1.1) was administered to measure how educators implement the SIAS 2014 policy in order to facilitate quality education for all learners in the Lejweleputswa District, Free State.

Following quantitative research was the qualitative data collection instrument in the form of interviews which explored the implementation of the SIAS 2014 with regard to the policy enhancing a more effective teaching and learning process that is all-inclusive for educators and the Education District Based Support Team in Lejweleputswa District, Free State. Purposive sample was used to select seven school principals and five members of the District Based Support Team who were interviewed. Using an interview to measure the ability of the sample population to implement the SIAS policy is in line with the view of Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) who maintain that although the interview has been used primarily to obtain information on variables other than cognitive ability, an important exception can be found in the field of developmental and cognitive psychology. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) explain types of interviews as informal conversation interviews, interview guide approaches, standardised open-ended interviews, key informant interviews, career and life history interviews, elite interviews,

and phenomenological interviews. A standardised, open-ended interview (cf. 4.8.1.1) schedule was constructed and the details of the schedule were based on the outcomes of the descriptive and inferential quantitative data that had been collected. In this research, the seven school principals were asked questions in the same order because the predetermined exact wording and sequence of questions reduces the possibility of compromising validity and reliability on the outcomes of the research. Additionally, five Lejweleputswa District-Based Support Team members in the inclusive education section were interviewed using the key informant interview. The key informant interview is a structured interview of participants whom the researcher deems to have certain expertise that is necessary for one or some of the research questions to be answered (cf.4.8.1.2).

The following section briefly explains how collected data was analysed.

1.7.2.2 Data analysis

Gay *et al.* (2011) regard data analysis as potentially the most important part of the research process because in this part researchers try to understand what they have learnt through their investigations. This explanation offered by Gay *et al.* (2011) is also confirmed by Creswell (2012) who contends that data is analysed to address each one of a researcher's questions or hypotheses. In this research, the researcher analysed the data collected for the purpose suggested by Gay *et al.* (2011), namely, to summarise data in a dependable and accurate manner, leading to the presentation of study findings in a manner that has an air of undeniability. Analysis of data collected about the nature of the SIAS policy and how the educators implement the SIAS policy was conducted according to the four procedures suggested by Creswell (2012) and Gay *et al.* (2011). The four procedures are discussed fully in Chapter Four (cf. 4.7.2 & 4.8.1.3) and are summatively and sequentially presented in both sources as the following:

- Quantifying of qualitative data
- Qualifying quantitative data
- Comparing results
- Consolidating data

Following the four above-mentioned procedures assisted in answering the last research question about the possible recommendation(s) that can be made for the more effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy among the Lejweleputswa educators. The SPSS Version 25 statistical program was used to analyse quantitative data. This program enabled the application descriptive and inferential statistics when analysing quantitative data.

1.7.2.3 Validity and reliability

Validity justifies the authenticity of the research findings while the concept of reliability is centred on the extent to which the research findings can be relied upon as objective outcomes of the research processes. It is essential for a researcher to choose an appropriate research instrument that may not compromise the research validity and reliability (Devlin, 2018; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). In this research, the findings that emerged from the data analysis process were validated to ensure accuracy and credibility by employing the following three primary forms of ensuring validity as advocated by Creswell (2012):

i Triangulation

The researcher corroborated evidence from different educators and members of the District Based Support Team.

ii Member checking

The researcher asked one or more participants in the research to check the accuracy of the report. This check involved taking the findings back to the participants and asking them (in writing or in an interview) about the accuracy of the report.

iii External audit

The researcher asked a knowledgeable person outside the project to conduct a thorough review of the study and report back, in writing, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the project.

1.7.2.4 Ethical considerations

Ethics are moral principles that influence behaviour or personal conduct. Webster's New World Dictionary as cited in Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) defines ethical (behaviour) as an act of conforming to the standards of conduct of any profession or group. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008)

further indicate that ethical concerns and questions affect mixed-methods studies just as much as they do any other kinds of research. They identify three which they regard as the most important ethical concerns, namely protecting participant identity, treating participants with respect, and protecting participants from both physical and psychological harm. Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2010) suggest ethical guidelines as including policies regarding informed consent, deception, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, and caring. When interacting with the participants, the researcher ensured that the following ethical guidelines were observed:

- Seeking permission from the Free State Department of Education to conduct this research at schools in the Lejweleputswa District;
- Carefully considering all possible consequences for educators who participate;
- Ensuring that the consent of sampled educators is voluntary and informed, without any implied deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate, and with regard to their privacy and dignity;
- Protecting all participants from unwarranted physical or mental discomfort, distress, harm, danger or deprivation;
- Treating all information obtained as confidential; and.
- Taking credit only for work actually done in direct connection with scholarly and research endeavours and giving credit to the contributions made by others.

1.8 LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This research encountered challenges about the research proposal, literature review, data collection, and the final writing up of the findings and conclusion. The first challenge to be reported on is based on the research proposal.

The research proposal was seriously hampered by the time factor. The researcher had to wait more than six months for the approval of the research proposal from the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee (FRIC). The FRIC outcome which ultimately came eleven months later called for a resubmission of the proposal with some effected changes for the final approval to be

made shortly afterwards. This experience was not only emotionally taxing for the researcher but also impacted negatively on the notion of racing against the time limits of the entire research. However, the researcher was able to effect the recommended changes by extending hours of working on the research project. Apart from that, the review of literature was another challenge as presented in the next paragraph.

At the start of this research the assumption held was that there would be plenty of literature about the SIAS 2014 policy for the researcher to draw some conceptual background from. However, during the research process, the researcher noted that other than the SIAS 2014 policy document, there was no other profound literature or research about the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy which is the centre of this research. Therefore, the researcher had to work from a shallow pool of ideas about implications for effective implementation of SIAS 2014 policy. The researcher was compelled to confine the conceptual framework of the research to the principles of the White Paper 6 because of lack of any other conceptual frameworks in the context of inclusive education in South Africa. Data collection presented yet another hurdle for the researcher.

The researcher had to wait more than three months for the approval of the Free State Department of Education to collect data in the Lejweleputswa schools and from the DBST. This was a challenge because the approval came with conditions which included no data to be collected during term four. Since the approval came on the last day of school in term two, it meant once again that the researcher would have to race against time in term three to distribute, collect and analyse quantitative data before the qualitative data could be generated back in schools and the DBST before the end of term three. Since the researcher is not a full-time student but a part-time one, this posed a serious challenge on the daily work demands and the research needs to the point where the researcher had to apply for unpaid leave in order to attend to some of the pressing research demands. Such unpaid leave did not also mean that the researcher was off the hook by forfeiting a day's salary but it meant an added workload and the submission of a catch-up plan for the lost duty time.

1.9 DERMACATION OF THE RESEARCH

This section highlights the scientific and geographical demarcations of this research. It comprises the scientific and geographical demarcation.

1.9.1 Scientific demarcation

Since this research deals with the evaluation of the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy, it can be demarcated, in the first instance, to Inclusive Education as an independent science and in the second instance, to the sub-discipline of Policy Studies in Education because it is concerned with the content, context and implementation of an education policy.

1.9.2 Geographical demarcation

Of all the nine South African provinces, Free State was the focus of the study. The Free State Province is made up of five districts, namely Lejweleputswa, Fezile Dabi, Thabo Mofutsanyane, Xhariep and lastly, Motheo. The Lejweleputswa District is the research site mainly because of the fluctuating learner performance ranking that it has always occupied throughout the years. The researcher has a keen interest in evaluating the implementation of the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support 2014 policy in the Lejweleputswa District. Figure 1.1 below shows the geographical demarcation of the research.

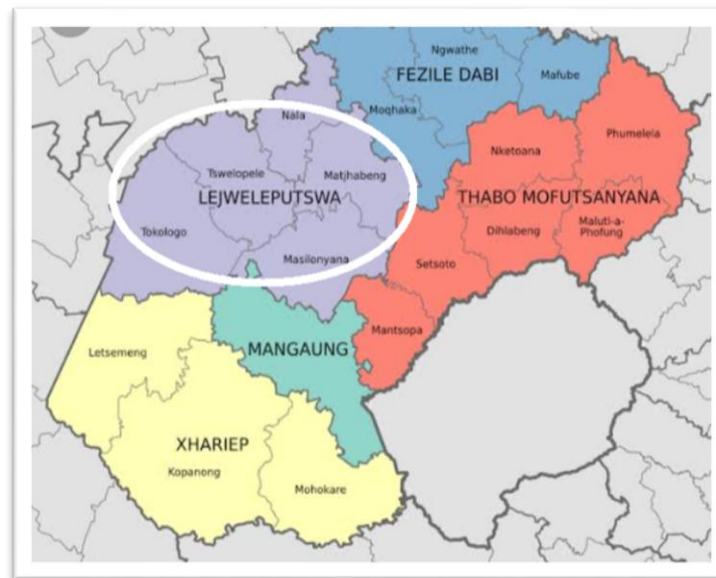


Figure 1.1: Map of Free State Province showing location of the Lejweleputswa District (Source: Google.com)

1.10 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

It is of outmost importance for a researcher to clarify the concepts that are going to be used frequently throughout the research process. This assists in demystifying instances of communication breakdown between the researcher and the reader that may be caused by ambiguity of concepts (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; Maree, 2016). In order to avoid any pragmatic breakdown, clarity is provided on the following concepts that are used frequently in the research, unless the context may imply otherwise.

1.10.1 Assess

This research contains one of the SIAS 2014 policy processes denoted by ‘A’ in the acronym. In this inclusive education policy, the assessment process is not fundamentally confined to the measurement of curriculum content mastered by learners, but it means the exploration of barriers to learning that are experienced by the learners. The assessment of barriers is done by an educator or school and/or the entire education system to grade the level or intensity of barriers within or around learners.

Bouwer (2016) describes the process of assessment as an act of focusing on how learners cope when a new or complex skill is being taught so that necessary adjustments can be made. In support of this viewpoint, Glazzard, Stokoe, Hughes, Netherwood and Nerve (2015) attest that the needs assessment includes the review of all available evidence such as the information about a learner’s personal, social and emotional development. This may also include establishing the nature of the intervention rendered for the learners about the needs they may experience.

For effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy, educators will assess the support needs of learners from time to time so that all learners, namely those who experience barriers to learning as well as those who do not, are able to access quality education. Assessment of barriers to learning that learners experience is discussed in Chapter Two (cf. 2.3.4).

1.10.2 Barrier to learning

A barrier to learning means an obstacle or something that prevents a learner from learning or militates learning to be effective. It refers to difficulties that arise within the education system as a whole, the learning site and/or within the learners themselves which prevent access to learning and development for learners (DoE, 2008; DBE, 2014; Swart & Pettipher, 2017).

Examples of barriers to learning include socioeconomic factors such as poverty and impairments that may be physical, cognitive, sensory, and/or developmental. Educators need to have a profound understanding of barriers to learning, not only for them to support learners who may be experiencing those barriers, but also for them to guard against aggravating such barriers with their performance at workplace. This research unpacks the nature of barriers which educators are likely to encounter among learners (cf. 2.3.2.1 – 2.3.2.4). This implies that educators should be able to identify learners who experience barriers to learning.

1.10.3 Identify

To ‘identify’ means to recognize a learning barrier that hinders effective learning from taking place. In this research the word ‘identify’ is one of the SIAS 2014 policy processes denoted by ‘I’ in the acronym. Educators embark on labelling and extrapolating the nature of barriers that are within a learner or around a learner and which interrupt the smooth learning process. Gargiulo and Metcalf (2013) stipulate that the identification of barriers by an educator involves assessing the available data from different sources that typically profile a learner’s strengths and needs. In the case of the SIAS 2014 policy implementation, educators examine completed Learner Profiles, the School Self Evaluation (SSE) tool, as well as interaction with parents and care-givers to gain knowledge that will assist them to determine the nature of the barriers that obstruct learners from effective learning. A detailed discussion on the concept of barrier identification is presented in Chapter Two (cf. 2.3.3). Besides identification, educators should be able to screen the presence or absence of specific barriers to learning.

1.10.4 Screening

Screening means testing for the presence or absence of a barrier to learning. In this research the word ‘screen’ is one of the SIAS 2014 policy processes denoted by the first ‘S’ in the acronym. The process involves having an entire class or school administratively checked (screened) to determine who among the learners is at risk of having a disability and who needs additional help (Taylor, Smiley & Richards, 2015). Screening also means gaining knowledge of and about a learner. This knowledge is held in high regard by acclaimed international associations such as

the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) which is acknowledged by Diener (2013). Knowledge about learners' learning development requires educators to understand patterns of their growth and development so that educators can adapt to and be responsive to individual variations (NAEYC in Deiner 2013). In the SIAS 2014 policy, the screening of barriers is conducted using a Learner Profile provided along with the policy document by a register educator. More of a discussion on the screening process is presented in Chapter Two (cf. 2.3.2). Educators and schools should provide support to all learners who experience barriers to learning.

1.10.5 Support

In this research the word 'support' is one of the SIAS 2014 policy processes denoted by the second 'S' in the acronym. Support of learners means a solution-focused process about identifying and addressing the individual needs of learners who require an additional teaching strategy or approach (Landsberg & Matthews, 2016). Support of learners who experience barriers to learning involves different approaches. These are all based on yielding a counter-effect to barriers. Educators need to explore as many approaches and strategies as there are differences in learners. Gargiulo and Metcalf (2013) also emphasise the need for educators to understand that supporting learners who experience barriers to learning starts with an individualised support plan in which educators may select a barrier which they wish to define and target for change by tracking, observing and measuring its frequency before teaching and reinforcing counter-barrier modes can be applied. Further discussion on this concept is found in Chapter Two (cf. 2.3.4).

1.10.6 SIAS 2014 Policy

The SIAS 2014 policy is a national education policy which focuses on the management and support of teaching and learning processes for learners who experience barriers to learning within the framework of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R –12 (DBE, 2014). The policy upholds human rights principles and promotes a shift from the traditional intervention model of 'fixing' what may be wrong with a learner who may be academically underperforming to a model of support of struggling learners by focusing on dealing with the barriers, not the

learner. A profound discussion on the policy rationale and principles, as well as its directives appears in Chapter Three.

1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE

In order to achieve the stated objectives, the report on the research will evolve as follows:

In Chapter One, an orientation to the research and the statement of the problem about the project will be covered.

Chapter Two determines the nature of the policy. A brief historical overview of the previous developments and initiatives that led to the gestation of the SIAS 2014 policy will be outlined. The exposition of the reasons for the gestation of the policy will be followed by an analysis of the content of the policy.

Chapter Three reviews literature on the Screening, Identifying, Assessment and Support of learners with learning barriers.

Chapter Four discusses the research design and methodology that have been implemented in this research.

Chapter Five presents analyses and interprets collected quantitative data.

Chapter Six presents, analyses and interprets collected qualitative data.

Chapter Seven presents the summarised findings and implications of the SIAS 2014. Before the conclusion and depending on the outcome of the study, possible recommendations will be made for the more effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy among the Lejweleputswa educators.

1.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter serves as a basis for the overall research project. Not only the aim and the statement of the problem have been presented, but also the research outline, the demarcation of the research area and a brief outline of the research methods. All these sections portray a vision and plan of the way in which the research objectives will be achieved in the subsequent chapters. The next chapter will focus on the nature of the SIAS policy. This will dwell on the historical

overview on the previous developments and initiatives that led to the gestation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The rationale for the gestation of the policy will be followed by an analysis of the content of the policy.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT POLICY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As stipulated by Ndou (2015), policy analysis helps the South African government to know which areas of the policy need to be amended so that quality education is delivered. This contains a discussion of the theoretical framework of the SIAS policy followed by an analysis of its context and content. Before the theoretical framework of the SIAS policy, it is essential to explain the beliefs and values that the researcher brings to this research.

The belief that emerged for me as the researcher in my role as a coordinator of SBST, SMT member and educator between the years 2013 and 2016 is similar to that of Stofile (2008), namely that having a policy that has clearly stipulated directives automatically guarantees that such a policy will yield the desired results. There were notable variations in the way inclusive education participants such as DBST, SMT, SBST members and educators disseminated, received, understood and implemented SIAS inclusive education policy. The researcher agrees with Stofile (2008) that effective policy implementation of a policy is not only dependent on its clear stipulations but also on other factors and conditions that impact significantly on it. The implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa District may not be an exception to the fact that the absence or presence of effective implementation that is yet to be discovered is a product of factors other than only the SIAS policy prescripts. The next section is a discussion of the theoretical framework of the SIAS 2014 policy.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT 2014 POLICY

The SIAS policy is based on the Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory which was first initiated in 1979 but later developed as recently as 2006 and 2009. The SIAS inclusive education policy adopts the Bronfenbrenner's ecosystem perspective which suggests a shift from locating barriers

within the learners to locating them in all the systems which form spheres of the existence of learners and which act as barriers to learning. These include the family, the school and aspects of community functioning (Hay in Stofile, 2008). The theory enables educators to be familiar with their learners' personal, social and academic world (Nel, Nel & Hugo, 2012). Schriver (2011) also confirms that the bioecological theory emphasises the need to understand human development by not focusing on an individual only but also examining the larger social ecology. In addition, Stofile (2008) argues that the belief that barriers may emanate from within a learner, school, home or community is based on the systems theory. The basic mentality of the systems theory is that people's actions are a result of multiple subconscious interactions of elements between or among systems. As a result, effective implementation of inclusive education policies requires an effective collaboration of all stakeholders (Stofile, 2008). Inclusive education calls for a paradigm shift from a confined view of a disability as a barrier only to a broader perspective of what type of support can be given to a learner with a disability and how that support can be delivered to counter effect of the intensity of the disability as a barrier (Department of Education, 2005b). The theory of Bronfenbrenner is also known as the process-person-context-time model (Swart & Pettipher, 2017). In the following paragraphs, the four levels of the bioecological model will be discussed.

The first level of the model is called proximal processes. Here human development takes place when there is interaction between the person and his or her environment. The interactive processes are presumed to lead to particular kinds of developmental outcomes as well as having the power for actualising genetic potential for effective functioning (Swart & Pettipher, 2017). A further example is given by Swart and Pettipher (2017) who refer to an instance of language and cultural differences between home and school.

The language and culture of home may be different from that of school. This difference that is said to result in anger, shame and low self-esteem in some parents and caregivers encourages the non-involvement of parents or caregivers and ultimately worsens the fact that they cannot assist their children with schoolwork. As a result, parents and children develop in opposite directions with little common ground in terms of culture, language and life experiences (Swart & Pettipher,

2017). The proximal processes seem to have an implication for SIAS policy implementation in Lejweleputswa.

The implication of proximal processes for SIAS implementation means that the prescripts of the SIAS policy need to accommodate instances of language and cultural differences between parents and learners who experience barriers to learning. The educators also need to be aware of these instances and administer care and support for the learners in a way that is not going to aggravate the situation. The study wishes to determine from the educators how the cultural differences of parents and learners are accommodated during the policy implementation. The second level of the bioecological theory that is closely related to the SIAS policy is the person characteristics which are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The person characteristics mean that every person brings certain biopsychological characteristics that influence proximal processes and their developmental outcomes. The three characteristics of person are demand characteristics, resource characteristics, and force characteristics.

The demand characteristics are features or attributes that provoke or discourage reactions from the social environment. They may influence the initial interactions because of the expectations formed immediately (Swart & Pettipher, 2017). Demand characteristics also bear implications for SIAS policy implementation as discussed below.

The Lejweleputswa educators may be influenced either positively or negatively by the features and attributes of learners who experience barriers to learning in their classes to either render support or condemn them. Similarly, a learner who experiences barriers to learning may be influenced by the attributes of their educators to either open up to supportive intervention or reject any form of support rendered. Educators in Lejweleputswa should be aware that learners have perceptions about them that may be facilitative or discouraging during the implementation of the SIAS policy. The major question at this stage is whether educators in Lejweleputswa are aware that their characteristics may influence barriers in learners to intensify or subside.

Apart from the demand characteristics of person characteristics, there are also resource characteristics. These characteristics mean that a lack of or the availability of resources influences the proximal processes. Resources such as skill, knowledge and experiences contribute to effective interactive processes (Swart & Pettipher, 2017). The implication of resource characteristics for SIAS policy implementation is equally important and is discussed below.

The Lejweleputswa educators need to embrace their teaching experience, skill and knowledge to facilitate effective implementation of SIAS. If the educators are not skilled and knowledgeable enough to implement SIAS policy, their efforts may be futile regarding the effective policy implementation process. This research needs to also determine whether the educators are aware that their skill or lack of skill in implementing the SIAS policy may render it either effective or ineffective. The last of the person characteristics to be discussed below is the force characteristics.

The force characteristics (also called dispositions) are forces that mobilise proximal processes and sustain their operation or conversely interfere with, limit or even prevent their occurrence (Swart & Pettipher, 2017). Force characteristics bear implications on effective SIAS policy implementation.

The District Based Support Team (DBST), School Management Team (SMT), School-Based Support Team (SBST), and School Governing Body (SGB) are examples of structural forces that can mobilise or immobilize processes of effective SIAS implementation. The unresponsive character of these structures to learners with barriers may cause educators to fail to sustain effective implementation of SIAS. This research shall have to find out which structural force in Lejweleputswa helps to sustain the functionality of SBSTs or causes SBSTs to be dysfunctional. Having discussed the second level of the bioecological theory, the next level to be discussed is the Environmental Systems level (also called Contexts or Ecological level).

The four levels of environmental systems that influence a person's development are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. An environment or social context is viewed as a set of nested structures in which each nest is contained inside the next nest, forming an interrelated interaction (Bronfenbrenner in Swart & Pettipher, 2017: 13). The nested systems are described as follows:

- In a microsystem, there is a person and activities that are intimate to them.
- In a mesosystem, there is a constant collaboration and interaction of the microsystems.
- The exosystem refers to forces that interact with those at mesosystem level to indirectly influence the activities at the microsystem level.
- The macrosystem refers to values and ideologies within the systems of a nation and which may be influenced by other systems (Nel *et al.*, 2012).

The implication of these levels of environmental systems on the SIAS policy implementation is discussed in the following paragraph.

Effective implementation of SIAS policy in Lejweleputswa should be found by this research to be maintaining the sovereignty of all the social contexts of learners' existence. All forms of support and intervention for learners who experience barriers to learning should ensure that no order at any context is disrupted or destabilized while attempting to address an identified barrier to learning. The last level of the bioecological theory is the chronosystems or time which is discussed next.

The notion of time is essential in the bioecological theory because all the interactive processes manifest outcomes that are a result of a short period or long period of time. This means that time brings about a big developmental change when there have been long-time (macrotime) interactive processes. Similarly, short-time (microtime) interactive processes may yield a small outcome as well. The implications of this aspect on the SIAS policy implementation are discussed below.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) needs to invest more time in initiating educators to SIAS policy and how it should be implemented. Failure to train educators thoroughly and

monitor the policy implementation may mean there will not be effective implementation taking place or worse still; the policy may not even be implemented. Similarly, educators need to understand that some identified barriers in the learners or in their environments are a result of a long-time manifestation and therefore may require more patience to address. The following section provides an analysis of the SIAS 2014 policy.

2.2.1 Policy analysis

Policy analysis is an exploration of aspects such as rationale, principles and directives in a public policy that qualifies such a policy to be regarded a policy. In a public policy, the impact of the factors on the environment affecting the policy is explored (Zondi in Ndou, 2015). In order to evaluate the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy effectively in Lejweleputswa, the rationale, principles and directives of the policy are explored together with the language of the policy, the assumptions of the policy as well as the silences and omissions in the policy.

The policy rationale

The policy states that the rationale of the policy is based on four aspects. According to Chapter Two Section 3(1) of the SIAS 2014 policy, the first rationale is based on promoting the principles of White Paper 6 by focusing on overcoming barriers in the education system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs (DBE, 2014). The implication here is that even if an educator who is to implement the SIAS policy is not sure of the principles of the White Paper 6, such an educator needs to understand that the major focus of the policy is to overcome the barriers that prevent learning from taking place. In an ideal situation, the barriers implied here are those that educators may identify in learners or in the learners' environments.

However, one of the key barriers in the education system which may render any policy ineffective, including the SIAS, is the incompetence of the people who are entrusted with the effective implementation of the policy. The first step towards effective implementation of the

SIAS policy can only be confirmed when the first-line implementers at schools (primary and secondary school educators in this case) understand the rationale of the policy which they are entrusted to implement. In this research it is important to establish whether the Lejweleputswa educators understand the rationale of the SIAS policy about learning barriers (cf. 4.5.1.2).

The second rationale in Chapter Two Section 4(1) of the policy is the commitment of South Africa to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities about zero rejection of learners on the basis of their disability in all schools. Educators need to have a thorough understanding of what disability entails and what the implications are for accommodating learners with disabilities. Since the policy is based on zero rejection of learners with disability, the implication is that this research needs to establish whether educators in Lejweleputswa understand what disability is and what it is not. The District Based Support Team (DBST) had to be consulted to find out how much training is rendered to educators about what disability is or is not as well as how educators are trained to accommodate learners with disabilities. Furthermore, the research also needs to establish from School Management Team (SMT) members and School Governing Body (SGB) members the extent to which learners with disabilities are not rejected at schools through accommodative policies (cf. 4.5.1.2).

Section 5 of Chapter Two of the SIAS policy is also based on the rationale of addressing barriers to learning and development. This rationale paves way to the support of learners who experience barriers to learning by all stakeholders in the education system. Examples of barriers outlined in Section 5(2) of Chapter Two of the policy include socio-economic aspects such as poverty; factors that place learners at risk, such as physical, emotional and sexual abuse; political violence; and attitudes. It is necessary to know how these barriers are addressed by subject educators who have only been trained to deliver subject content. Factors such as poverty are much broad and emanate from many variables which also have several dynamics. Implementation of the SIAS policy is aimed at addressing such barriers in a school set-up. The basic question is how educators in Lejweleputswa address barriers in the academic lives of learners so that such learners are able to access quality education (cf. 4.5.1.2). The following section analyses the principles of SIAS 2014 policy.

The policy principles

The organising principles for the SIAS process acknowledge that every learner has a right to receive reasonable accommodation in an inclusive setting and that decisions about the child should be in his or her best interests at all times (Chapter three Section 7(3)). Ideally this means that those making decisions about a learner who needs to be accommodated need to consider what the learner says, suggests and feels about how accommodation can be conducted. Educators are often not very young therefore they can readily rationalise about matters and participate in plans in which they were consulted and about which their views are held in high regard. The educators in Lejweleputswa need to be consulted to find out how this organising principle is upheld during the implementation of the SIAS policy.

Chapter three Section 8(1) indicates that support should no longer focus only on the diagnosis and remediation of deficits in individual learners through individual attention by specialist staff, as had been the case before South African democratic era. The SIAS shifts the focus to a holistic approach where a whole range of possible barriers to learning that a learner may experience is considered. The support principles are aimed at designing support programmes in such a way that every learner gains access to learning in his or her own home environment. This implies that educators in Lejweleputswa need to understand that the policy presents a shift from an old clinical model of support to the new one that emphasises human rights. Effective implementation of the SIAS policy by phase educators in Lejweleputswa must reflect this holistic approach to support rendered.

Assessment principles referred to in the SIAS policy do not refer to assessment of learner scholastic achievement, but to assessment that determines the barriers to learning and level of functioning and participation to determine support needs. Educators, parents and learners need to be centrally involved in the assessment process. The interest of the researcher concerning this principle is on how learners of Lejweleputswa are involved during the assessment of barriers in the SIAS processes. The following section provides an analysis on how the SIAS 2014 policy should be implemented.

2.2.2 Policy implementation

Sultana (2008) views educational policy implementation as a process of mutual adaptation, with implementers (educators) trying to make sense of – and manage – the demands made by policymakers in an attempt to reconcile them with their personal and professional world views. This means that Lejweleputswa educators would not simply read the SIAS policy, but in order for them to implement it effectively, they need to actively interpret the changes that they are expected to put into place. The next paragraph focuses on how a policy can be effectively implemented.

Stofile (2008) acknowledges that effective policy implementation is normally explored from two different theoretical perspectives, namely the top-down and bottom-up models. The top-down approach was developed by Pressman and Wildavsky in 1973 while the bottom-up approach was devised by Hanf, Hjern and Porter date back to 1978.

2.2.2.1 Factors that promote policy implementation

The top-down model of policy implementation advocates that for effective policy implementation to take place, a linear process unfolds as follows:

- Establishing implementation structures;
- Designing a programme that incorporates task sequences and clear statements of objectives;
- Developing performance standards;
- Building in monitoring and control devices to ensure that the programme proceeds as intended (Stofile 2008: 38).

From the above-listed processes of top-down model of effective implementation, it is clear that the model promotes centralized power of control. For policy to be effectively implemented, the policy makers at the top position ensure that all role players have a clear mandate of their sphere of sovereignty. They also ensure then that quality of implementation is of a set acceptable

standard according to the designed tool(s) of control and monitoring. When relating the top-down model to the focus of this research, what comes in the main is the fact that the Department of Basic Education entrusts the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy to the educators, SBST and DBST. The process of screening, identifying and assessing the learning barriers experienced by the learners and then supporting such learners is the programme that has been established at the top by the department policy designers. The performance indicators during the SIAS implementation as well as the tools for controlling and monitoring the implementation are both the prescripts of the top structure which is the DBE. However, other theorists do not regard the top-down model as an ideal way of policy implementation. They rather opt for the bottom-up model which is discussed in the next paragraph.

The bottom-up model emphasises that effective policy implementation starts by mapping the network of actors in the actual field where implementation is to take place and asks them about their goals, strategies, activities, and contact persons (Elmore in Stofile, 2008). The proponents of this model dismiss the idea of central control. The stance of these theorists is that effective implementation relies on the competency and skill of the implementers more than on the officials, whose role is largely to monitor and control the implementation process.

In simple terms, the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy does not depend on the clarity of the policy directives but on the competence of the educators who are at the bottom level of implementation. If the educators are able to screen the barriers in the learners competently and identify the type(s) of learning barriers experienced by the learners as well as assessing the needs of such learners, then such educators are not likely to experience difficulty in supporting such learners or even in requesting an intervention from SBST and DBST for more intensified support. The top structures, which in this case may be the district and provincial support teams, will only then be advised by the implementers (educators) on what seems to work and what does not for the effective implementation. As much as the two models discussed above have proponents and critics, there are factors that hinder their effective implementation as discussed below.

2.2.2.2 Factors that hinder policy implementation

As has been stated in chapter one, the purpose of this research is to evaluate the implementation of the SIAS 2014 inclusive education policy in Lejweleputswa schools. This paragraph aims to outline the factors that may be causative agents of an inclusive education policy's ineffective implementation at school level. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and MIET Africa (2014) note that a compromise on the culture, policies and the practices of a school may cause an inclusive education policy implementation to be ineffective.

i School culture

Developing an inclusive school culture means promoting those things which the school holds in high esteem and which are also noticeable to the surrounding community. A non-inclusive school culture is believed to be the foundation to having a school where any policy implementation that is inclusive will not be effective. The following negative cultural practices in a school are a checklist for ineffective implementation of an inclusive education policy in a school:

- No degree of welcoming signs in a school.
- Learners do not help each other.
- Staff does not collaborate with each other.
- Staff and learners do not treat each other with respect.
- There is no partnership between teachers and caregivers.
- Staff and SGB do not work well together.
- Not all local communities are involved in the school.
- The school does not have inclusive values (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education & MIET Africa, 2014: 29)

On the same note, Stofile (2008) also acknowledges that socio-cultural factors influence policy implementation. The inclusive education policy, like any other education policy, depends on parents' involvement and participation.

However, it has been established that there are some cultural tendencies of segregating women from intensive participation in such profound social matters as education and its related dynamics. In such cultures where the role of women is that of an inferior nature, these women often have low self-esteem and tend to lack confidence in themselves (Cloete, in Stofile, 2008).

ii School policies

The policies of a school are vital in formally defining what the school does and does not believe in as well as what it aims to achieve. A school policy also pronounces the intensity of commitment of the school in protecting what it holds in high regard. In other words, a school that has to implement an inclusive education policy such as SIAS 2014 policy effectively will have its inclusive intention implied in the policy aim and goal. Even if a school policy is aimed at being inclusive, if such a policy has some or all of the following aspects, it is likely to be ineffective:

- South Africa Does not ensure that the advocacy of the policy reaches out to all stakeholders in the community;
- Does not facilitate the participation and learning of all learners;
- Does not reduce the pressure to exclude learners for disciplinary reasons;
- Does not increase the school's capacity to respond to many types of learners and uphold their right to a quality education; and
- Does not ensure that support is coordinated (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education & MIET Africa, 2014: 52)

Apart from the list above relating to the school policies contributing to ineffective policy implementation, daily school practices can also contribute to ineffective policies in the manner discussed below.

iii School practices

Certain school practices can also have a limiting factor on the effective implementation of policies. Ladbrook (2009) attests that policy implementation limiting factors are prevalent at macro, meso and micro levels. Since the focus of the research is on the limiting factors at school

level which is the micro level, this paragraph only focuses on presenting such practices at micro level. Six limiting factors have been identified as follows:

- Lack of training of educators to implement inclusive education policies causing them to struggle without knowledge and skills;
- An inadequate infrastructure at school that can facilitate the smooth implementation endeavours;
- A negative learning climate caused by poverty and emotional deprivation at school;
- Stress factors inhibiting job fulfilment;
- Negative attitudes; and
- Lack of parent and community involvement (Ladbrook, 2009)

Moreover, regarding the negative school practices, educators should consider the following checklist when determining how inclusive the practices of a school are:

- Is teaching planned with all learners in mind?
- Do lessons encourage the participation of all learners?
- Are learners actively involved in their learning?
- Does homework contribute to the learning of all learners?
- Do all learners take part in activities outside the classroom?
- Do teachers plan, teach and review in teams?
- Does the assessment that is done help learners achieve?
- Is classroom discipline based on mutual respect?
- Is the staff's expertise fully utilised?
- Does staff develop resources that support learning and participation?
- Does staff know about and use resources in the community? (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education & MIET Africa, 2014: 69).

From the above checklist, it becomes clear that school practices have a role to play in facilitating policy implementation or hindering policy implementation. A school that may be found in this research to be effectively implementing the SIAS 2014 policy will surely be the one checking the

above-mentioned aspects and also having good networking relations with the policy implementation structures at meso and macro levels. It is therefore the intention to find out from the SBST and DBST members of Lejweleputswa whether the ineffective implementation of SIAS 2014 policy that may be prevalent may be a result of any of the identified hindrance factors above. At this juncture, it is important to explore the contextual analysis of the SIAS policy.

2.3 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE POLICY

The concept of context analysis of policy means exploring the events that led to the gestation of a policy. This is also confirmed by Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, and Henry (1997) who state that the pressures and antecedents leading to the gestation of policy include the contemporary aspects which could be economical, social and political. In this section, the developments that caused the SIAS 2014 policy to be promulgated will be discussed.

Preface

The history of inclusive education policy dates back to the pre-democratic era in South Africa. The medical deficit model or within-child model was commonly applied. This is a model that views a learner as a patient who is deficient in a particular aspect of learning life and so becomes treated for such illness until the deficit is remedied. Alternatively, the learner is removed from a local school set-up to a special school set-up that has been established for learners with the same deficit. In this model, learners were identified as having special educational needs and were therefore referred to centres which were hoped would find out “what is wrong” with people and “fix” them (Swart & Pettipher, 2017) This model was highly criticized, not only for its labelling approach, but also for the fact that in South Africa, only the white minority group could benefit from this educational service while the majority of black learners living in rural areas were left unaided.

The democratic era in South Africa marked the beginning of a paradigm shift in education policy from both the “special” and “general” education system to an education system that is able to identify and address learning diversity and needs among all learners. The following legal

documents have created the necessary policy and legislation to facilitate a paradigm shift to inclusive education in the early years:

- The White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1995) which discusses the importance of addressing the needs of learners with special needs in both special and mainstream schools;
- South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996) which calls for all public schools to admit all learners without unfair discrimination and ensure that the learners achieve academically and develop holistically;
- The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (Republic of South Africa, 1997) which recommends specific action that will ensure that people with disability are able to access the same rights as any other citizen in South Africa (Swart & Pettipher, 2017: 19; Stofile, 2008: 2).

The above-mentioned documents also gave way to the following legal documents related to or about inclusive education:

- The National Commission on Special Educational Needs and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCSNET/NCESS) Report (Department of Education, 1997), which laid the foundation of what the terms *special needs* and *education support* mean as well as identifying barriers that lead to the inability of the education system to accommodate diversity;
- The Consultative Paper No. 1 on Special Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 1999), which was largely based on the recommendations of the NCSNET/NCESS advocated inclusion based on the principle that learning disabilities arise from the education system rather than the learner.

Having stated the above-mentioned legal documents as having created the necessary policy and legislation to facilitate a paradigm shift to inclusive education in the early years, now it is time to discuss the historical background of the SIAS policy as an inclusive education policy.

2.3.1 Historical background

The White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1995), the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996), the White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (Republic of South Africa, 1997), and the NCSNET/NCESS report are all legal frameworks based on international human rights agreements, such as the Salamanca Statement which supports the development of an education system that recognises a wide range of diverse needs and ensures a wide range of appropriate responses (UNESCO in Stofile, 2008). After 1994 the South African government was committed to translate principles articulated in the South African Constitution into educational policies and legal frameworks. These principles include education as a basic human right, quality education for all, equity and redress, the right of choice, curriculum entitlement, and the rights of parents (Muthukrishna & Schoeman in Stofile, 2008).

It was after the release of the Consultative Paper No. 1 that the first inclusive education policy was promulgated. This was the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001a). The principles of the policy have already been outlined in Chapter One. The policy identifies the development of classroom educators as a human resource as one of its initial steps towards building an inclusive education. Educators are regarded as the primary resource for achieving the goal of inclusive education and training. The policy further acknowledges that educators need to improve their skills and knowledge, and develop new ones (Department of Education, 2001a). With regard to the SIAS policy, the above-mentioned provision of the Education White Paper 6 can be regarded as a forewarning that the SIAS 2014 policy will only be effectively implemented if educators, including those of Lejweleputswa (as targeted by the research), are skilled and knowledgeable in implementing the policy. Therefore, the ability of the educators to screen, identify, assess barriers, and then support learners with barriers is imperative for realising the inclusive education. Even though the White Paper 6 was the first initiative of the democratic government to open quality education access to all learners of South Africa who were experiencing barriers to learning irrespective of their racial groups, there were still some serious challenges threatening the realisation of inclusive education in South Africa. Therefore, the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support was introduced in 2008.

It is interesting to note that before the introduction of the SIAS 2014, there was the SIAS Strategy which was introduced in 2008 with the aim of correcting the process of identifying, assessing and providing programmes for all learners requiring additional support in order to enhance participation and inclusion (DoE, 2008). The Strategy has identified five serious challenges that were prevalent in the education system of South Africa at the time the Strategy was promulgated. Such challenges have been outlined in Chapter One (cf. 1.6.2), but it is important to closely examine the third and fourth of the listed challenges because they closely relate to the aim of this research.

The third and fourth challenges identified are a lack of a system of rigorous assessment and identification to ensure a consistent process of screening, identification and referral of learners into special schools; and lack of involvement of educators, parents and learners in the assessment process. These challenges were to be addressed by the SIAS 2008 Strategy so that there would not be inconsistency in the process of screening, identification and referral of learners into special schools and there would be involvement of educators, parents and learners in the assessment process. The SIAS 2008 policy explicitly outlined the stages of the Strategy in the following manner:

- Stage 1 - Gain background information on the learner.
- Stage 2 – Identify barriers to learning and development.
- Stage 3 – Establish levels of support and an action plan with a “support package”.
- Stage 4 – Action planning for provision and monitoring of additional support (Department of Education, 2008: 10).

The four stages above are similar to the SIAS 2014 policy stages. Therefore, the next paragraphs of this research will explore what each stage entails and the literature related to such stages. But before the discussion of the stages it is necessary to mention that of all the stages to be discussed, the Stage 1 covers most of the remaining space of this chapter as it is the most profound of them all for reasons which will later be discussed.

2.3.2 Stage 1 - Gain background information on the learner

Stage 1 represents the screening phase. By screening the barriers in a learner, an educator would gain the background information on the learner by filling in a learner profile for each learner to determine whether a learner has been noted as experiencing barriers to learning in their previous grades. The SIAS 2014 Learner Profile provisions will be discussed later in Chapter Three (cf. 3.2) but at this juncture the focus is on the nature of barriers that can be prevalent in a learner or in his or her life.

Factors that can act as barriers to learning can be classified as either intrinsic barriers or extrinsic barriers (Nel *et al.*, 2012). The Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education and MIET Africa (2014) further group extrinsic barriers as systemic, societal, and pedagogic in addition to the intrinsic barriers.

As has been established in Section 2.2 earlier in this chapter that educators are to focus the screening process not only on the barriers within the learners but also on their environment according to the theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979), namely the bioecological model, the researcher intends to explore relevant literature from the inclusive education approach which is human rights based. In this way, the researcher believes the bioecological model will have been applied appropriately because all factors within and outside a learner will have been explored.

Anything that prevents effective learning from taking place is considered a barrier (Nel *et al.*, 2012). This is done by way of systematically asking questions about that person or any entity in order to select from the responses what might yield a clue to the enquiry established about that person or entity. The following paragraphs are an exploration of screening of systemic, societal, pedagogic, and intrinsic barriers that may hamper effective learning from taking place, including in Lejweleputswa. To start with, the next paragraph will discuss the process of screening the above-mentioned types of barriers.

2.3.2.1 Screening of systemic barriers to learning

Systematic barriers entail obstacles emanating from the education system which may prevent effective learning from taking place. These barriers include policy and curriculum issues,

overcrowded classrooms, school buildings that are not wheelchair-friendly, lack of textbooks, and unqualified educators (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education & MIET Africa, 2014). Barriers in the education system may exist at any level and can potentially influence a learner's academic life at microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem levels (as advocated by the bioecological model discussed in Section 2.2 above). Since it has already been indicated in Chapter One (cf. 1.4) that the purpose of this research is to evaluate the implementation of SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa schools by educators, the focus of discussion in the next paragraphs will largely be on the school as a microsystem.

Unlike the directive of the SIAS 2014 policy where barriers are screened by one educator using a tool such as a learner profile only, systemic barriers may have to be discovered by a structure(s) within an education system by conducting an enquiry into a particular phenomenon within the system. An example of screening in a microsystem can be drawn from a school set-up where structures such as the SMT, SBST, SGB, subjects departments and or a school academic committee may each screen the barriers in their individual sphere of sovereignty. For example, while the SMT can screen the barriers within the school management that may be a cause for ineffective learning, the SBST, on the other hand, can screen the barriers within their coordination boundaries that also contribute to the ineffective learning at school. This may be the case with all other structures. As can be observed, all systems within the school will be conducting their own systemic screening of barriers which impact on effective learning in a school system. The process of systemic screening of barriers is also evident in the implementation of the School Self Evaluation (SSE) which is a facet of the National Policy on Whole-School Evaluation (DoE, 2001b) explained in the paragraph.

SSE is a policy that calls for all schools to evaluate their areas of strengths and weaknesses annually on a rating scale so that a school improvement plan may be drawn up for those areas that score less than the acceptable rating. It is therefore necessary to focus the enquiry on Lejweleputswa educators regarding the screening of the discussed barriers to determine whether the following aspects exist in their respective schools:

- They understand what systemic barriers are;

- There are some systemic barriers that they have noticed which affect the learning of learners in their schools;
- The School Self Evaluation (SSE) or the Subject Improvement Plan (SIP) in their schools are used to screen systemic barriers that influence the learning of learners in their schools; and
- The information on the Learner Profile is detailed enough for them to understand the systemic barriers that exist in their schools and which affect the learning of learners (cf. 4.5.1.2).

The next paragraph discusses the screening of societal barriers.

2.3.2.2 Screening of societal barriers to learning

Societal barriers are factors such as poverty, violence, crime, and the impact of HIV and AIDS which effect negatively on educational access, retention and achievement. Screening societal barriers may not necessarily be conducted in a formal one-on-one interaction or be dependent on what is written about a particular society; but it largely calls for the screener to personally know or live within the particular society interactively. Educators who are conversant with the social backgrounds of learners may be in a better position to understand the societal issues that affect learners because they have first-hand knowledge of how the particular society lives. Tinto in Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Moolla, and Sylvester (2014) justifies the importance of screening societal barriers by stating that understanding the family context of learners helps institutions to configure support programmes effectively for diverse learner situations and populations.

On the same note, Howe and Lisi (2017) emphasise that educators must develop a deep knowledge about the socioeconomic status or social classes from which learners come because such screening impacts on the educational access of learners. They further attest that research shows that learners from lower socioeconomic classes have higher dropout rates and slower acquisition of academic skills than learners from other socioeconomic classes. Furthermore, learners who are raised in homes in which parents are unemployed, homeless, or working may find themselves accepting their class status and believing that their lifestyles are not alterable.

The implied idea at this juncture is that for effective SIAS policy implementation stage of screening, Lejweleputswa educators should ensure that they do not only understand the societal background of the learners they screen, but also deduce from the responses given on the Learner Profile about family background of any learner the societal barriers that may affect the learning of such learners. From the above discussion, it therefore becomes necessary to find out from the Lejweleputswa educators whether:

- they understand what societal barriers are;
- there are some societal barriers that they have noticed which affect the learning of learners in their schools;
- they find the information on Learner Profiles detailed enough for them to understand the societal barriers that exist in their learners' social environment; and
- the underperforming, misbehaving and or dropping out learners in their schools are those who are mostly affected by societal barriers (cf. 4.5.1.2).

The next paragraph discusses the screening of pedagogic barriers.

2.3.2.3 Screening of pedagogic barriers to learning

Pedagogic barriers relate largely to inappropriate teaching or methods of assessments to which learners are subjected. Barriers of this nature neither emanate from society nor the educational system; they are profoundly caused by a lack of educators' competence to teach and assess learners. Sousa (2007) indicates that nowadays learners get information from many different sources and are surrounded by media such as cell phones, multiple televisions, movies, computers, video games, e-mail, and the Internet. As a result, their young brains have responded to the technology by changing their functioning and organisation to accommodate the large amount of stimulation occurring in their environment. Hence many learners regard school as a monotonous place compared to what other places offers them. The changing brain response of learners today does not mean learners have a learning barrier but it may simply be a cry for a change of traditional ways of teaching to a more stimulating interesting one.

Sousa (2007) also suggests that educators must rethink what they do in classrooms because there may be instances where learners are wrongly referred to special schools not because they have learning difficulties but because the school has not yet adapted to their changing brains. As has been stated earlier in this paragraph, pedagogic barriers do not lie within a learner but they are in the inappropriate teaching or assessment. The next paragraph aims to elaborate on how these barriers can be noted.

The SSE instrument can best serve as a starting point for educators to establish whether their teachings and assessments tasks pose barriers to learning. Part C of the SSE instrument requires schools to evaluate the quality of teaching, amongst other aspects, by checking the IQMS files, educator files, learner work books and assessment records, monitoring and control records, and by lesson observation. By screening all these, a school will determine whether Criterion 1.2 (Creation of Positive Learning Environment) is or is not fulfilled by focusing on the 1.2.4 Indication which measures the ability of the educator to manage diversity in the classroom by acknowledging and catering for different forms of diversity in that particular classroom (DoE, 2001b). The two lowest rating scores on the criterion are said to need improvement and urgent development of such educators whose teaching would be under SSE process.

Apart from the SSE, Tomlinson (2014) also notes that a pedagogic barrier exists when an educator does not know what should basically be acquired as knowledge, understanding and skill in a learning activity for learners. Therefore, such lessons may not stimulate learners to have understanding of the basics of the content they are learning. Screening of pedagogic barriers can also be related to the SIAS policy implementation as it is highlighted in the paragraphs to follow.

At this juncture it may be clear that even for the effective implementation of the SIAS policy in Lejweleputswa, the educators would still be expected to evaluate their teaching and assessment processes. This can be achieved by conducting SSE and or IQMS (discussed in Chapter One) whereby educator performance is measured and scored on a rating scale to get a clear indication of whether their teaching and assessment strategies pose barriers to smooth learning in their classrooms. The importance of measuring the performance of educators and providing feedback about their teaching is supported by studies which prove that receiving feedback of the

measurement and scores is helpful in improving learner performance (Gueldner & Merrell, 2010). The two implications this point are firstly, the need for the SMT to provide and discuss the SSE and IQMS feedback with relevant educators in order to develop their teaching competence and improve learner performance; and secondly, the need for the record of findings and scores to be made readily available for SBST to verify the reliability of referrals made by educators to the SBST for learners who are thought to be having learning barriers. For this reason, it may be debatable whether the role of SBST in schools is effectively carried out during internal referrals between educators in Lejweleputswa and their respective SBSTs and between the SMT and the SBST for information sharing and accessibility of crucial records that relate to educator performance and competence. It is assumed that most of the learners who are referred to the SBST by educators in Lejweleputswa for the SBST intervention (based, for example, on such learners' underperformance, behaviour or any unwanted outcome) could possibly not have any barriers; rather, the barriers might be lying with the incompetent educators' way of teaching and assessing.

Similarly, if an SBST acts upon a request from an educator for intervention without first checking with the SMT the trend of that educator's rating scores on his or her quality of teaching, then it means the SBST would not be competent enough to ensure that learners who have been screened as experiencing learning barriers are indeed the rightful ones. It is imperative therefore to establish from SBSTs whether the following instances occur:

- The SBST understands what pedagogic barriers are;
- The SBST consults with the relevant SMT member who is the supervisor of the educator who has made a referral of a learner to check the records of that educator's competence and efficiency in managing diversity in his or her classroom so as to ensure that the referral is reliable; and
- The SBST develops educators regarding pedagogic barriers through in-house workshops (cf. 4.5.1.2).

As can be observed, the screening of all types of barriers discussed so far in this section cannot be located within a learner even though each may affect learning. Not only a learner should be regarded as a bearer of learning barriers; but the education system, society and pedagogy can also bear barriers to learning. While the screening of learning barriers should never exclude these

barriers, it is equally important to explore barriers that are located in a learner: these are called intrinsic barriers.

2.3.2.4 Screening of intrinsic barriers to learning

Intrinsic barriers refer to conditions within a learner which act as obstacles towards effective learning taking place. Often learners who experience intrinsic barriers have been born with such conditions. These include sensory impairments such as visual and hearing impairments and various forms of physical impairments including cerebral palsy and neurological conditions such as epilepsy (DoE in Nel *et al.*, 2012). Educators also need to be aware of intrinsic barriers to learning so that they can render the necessary support to such learners. Donald, Lazarus and Moolla (2014) maintain that learning disabilities should not be viewed in the same cluster of barriers such as communication difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and specific learning difficulties. While a learning disability refers to conditions that generally have some clearly identifiable basis such as physical, sensory, neurological and intellectual disabilities, learning difficulties do not always have a clearly identifiable basis, and are more subject to different interpretations in different social contexts.

However, most learning difficulties can be addressed in a regular classroom. Figure 2.1 below is an illustrative differentiation between learning disabilities and learning difficulties as viewed by Donald *et al.* (2014). It is imperative for educators to understand this distinction so as to avoid confusing the nature of support that should be rendered to learners according to the barriers they experience. For example, the barriers in a learner having a physical disability that affects mobility may not be similar to the barriers in a learner who has an intellectual disability. In as much as both learners have intrinsic barriers, they each need to have the barriers in them treated differently. It is important to distinguish between learning disabilities and learning difficulties as both facets of intrinsic barriers are relevant for Lejweleputswa educators in implementing the SIAS policy. The following paragraphs are a brief outline of the basic characteristics of the two facets of intrinsic barriers (Donald *et al.*, 2014).with which the educators should be familiar.

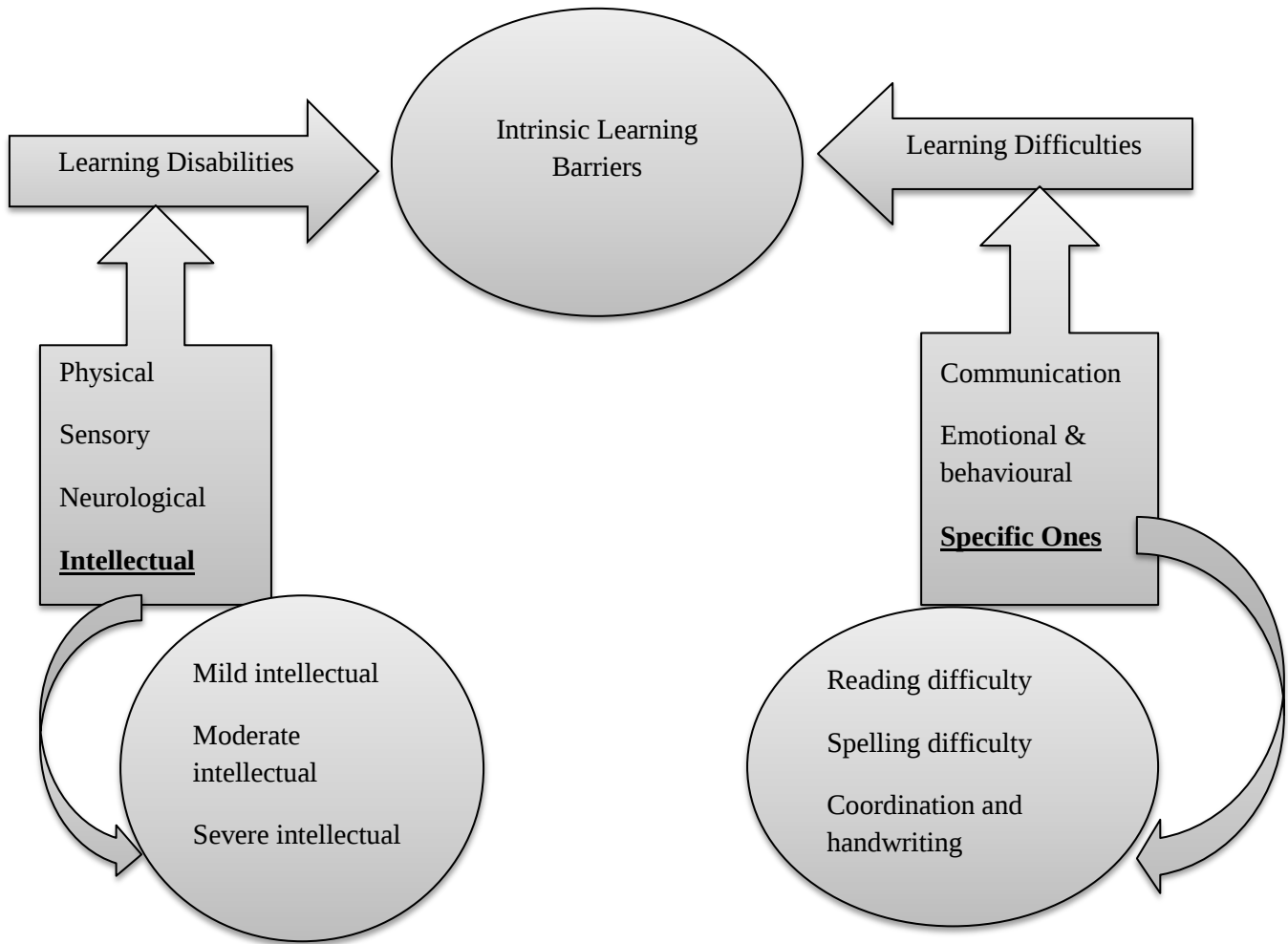


Figure 2.1: Differentiation between learning disabilities and learning difficulties (Source: Donald *et al.*, 2014).

▪ Learning disabilities

Learning disabilities can be characterised in many ways, ranging from visual, hearing, neurological and intellectual ones. The prime motive of this paragraph is to justifiably convey ideas of different academics who emphasise that educators need to be conversant with disabilities that may act as barriers to the learning of learners in their classrooms. Causes of physical disabilities affecting mobility and the use of hands are more common in disadvantaged social contexts than in more advantaged contexts, usually through lack of adequate health and safety measures in the communities concerned. It is further argued that visual and hearing disabilities fall under sensory disabilities. Visual disabilities range from total blindness through varying degrees of loss of vision while hearing disabilities range from total deafness through

varying degrees of hearing loss; but where the condition is not severe, educators have to cater for all the needs of such learners. Improper identification of these barriers by educators tends to subject such learners to being labelled as being stubborn, naughty, or inattentive. The most common neurological disabilities include cerebral palsy and epilepsy. The former is due to permanent damage to the cerebral cortex of the brain and the latter is because of damage to different areas of the brain. On the other hand, intellectual disability involves problems experienced by learners in understanding, remembering, reasoning, and other higher cognitive functions. The disability ranges from mild or moderate to severe intellectual disability (Deiner, 2013; Drake, 2014; Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2013; Glazzard, Stokoe, Hughes, Netherwood & Nerve, 2015; Pierangelo & Giuliani, 2009).

i Learning difficulties

As in the case of learning disabilities, the researcher also concurs with the proponents of the need for educators to be familiar with learning difficulties that may be experienced by learners beforehand so that they may plan an effective teaching and learning atmosphere for all learners. Learning difficulties experienced by learners are said to include communication and emotional and behavioural issues, while specific difficulties entail reading, spelling, coordination and handwriting, and mathematical difficulties.

Many inclusive education theorists attest that learning difficulties can be characterised as difficulties in communication and these range from language development difficulties to speech production difficulties. Difficulties in language development may be inclusive of all elements of receptive and expressive language which entail discriminating speech sounds, understanding word structure and grammar, understanding word meaning, making sounds adequately, using adequate word structure and grammar, and using adequate word meaning (Evers & Spencer, 2011; Howel, 2007; Lundy & Swartz, 2011). Theorists such as Wicks-Nelson and Israel further group the emotional and behavioural difficulties into internalising reactions (turned inwards) and

externalising reactions (directed outwards) by suggesting that internalising reactions by learners may include psychological conditions such as depression, grief, withdrawn or dependent behaviour, anxiety, eating disorders, petty stealing, lying, and avoiding behaviour (Donald *et al.*, 2014). Externalising reactions, on the other hand, include patterns of under-socialised behaviour. Learners portraying under-socialised behaviour tend to be aggressive, destructive, or cruel, as well as lying, and behaving defiantly. Such learners often appear to lack a sense of social morality or conscience. Patterns of inappropriately socialised behaviour involve instances of a learner growing up in a family and sub-culture that have rejected ways of behaving that are generally upheld in the wider community or society as a whole. The behaviour of such learners may conform to that of the families and peer-groups to which they belong but may often come into conflict with the school, the law, or other social institutions. Hence the need for institutions such as schools to have systems in place that are meant to address the learning needs of such learners (Deiner, 2013; Drake, 2014; Taylor, Smiley & Richards, 2015).

From the intrinsic barriers discussed above, it can be concluded that barriers within a learner may be so complex that even screening of such barriers may need an educator who clearly understands such barriers to avoid misinformed identification which will then lead to wrong support strategies. The study therefore endeavoured to determine how much educators know about intrinsic barriers by asking whether they can draw a clear distinction between a learning disability and a learning difficulty (cf. 4.5.1.2). The next step is a discussion about the second step of SIAS which is identification.

2.3.3 Stage 2 – Identify barriers to learning and development

In Stage 1 of SIAS discussed earlier, types of barriers were examined of which educators implementing the SIAS policy need to have a sound knowledge. This second stage is characterised by an educator's identifying the screened barriers which prevent the learner from accessing quality education. The identification at this stage is only limited to those learners for whom the screening stage raised the concern of the educator. The identification of barriers in the SIAS 2014 policy is guided by a form known as Special Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1). The

details and provisions of the SNA 1 will be reviewed later in Chapter Three. Currently the focus is on the identification of barriers as advocated by other academic theorists.

Carkhuff (2009) regards anyone who endeavours to identify needs in the lives of others with a purpose of bringing about an intervention as a helper while anyone who experiences the need for intervention is a helpee. Educators identifying barriers in the academic lives of learners can therefore be referred to as helpers while learners experiencing barriers are helpees. The first skill of identifying barriers by helpers is called 'attending'. This basic skill of attending involves attending physically, observing and listening. In other words, educators need to attend to the barriers in the screened learners in order to foster the following ideals:

- Attending involves communicating an undivided attentiveness to the helpee;
- Attending serves to focus the helper's observing and listening skills upon the helpee's verbal and behavioural expressions of their experiences; and
- Attending also serves to communicate an intense interest in the experiences of the helpee, thereby motivating them to become involved in the helping process (Carkhuff, 2009: 39)

These ideals are elaborated upon as follows:

i Attending involves communicating an undivided attentiveness to the helpee

In the context of the SIAS 2014 policy implementation, in order for educators to appropriately identify the barriers in the lives of learners, they need to be attentive to the needs of learners. Attentiveness in this case means they need to be able to explore the strengths and needs in the lives of learners in and outside the classroom, in their specific subject and in other subjects, and in the home lives as well as the school lives of learners. The art of attending should involve the learner and assure them that the exploration is for a good cause and is not aimed at labelling or a judgmental result but rather to find an amicable intervention regarding the barriers experienced (Badenhorst, 2008; Gouws, Kruger & Burger, 2008; Kostelnik, Gregory, Soderman & Whiren, 2012; Makola, 2016; Wilken, 2008). The next skill to be discussed is the skill of focusing the helpers' observation and listening skills on the helpees' verbal and behavioural expressions of their experiences.

ii Helper's observing and listening skills upon the helpee's experiences

The implication in this context is that educators should not focus on the learners as individuals, but they should focus on the experiences in the lives of learners, especially as expressed by the learners involved. In other words, an educator needs to note, hear and watch the way a learner defines and interprets experiences in his or her life. What a learner regards as a problem in his or her life, may not seem like a problem to the educator. The educator is at this stage acting as an objective observer of the learner's behavioural expressions and a listener to the learner's verbal expressions. Being an effective learner observer requires suspending judgement and interpretation of the events and instead focusing on describing the phenomena that the educator sees (Barringer, Pohlman & Robinson, 2010). Since the skill of the educator is important in the intervention process of the barrier identification, the educators should observe this crucial step of objective observation and listening before they add in their expertise to the process. The same idea of educators' objective observation and listening is supported by Tomlinson (2014) who attests that educators should allow learners to figure things out for themselves. Educators are only to provide directions and guidelines for quality, but they should leave some ambiguity, choice, and flexibility so that learners have to make leaps of transfer and apply common sense (Tomlinson, 2014). The next skill to be discussed is the skill of communicating an intense interest in the experiences of the helpee.

iii Interest in the experiences of the helpee

Learners are believed to be crucial role-players in the process of identifying the nature of the barriers affecting them. They provide an insight into their affinities such as in the topics, skills, or experiences that they truly love and enjoy doing and or they do are not good at them (Barringer *et al.*, 2010). It is up to the educator to instil in the learners the conviction that he or she is interested in helping the learner unreservedly. When learners are aware that educators mean well in helping them find an intervention in their barriers, they become even motivated to participate in finding a solution to their own identified barriers (Barringer *et al.*, 2010). The same approach applies to the identification stage of barriers in the learners during the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy.

Lejweleputswa educators should involve learners during their identification stage. They also need to act towards such learners in a way that gives assurance that they have a positive interest in seeing the barriers in their lives alleviated. By so doing, the learners will develop an interest in joining the educators to find a solution to the barriers and so be motivated to participate at every step of finding a solution. Identification of barriers is closely linked to the assessment of such barriers and the next stage is a discussion of this third stage of SIAS.

2.3.4 Stage 3 – Establish levels of support and an action plan with a ‘support package’

Stage 3 represents the assessment stage of SIAS where the support needs of the learner are established. It is at this stage that other support structures within and beyond the school may be consulted for further assistance in assessing the nature of support needed to address the barriers to learning. There is no universal assessment approach to determine the nature of support needed because each barrier is independent of the others and depends on the context of the existence of such a barrier. However, the list of principles of assessment listed below which are promulgated in the SIAS 2014 policy document are regarded as a stepping stone for evaluating the policy implementation stage of assessment in Chapter Three.

- The policy refers to the assessment of barriers to determine the support needs of learners, not assessment of scholastic achievement or assessment of learners who experience barriers to learning.
- The process requires the full involvement of educators, parents and learners.
- The assessment of barriers process needs to explore the barriers from all areas of existence of a learner such as within self, curriculum, school, home or community.
- Assessment of barriers should be varied and conducted from different perspectives.
- Culturally fair standardised tests can also be used as reference to determine the learning and support needs of learners.
- Any request from a School-Based Support Team to the District-based Support Team for specialist assessment should specify the nature of assessment query and motivation for such an assessment.

- The procedure during assessment of barriers should be guided by the principle of respect for the concerned parties.
- The purpose of the barrier assessment should be clear and open.
- Assessment of barriers should be appropriately and relevantly conducted according to the realities and context of the person or school concerned.
- Assessment should be free from bias but be fair and mindful of issues of gender, race, cultural background and ability.
- Assessment of barriers should be done for the purpose of improving teaching and learning process.
- Assessment of barriers should be an ongoing process.
- There should be a close collaboration within systemic levels that are involved in the assessment process such as the School-Based Support Teams and District-based Support Teams to ensure that assessment processes are smoothly pursued.
- Assessment of barriers must be manageable and time-efficient.
- The results of assessment should be clearly, accurately and timeously documented and communicated to those affected (DBE 2014).

A broader elaboration on the support needs assessment will be dealt with in Chapter Three within the context of SIAS 2014 policy.

The above section has discussed assessment in the SIAS policy and the guiding principles involved. After assessment, the next stage to explore is the support stage which is discussed below.

2.3.5 Stage 4 – Action planning for provision and monitoring of additional support.

The 2008 SIAS strategy regards the support stage as the moment where the support structures review and verify the support that was initially rendered by the educator in an endeavour to bring about an intervention regarding the barriers experienced by the learner before external intervention is sought. It was to be through the effective implementation of the SIAS Strategy that the screening of learners, identification of learner needs and referral of learners to special

schools as well as the involvement of relevant stakeholders would be valid, reliable and beyond question. However, it is highly tempting to conclude that the SIAS Strategy has never been a success in realising inclusive quality education in South Africa because the SIAS 2014 policy later came into being.

The SIAS 2014 policy document still has the provisions of the 2008 SIAS Strategy but only the procedural steps have been made more explicit. At this stage the nature of support identified to address the barriers is implemented and monitored. The support stage of SIAS is actualised by two forms called the Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1) and the Individual Support Plan (ISP) which will later be discussed in Chapter Three.

2.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, a theoretical framework of the SIAS 2014 policy was provided. Here the ideas relating to a policy analysis and implementation were presented. Factors that both promote and hinder effective policy implementation were discussed. Furthermore, a contextual analysis of the SIAS 2014 was provided which entailed the historical background of the policy as well as the stages involved in the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. Among the SIAS stages, the first stage of screening has been extensively discussed because it is a prerequisite for the effective implementation of the SIAS policy. It is believed that if educators can competently screen the barriers in the learners, then they can easily follow the rest of the SIAS steps to the finish. The next chapter will be the content analysis of the SIAS policy.

CHAPTER 3

THE SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT OF LEARNERS WITH LEARNING BARRIERS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Two a theoretical framework and contextual analysis of the SIAS 2014 policy was given. This included discussing concepts of policy analysis and implementation as well as the factors that promote or hinder effective policy implementation. The historical background of the SIAS policy and the related stages were contextualised. As indicated in Chapter Two (cf. 2.4), this chapter aims to analyse the contents of the SIAS 2014 policy by closely examining the policy directives on how screening, identification, and assessment of barriers as well as how support of learners experiencing barriers to learning should be conducted in the South African public schools.

Understanding of the aim of SIAS policy is of paramount importance. To demystify any misconception that may be associated with the aim of the policy, it is stipulated that the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) policy is meant to enable a shift from focusing only on the support of individual learners owing to their disabilities, to a broad mode of support on teaching and learning so that effective learner participation is maximised in all schools (DBE, 2014). This means the policy ensures understanding of educational inclusivity by compelling the implementers such as the Lejweleputswa educators to bear in mind that their main focus in addressing educational needs in their daily practice should no longer be on the nature of a learner but rather on the nature of the barrier that prevents the learner from learning as well as the nature of support that may be suitable to assist the learner. This basic understanding is the shift from the medical deficit or within-child model to a social systems change approach discussed in Chapter Two (cf. 2.2) and is crucial for the effective implementation of the SIAS policy in Lejweleputswa District by educators. Reviewing appropriate literature that supports the inclusive education in Lejweleputswa secondary schools is important in determining the implications for the effective implementation of the SIAS policy.

Therefore, the policy directives about screening, identification and assessment of learning barriers and the support of learners experiencing barriers, as well as the following policy administrative forms will be the main documentary sources of analysis in this chapter:

- Learner Profile
- Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1)
- Support Needs Assessment 2 (SNA 2)
- Individual Support Plan (ISP)
- Form DBE 120 – Request for support by SBST to DBST
- Support Needs Assessment 3 (SNA 3)

Each of the administrative forms will be analysed in relation to the stage of SIAS in which it is administered according to policy directive. For example, the Learner Profile will be analysed under the screening stage because the policy directive requires that screening should be done using the Learner Profile. Before the analysis of the SIAS stages using the administrative forms, it is necessary to briefly unpack what the SIAS process entails.

3.1.1 The SIAS process

The SIAS 2014 policy supports the implementation of the principles of the Education White Paper 6 which have been listed in Chapter One (cf. 1.6.1). The policy also intends to ensure a rigorous and consistent process of screening, identification, assessment, and support of learners across the system (DBE, 2014). The following is a discussion of the SIAS processes and analysis of the forms used throughout the process. It is stipulated that the specific administrative forms are used throughout the SIAS processes to conform all the steps and uniform procedures that have to be followed when the policy on SIAS is implemented (DBE, 2014). The key focus of the analysis of this policy will be to identify the extent to which the policy fulfils the aim of the Education White Paper 6 by exploring the language, assumptions, silences, and omissions of the policy directives in each administrative form. The first administrative form to be discussed is the Learner Profile in the screening stage.

3.2 THE SCREENING PROCESS USING THE LEARNER PROFILE

This is the first stage of the SIAS 2014 policy implementation. In this section, policy analysis will be done in two phases. The first phase covers the content analysis of the language, silences, assumptions and omissions of the SIAS policy directives for screening while the second phase deals with the implementation process analysis using the Learner Profile.

3.2.1 Policy directives

The following is a list of some of the policy directives concerning the Learner Profile during screening which will be discussed later in this section.

- Educators must undertake the process of screening on all learners at admission as well as at the beginning of each phase and record their findings in the Learner Profile (LP) before capturing the details in the Learner Unit Record Individual Tracking (LURITS) System.
- The register educator must complete the Learner Profile at least once per year.
- The areas in the Learner Profile which are marked with an asterisk are an indication of when the SNA 1 should be completed.
- A photograph must be attached to the Learner Profile
- The Learner Profile also inquires about the learner's position in the family and how many children there are the household (DBE, 2014).

From the above policy directives, the following analytical aspects can be derived:

3.2.1.1 The language of the policy

It can be observed that the screening of every learner at admission and at the beginning of each phase by an educator using learner profiles is written in a clear language that does not seem to have ambiguities. However, the implementation of the screening stage may be variably managed at Lejweleputswa schools because more than one educator teaches a learner at secondary schools and the policy does not require all subject educators of a one learner to conduct the screening process. Instead, one learner is screened by one educator using one Learner Profile.

3.2.1.2 Silences of the policy

The study acknowledges that the policy is silent about the following:

- Why amongst all the educators of a learner the screening is done by the register educator only.
- What the rationale is behind the photograph attachment on the Learner Profile and whether the presence or absence of a photograph on a Learner Profile has any impact on the screening process in Lejweleputswa for educators to effectively manage implementation of the screening stage.

3.2.1.3 Assumptions of the policy

The policy emphasises that the Learner Profile document serves primarily as a tool for educators (not only one educator) to plan interventions and support on a day-to-day basis for all learners as part of the teaching and learning process (DBE, 2014). The Learner Profile in the SIAS process facilitates a timeous intervention regarding the barriers that are experienced by learners by having the experts or practitioners rendering the needed support whilst it can still be effective (DBE, 2014). The policy seems to assume that:

All register educators can efficiently undertake the screening process and their finding can be a reliable stepping stone for all educators to plan their interventions. However, appointing only a register educator to compile the learner profile may compromise the reliability of the learner profile because some researchers have established that not all educators do their work well. Mamaila, Letswanyo, Motala, and Mangena as cited in Ndou (2015) contend that some of the challenges facing education policy implementation is that the majority of educators do not do their work well because they are detached from ideal work ethics. Based on the above-mentioned findings, there is a need to establish the impact of register educators being the only screeners of learners who are taught by more than one educator in Lejweleputswa.

Attachment of a learner photograph on the profile is feasible. This directive has financial implications which the policy seems to assume that all learners and all schools can easily achieve. It is also important to establish how the educators implement this directive in terms of

who is financially responsible for each learner having a photo attached. Researchers such as Nakamura and Smallwood as cited in Ndou (2015) state that the implementation of educational policies is dependent on economic factors such as the availability of money. The availability of money to print photographs may mean that in the event where there is no money to print photographs then the policy's intention of standardised procedures will be compromised.

The accessibility of the Learner Unit Record Individual Tracking (LURITS) System is always possible for educators. Capturing the screening information of a learner in this system is helpful for future reference but it is doubtful whether educators in Lejweleputswa access this system for planning lessons that accommodate diversity of learners.

Extended family structure and a large family size from which a learner comes may suggest that a learner may be at risk. In actual fact, implications of family structures vary with cultural and racial groups. The provisions of the policy in the learner profile in enquiring about family sizes of learners may yield misleading outcomes. For example, in an African Basotho family structure, it does not mean a learner is at risk if s/he stays in a family where there are cousins from uncles and aunts. It is further regarded a taboo in a Basotho and perhaps other African family structures to disregard cousins as not being one's siblings, especially when they live under one roof. Children are often groomed to view each other as true brothers and sisters without denoting strict biological order of relation. As a result, for some African learners it might be difficult for a learner or parent to say what exactly the position of the learner is in his/her family and this may also subject the respondent to unwarranted discomfort.

Contrarily, the policy principle of assessment also states that assessment of learning barriers must be conducted fairly as well as being free from bias (DBE, 2014). Furthermore, McLean, Pavri and Fowler as cited in Pool and Hourcade (2011) attest that culturally insensitive screening procedures may over-identify or under-identify learners of diverse backgrounds. Over-identification results in unwarranted diagnoses of disability, while under-identification results in failing to identify children with delays, therefore failing to provide needed services in a timely fashion (Pool and Hourcade, 2011). It is assumed that enquiry about the position of a learner in a family may yield over-identification results.

3.2.1.4 Omissions of the policy

It has been noted that the general trend of the proponents of inclusive education is to increasingly and openly emphasize the need for educators to guard against identifying behavioural difficulties that may be displayed by learners as barriers to effective learning (cf. 2.3.2.4). Learners who have records of behavioural problems may need to be checked by educators from time to time in order to curb the unwanted behaviour which may negatively affect their learning. As a result, learners who have a record of frequently misbehaving can be regarded as learners at risk and their educators need to receive intensive training so that they can effectively assist such learners to overcome the behavioural difficulty (Barringer, Pohlman & Robinson, 2010; Donald & Moolla, 2014; Evers & Spencer, 2011; Howel, 2007; Lundy & Swartz, 2011). Despite these arguments which are in favour of the frequent monitoring of learners who experience behavioural difficulties, the researcher is concerned that the screening process conducted with the Learner Profile in the policy seems to have omitted the aspects of clearly inquiring about behavioural record of learners in or outside the school. Omitting the issue of next the previous behaviour of a learner may render the screening process unreliable.

3.2.2 The Learner Profile implementation process

It has been indicated above that the areas in the Learner Profile marked with an asterisk indicate when the when the SNA1 should be commence. Such areas are an indication that a learner might be at risk and therefore need the attention of the screening educator to dig deeper for any barriers in the life of a learner. The questions about disability, type of social grant, indication of problems regarding medical aspects, early intervention services rendered, and areas needing ongoing support are areas that are marked with an asterisk in the Learner Profile which will be analysed in this section.

3.2.2.1 Disability

Educators in Lejweleputswa need to have a basic understanding of what disability is. There are two scenarios about disability that the study would like to explore among Lejweleputswa educators. First is that once learners indicate during the screening process that they have a disability, do the educators know that a disability is a type of intrinsic barrier? Furthermore, are educators able to differentiate among the physical, sensory, neurological and intellectual disabilities? The second scenario is in the event when no one has indicated in the Learner Profile

that a learner has a disability. Are educators capable of deducing that the learner could be having a disability given other indicators such as the academic record of a learner? This knowledge will assist in deciding on the nature and level of support needed for such learners. The types of disabilities were discussed in Chapter Two (cf. 2.3.2.4) and the study would like to determine how much the educators know and understand about learner disabilities (cf. 4.5.1.2).

3.2.2.2 Type of social grant

The Learner Profile screens for the type of social grant being received but only gives examples of the following social grants: foster care, care dependency grant and child-support grant. The questions that the research needs to answer are whether the screening educators know all the types of grants besides the ones given as examples and whether educators know the conditions that should prevail for each of the grants to be received by a learner. This is worrisome because some learners, caregivers and parents may only know that a learner receives a grant but cannot remember the name of the grant. Knowing the name or type of grant may not only assist the screening educator to deduce the learner's degree of vulnerability but also to be able to place the needs of a learner in an appropriate category of barriers so that an appropriate type and level of support may be decided on and rendered.

3.2.2.3 Indication of problems regarding medical aspects

The Learner Profile screens medical problems related to the following: child growth progress, prenatal/postnatal information, immunization record (birth to five years), visual/ hearing/height/ weight/speech/physical/locomotor screening results, hospital admissions, and any chronic condition. The word 'problems' is even underlined in bold print. The researcher believes that the policy designers highlighted the word 'problems' in order to emphasize and hint that screening educators need to understand the significance of those indicated problems to the learning development of learners. For example, an educator should be able to relate the significance of a medical indication about visual problems to a possibility of such a learner experiencing a learning barrier related to visual learning. In this case, the study seeks to establish from the Lejweleputswa educators whether they understand the significance of the indicated problems on the medical records of learners (cf. 4.5.1.2).

3.2.2.4 Early intervention services rendered

The Learner Profile has three rows and three columns to be filled in related to the early intervention services rendered. Table 3.1 below indicates how the columns are labelled.

Table 3.1: Early intervention services rendered

0-5 year	Area of need	Services and intervention received

It is uncertain how the Lejweleputswa educators execute the policy in this area.

The study seeks to determine the following:

- What 0-5 year means,
- What the educators say should be written in the next two blank cells following the “Area of need”; and
- What the educators say should be written in the next two blank cells following the “services and interventions received” (cf. 4.5.1.2).

3.2.2.5 Areas needing ongoing support

The last of the sections of the Learner Profile indicated by an asterisk are the Areas Needing Ongoing Support. Examples of such areas are given in brackets as academic, emotional, behaviour, social, learning, vision, mobility, and communication. The assumption is that the given examples of areas that may need ongoing support are intrinsic barriers which belong either in the learning disabilities category or in the learning difficulties category. Concepts of learning difficulties and learning disabilities were discussed in Chapter Two (cf. 2.3.2.4). However, it is necessary to find out how Lejweleputswa educators screen the barriers in the learners regarding these areas (cf. 4.5.1.2) because some ambiguities have been noted about this section. Table 3.2 below depicts the layout of this section:

Table 3.2: Areas needing ongoing support

MM/YY	Gr	Area of need	Nature of support	Review date

Analysis of Table 3.2 reveals the following ambiguities:

i MM/YY

While MM/YY doubtlessly indicates month and year, it is unclear which month and year are filled in by educators. Also it is not clear whether educators are meant to write the month and year during which the area of need was first discovered or whether they should write the current month and year during which the screening process on the Learner Profile is being conducted.

ii Gr

Regarding the Gr, it is also clear that this stands for grade. However, it is not clear whether educators here write the grade in which the learner was when the barrier was first discovered, or whether they write the current grade in which the learner is at the time of screening.

iii Area of need

On the cell relating to area of need it is still not clear how educators should know the area of need. It is unclear whether the source of information that educators use to determine the area of need is any of the following or all of them:

- Being told by parents or caregivers, the learner him- or herself, learner's peers, fellow educators, or community members;
- Referring to the academic records of the learner's performance;
- Referring to incidents records of the learner's misconduct; or
- Studying the SIAS policy handbook.

iv Nature of support

It not clear what educators should write in the column about the nature of support. It is unclear whether educators write the nature of support previously rendered or the support that will be rendered now that the barrier has been noted. It is therefore necessary to find out from the educators what they write in this column. Now that screening using the learner profile has been discussed, the next discussion will focus on the process of identifying and assessing barriers using the second administrative form called the Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1).

3.3 SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT 1

The process of identification and assessment of barriers

This is the second stage of the policy implementation where barriers to learning are identified and assessed. The identification and assessment process is divided into two levels. The first is the identification and assessment of barriers at the educator level and the second at SBST level. As has been done in the screening stage earlier in this chapter, policy analysis will be conducted in two phases of each level in this section. In each of the three levels of identification and assessment of barriers, there will be two phases of analysis. The first phase deals with the content analysis of the language, silences, assumptions and omissions of the SIAS policy directives for identifying and assessing barriers while the second phase will be the implementation process analysis of the Support Needs Assessment 1.

3.3.1 Policy directives

The following is a list of some of the policy directives concerning the Support Needs Assessment 1 during the identification and assessment process which will be discussed later in this section.

Level 1: Identification and assessment using the Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1)

Amongst the policy directives relating to identification and assessment, the following directives may have an impact on the policy implementation:

- After a learner has been identified as being vulnerable, the register educator is responsible for coordinating support processes for the learner with relevant stakeholders.
- The involvement of parents and learners who are over twelve years is of outmost importance during the decision-making processes of SIAS.
- An Individual Support Plan (ISP) is drawn up for learners who are found to be experiencing barriers (DBE, 2014).

The implications of the above-mentioned directions are that educators in Lejweleputswa District schools should be familiar with these three administrative forms for their daily implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. They need to understand that assuming the role of a case manager means they need to know exactly how and why they fill in the SNA 1 and the ISP. They also need to ensure that their implementation processes are in line with the rationale of the policy.

The language of the policy

From the above-presented policy directives, it is clear that the identification of barrier(s) in the learner after the screening process by an educator using SNA 1 is written in clear language that does not seem to have ambiguities. However, the implementation of the identification stage may be managed variably at schools of Lejweleputswa because now the policy allows any educator to fill in the SNA 1 for a learner who was screened by another educator. This means any educator who may feel that the learner experiences barriers and needs support may fill in the SNA 1.

3.3.2 Silences of the policy

As has been stated above, the policy seems to be silent on how educators who complete an SNA 1 should collaborate with each other to avoid a situation whereby a learner has all the educators completing an SNA 1 for him or her relating to the same barrier and ending up causing confusion about the learner.

3.3.3 Assumptions of the policy

The policy seems to assume that during the identification stage the educator can identify the barriers competently and efficiently after the screening process using the SNA 1 and the ISP. However, the implementation of the identification stage may be variably managed at schools of Lejweleputswa owing to the stipulated ambiguity of the learner involvement discussed below.

3.3.4 Omissions of the policy

The last two principles of White Paper 6 advocate that inclusive education tries to maximise the effective learner participation in schools (DoE, 2001a). Considering these two principles, it seems as if there is a disparity between the principles and how they are being actualised in the identification and assessment stage of barriers to learning because the SNA 1 seems to be more educator-centred than being collectively centred. The essence of the SNA 1 is to assess the support needs of an individual learner by first acknowledging that there is a concern about the learning progress of the learner, the identifying of the strengths and needs of the learner, and lastly, the nature and outcome of support rendered by the educator. All these endeavours are doubtlessly in order, but the concern is that there is nowhere that the learner participates actively. This is particularly the case of learners who are in the secondary schools or are old enough to participate rationally during the support needs planning stage about them. The involvement of an individual learner is portrayed as if the old model of patient deficit is being used because it is only the educator who works on the learner while the learner is a passive participant by just being present for ‘diagnosis’ and then occasionally giving consent for disclosure for further support. There is no space provided for the learner’s voice or opinion to be heard directly or captured in any of the administrative forms, the SNA 1, ISP or even in the Learner Profile about the following:

- Whether they indeed acknowledge that they experience barriers to learning;
- Their own identification or cause of the barriers;
- Their own support needs assessment; and
- How they would prefer to be supported.

This seems to be a contradiction of the SIAS 2014 policy rationale about how the identification process of barriers should be conducted as it states, “The parent/caregiver and the learner (from

the age of 12 as far as possible) must be involved throughout in the decision-making process of the SIAS (DBE, 2014: 24). Ironically, all the educator does at this stage does not seem too intensively skill-oriented and or professional-based for the learner not to make an input as well. Therefore, whatever the educator will have written on the SNA 1 or ISP is based on opinion more than on expertise: this is no reason why the learner's opinion should have not been captured as well.

Since the policy is for both young and older learners, older learners should be more actively involved in identifying their own needs and concurrently draw their own improvement plans so that the two principles of the White Paper 6 (mentioned above) are fully observed. Learners need to participate in the delivery of inclusive quality education by also having a voice, reflecting on their own lives and individual worlds, and also actively monitoring their progress in the goals they will have set for themselves. Having learners participate by identifying their own learner-centred special needs assessment and their own strategies to overcome barriers, lifelong learning and empowerment of learners in developing their individual strengths will have been realised. Perhaps an opposing opinion would say the learner's input is already covered by the principle of involvement stated in the policy. However, the role of the learner and the voice of the learner are featured nowhere in the SNA 1; only the role and voice of the educator are given prominence.

The study would like to determine how the involvement of learners is conducted among the educators in the Lejweleputswa District, especially considering that there are systemic, societal, pedagogic, and intrinsic types of barriers that may hinder learners from accessing quality education (Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education & MIET Africa, 2014). Acharya (2009) emphasises the importance of involving learners in identifying their own barriers and engaging in addressing such barriers. Educators should develop a new approach that involves learners as producers of knowledge, rather than as passive recipients and they need to support learners' efforts to find a place in society by forging appropriate links between personal goals and interests, school opportunities, and future plans.

3.3.5 The Support Needs Assessment 1 implementation process

As previously stated, the SNA 1 is a tool used by educators to determine the barriers that may be prevalent in the lives of learners. In this section, the focus will be on the provisions of this form and its implication for implementation. The provisions to be discussed are the description of the educator concerns about the learner, the notion of the time when the concern and barriers were first realised and a description of how the observation is currently affecting the learner's learning and development.

3.3.5.1 Describe your concern about the learner

Among its provisions, the SNA 1 requires educators to describe their specific concern about the learner for whom the SNA 1 is completed. It is unclear whether this requirement is open for educators to describe concerns about extrinsic barriers that impact on the learner's learning progress. Such an extrinsic barrier could be a learner's learning being hampered by multiple barriers such as in a case of a learner who comes from a poor family, is not performing well academically, and displays behavioural and emotional difficulties.

The space allocated on the form for the educators to describe their concerns about the learner is only three lines. This may suggest that the policy assumes that there is only one concern or that it can be described succinctly. The space does not seem to offer enough room for the educator to detail the learner's situation and the barriers that may be hampering learning.

3.3.5.2 When did you become aware of this?

Educators are asked when they became aware of the barrier. The policy provision here also seems to assume that educators will be describing concerns or barriers that can easily be traced back to the time of commencement. It is unclear what educators would write here in the case of a learner who is trapped in a poverty cycle.

3.3.5.3 How is this observation currently affecting the learner's learning and development? Describe.

There is a three-line space reserved for the observation of the educator about the barrier(s) currently affect the learner's learning and development. This then also suggests that the policy assumes that the educators would likely not be faced with a learner's situation that has so many

barriers that the space would not be enough to describe them. Instead, the policy seems to assume that a two-line description would be sufficient because there would only be one or two ways in which the one or two barriers observed affect the learning and development of a learner.

It is assumed that the spaces provided for this section of the SNA 1 are too limited and may not be accommodating of most of the situations that prevail in the Lejweleputswa schools and especially in the black township school communities during this period of the post-apartheid era. The following table is a scenario that that is likely to prevail in a township secondary school where one learner may be experiencing more than one barrier and those barriers are interconnected.

Table 3.3: Barriers in one learner's life

Barriers in one learner's life			
Systemic barrier details	Societal barrier Details	Pedagogic barrier details	Intrinsic barrier details
The learner is placed in an overcrowded classroom that does not have enough resources and does not perform well academically.	The learner does not have positive role models and mentors at home or in the community to encourage him/her to achieve at school.	The educators often regard the learner as not committed enough and do not encourage the learner to achieve. Instead they have developed a negative attitude towards the learner.	The notion of underperforming and not being regarded by the educators as valuable has discouraged the learner to want to try harder to achieve and has reduced his/her self-esteem.

From the above scenario it seems necessary to find out from educators whether the assumed scenario of learners who experience many barriers is common in their daily practice. If it is the case, then they need to indicate how they normally respond to the enquiry of SNA 1 in only two lines about how a barrier currently affects the learner's learning and development.

The next section is the analysis of the policy implementation using the administrative form called the Support Needs Analysis 2 (SNA 2) by the SBST to identify and assess the barriers in the learners.

3.4 SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2

The process of identification and assessment of barriers

As indicated earlier, the identification process is divided into two levels, the first of which has been discussed, namely the identification and assessment of barriers at educator level. The discussion now focuses on the second level of identification and assessment which is at SBST level. Unlike the first level of identification and assessment, policy analysis in this level will not be done in two phases. There will be a general content analysis of the SIAS policy directives for identifying barriers by the SBST and the implications for the implementation process of the Support Needs Assessment 2 (SNA 2).

3.4.1 Policy directives

The following is a list of some of the policy directives concerning the Support Needs Assessment 2 during the identification process which will be discussed later in this section.

Level 2: Identification process using the Support Needs Assessment 2 (SNA 2)

This level does not necessarily mean the SBST identifies the barriers from scratch as will have been done by the educator. However, it reviews the identification process done by the educator and moderates where necessary. The role of the SBST regarding the SNA 2 as prescribed in the SIAS 2014 policy Chapter Three Section 11(b) and Chapter Six Section 3 and listed below may have an impact on the policy implementation:

- To attend to the support needs of educators about learners who experience learning barriers;
- To review support plans that are drawn by educators by gathering any additional information that may be required, and provide direction and support to strengthen the Individual Support Plan (ISP);
- If there is a need, to request assistance from the DBST to enhance ISPs or support their recommendation for the placement of a learner in a specialised setting (DBE, 2014);

- The **SNA 2** form should be a guiding tool for the School-Based Support Team when a learner is referred to effectively undertake the following:
 - **Review** the referring educator's identification of barriers and the interventions applied;
 - Develop a **plan of action** to strengthen the support; and
 - Implement the support plan that has a date for review which may be once per term at least (DBE, 2014).

As can be noticed, the SBST verifies the actions of the educator and also strengthens the support by either making recommendations to be implemented by the educator or any other school structure that may be of help, or seeking further support and intervention from the DBST. The study acknowledges the existence of a clear procedure to be followed during the stage of identification but it is concerned that the control and monitoring of educator processes is based only on the identified learners. The second concern is that there are gaps in the role of subject educators who complete the SNA 1. These two implications for effective implementation in Lejweleputswa District are discussed below.

3.4.2 Control and monitoring of educator processes based only on the identified learners

The fact that since stage one of screening, no structure in or outside the school was ever committed by the policy to control and monitor that effective screening and identification take place is of concern. It has been established that many educators in South Africa are not sufficiently equipped to identify barriers to learning because of overcrowding in their classes and a lack of appropriate training (Ntsanwisi, 2007). It is essential to enhance educator capacity for addressing problems and fostering social, emotional, intellectual and behavioural development (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2000). The Department of Education as cited in Ndou, (2015) has affirmed that the principal and members of the school management team play a vital role in implementing inclusive teaching and learning. Members of school management teams should take a lead in changing the attitudes of all stakeholders. They should establish School-Based support teams that coordinate support to all learners in the school by meeting regularly, giving guidance to educators and tracking support (Ndou, 2015).

However, when there is no control or monitoring of educator activities in the implementation of the policy, there will be no guarantee that the referral of a case to SBST is justifiably relevant for SBST intervention. Instead, the policy only calls for the SBST to verify the processes related to the cases referred to them and does not say anything about real cases left behind.

Furthermore, it is necessary to find out from the SMT members how they control and monitor the SNA 1 and 2 given the fact that the policy only prescribes that the educator can refer the SNA 1 straight to the SBST without the knowledge of a curriculum manager who by now is the HOD, even if the case involves a pedagogic barrier. Similarly, it is necessary to determine how the SMT controls and monitors the SNA 2 given that the SBST can also recommend a curriculum intervention support strategy directly to the educator without checking with, or being checked by the curriculum manager involved. Lack of control and monitoring of the SNA 1 and 2 can lead to the SIAS policy ineffectiveness in the manner explained below.

If an educator has not competently screened the barriers to learning in a learner who experiences barriers and nobody was able to pick that up, then the educator will next proceed to identify the barriers incompetently and attempt to address them. In this way the whole process becomes futile to the extent that the SBST would become involved. However, there would still not be any guarantee that in its attempt to intervene, the SBST will be able to trace the error and perhaps discover cases that have been overlooked by the educator which could have been identified as warranting the SNA 1 completion.

3.4.3 There are gaps in the role of subject educators who complete the SNA 1

The policy seems to create a coordination gap by focusing all the referral procedures upon the class educator and SBST. At the first stage of the policy only the register educator was the one screening the barriers using the Learner Profile but in this second stage of identification, even subject educators can complete the SNA1. However, nowhere in the policy are the screening findings disclosed to subject educators. According to the policy, each stage flows into the next.

Therefore, it is unclear how the subject educators who are not register educators of a particular learner would have known that SNA1 needs to be filled in. It becomes obvious that such subject educators would have to teach the learner first, get it done all wrong while time flies, and then ultimately stumble in to the learner who needs support. It is assumed that the implementation of this policy provision creates gaps in the procedures to be followed at secondary schools because this is where one learner is taught by more than one educator. and yet the policy unfolds in patches what should happen in such instances. The next discussion will focus on the support process using the Individual Support Plan (ISP).

3.5 THE SUPPORT PROCESS USING INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PLAN (ISP)

The Individual Support Plan (ISP) is another administrative form that is completed as soon as the SBST and the educator who has completed the SNA 1 have discussed the way forward for referral made by the educator. The provisions of the form seem reasonable except for the fact that the heading of the form indicates that it should be completed by the SBST and the “class teacher”. The phrase “class teacher” is understood to mean a register educator.

In this case, the fact that the subject educator who will have completed the SNA 1 for a learner is now not being involved in the support plan for the learner is somewhat disturbing. Like the screening process, the register educator is once again mandated to take part in the planning process yet there is no rationale in the policy for such a mandate. The understanding is that the educator who has already identified and assessed the needs of the learner should be the one taking part in the support planning process until referring the case to the SBST.

Similarly, it is also unclear how effective the implementation of the SIAS policy is in Lejweleputswa secondary schools where seemingly, according to the policy, the roles of the register educator and the subject educator do not make a logical role-playing. This idea of illogical role-playing by educators can be represented in Figure 3.1 below:

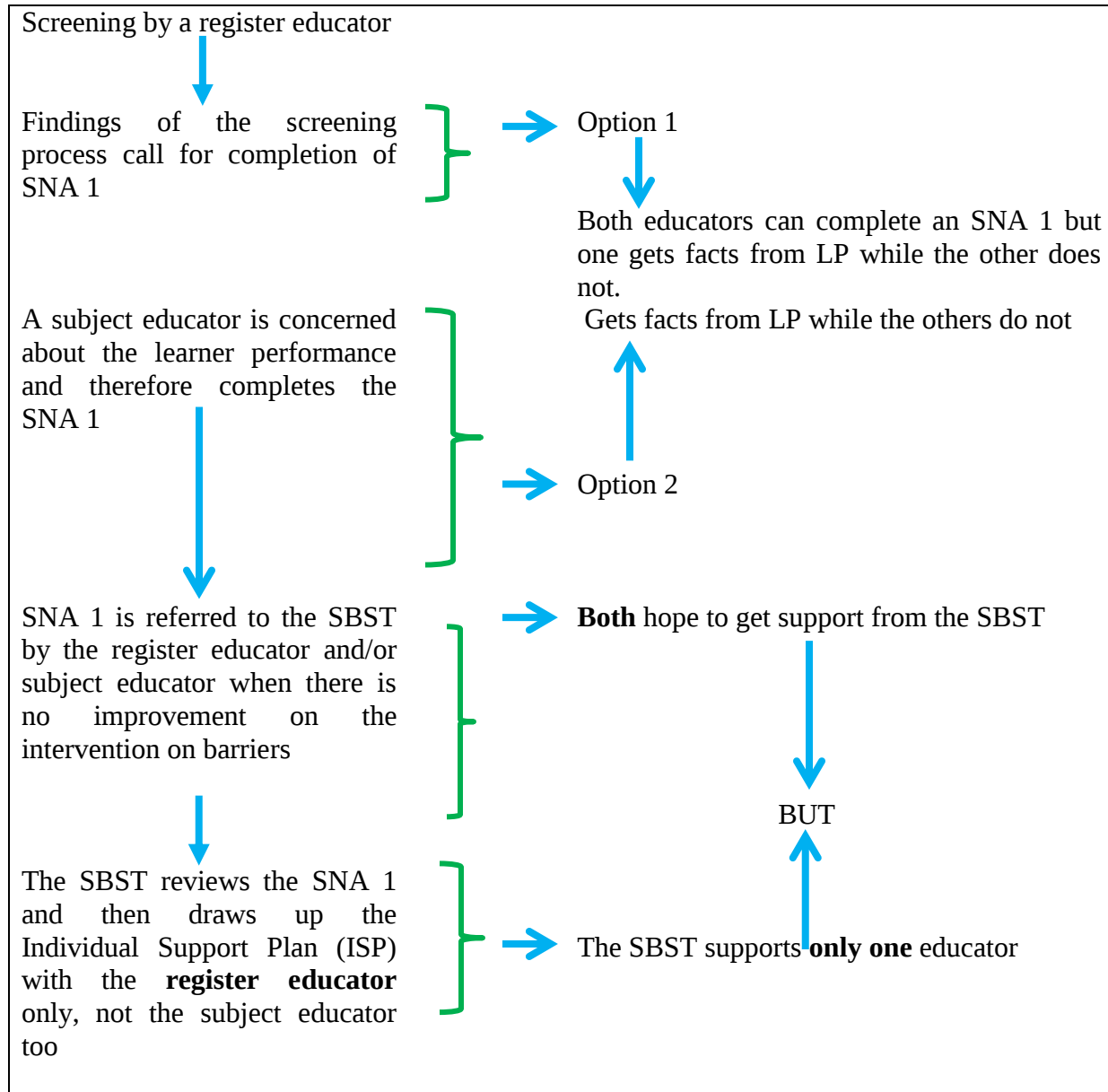


Figure 3.1: Illogical role-playing by educators during the screening and support planning processes

From Figure 3.1 above it can be seen that there is an illogical flow of administration of the SIAS policy forms for barrier identification and assessment (SNA 1) and the support process (ISP). This then already spells a strong possibility of policy implementation not being well coordinated between implementers. It is unclear what the rationale for this may be now that the following anomalies exist:

- The ISP is completed by SBST and register educator only and excludes the subject educator who has referred the case to the SBST and
- The inputs of the curriculum manager (in the case of pedagogic barriers), the learner, as well as the parent or caregiver are not sought in the drawing up of the ISP.

Now that the support process using the Individual Support Plan (ISP) has been discussed, the next point of analysis will be discussion of the support process using the administrative form DBE 120.

3.6 THE SUPPORT PROCESS USING FORM DBE 120

The Form DBE 120 is an administrative form used by the SBST to request support from the DBST. The form is very brief and relevant as far as the researcher is concerned. It simply requires the SBST to provide reasons and motivation why support is needed from DBST and state what support is needed from the DBST. The the subscription of the SBST and the school principal is then required. The concern is that even at this stage the learner's subscription is still not included. As has been the case with the completion of the SNA 1, SNA 2 and the ISP, the learner has consistently been excluded in this process which is said to be effective inclusive education policy implementation.

The act of excluding the learner in all these crucial processes of the SIAS policy leads to speculation that all the efforts by the SBST and educators will not yield the aspired results. Learners, especially at secondary schools, should be at the centre of all processes, especially when no professional input has been made. For example, in a case of an adolescent learner who experiences behavioural difficulty, why would the completion of the ISP exclude the learner completely? It would appear that some of the barriers experienced by learners at the intermediate phase and secondary schools may never be overcome unless the learners are actively involved in the planning and implementation of intervention strategies. For this reason, it is necessary to inquire from the DBST how much success has been registered in the practice of not including the learners in the intervention processes.

Having discussed the support process using the administrative form DBE 120, the next discussion will focus on the role of the DBST in rendering support to the request made by the SBST.

3.7 THE SUPPORT PROCESS USING SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT 3 BY THE DISTRICT-BASED SUPPORT TEAM

The Support Needs Assessment 3 (SNA 3) is another administrative form used by the DBST to render support to the SBST at school level. In this section, the main focus will be on the policy provisions about the role of the DBST in assessing the needs of the SBST concerning the learner referred. The following is a list of the expected competencies of the DBST as prescribed by the SIAS 2014 policy:

- To respond to the SBST's requests for assistance;
- To assess the appropriateness of the SBST requests;
- To provide direction about services and resources that may improve the School-Based support plan; and
- To identify learners who are liable for placement in specialised settings, to access specialised support services attached to ordinary or full-service schools or to access high-level outreach support (DBE 2014).

The SNA 3 guides the DBST to review the action plan of the school and use the Guidelines for Support 1, the Table to rate the level of support needed and the Checklist to help determine how support is to be provided to the learner. A plan of action is further developed by the DBST for the support of the learner and/or school, based on the information available. The support plan should include the following:

- Plan and budget for additional support programmes determined in SNA 3;
- Allocate resources and support-service to the school and learner;
- Train and mentor educators as well as counselling of parents or legal caregivers;
- Monitor the support provided; and
- Make use of SIAS policy Annexures to execute their decisions (DBE, 2014).

The role of the DBST is clearly presented in the policy as the last point of referral from the school. However, the following aspects of implementation, namely the timeframe for DBST feedback, accountability for unjustifiable requests from SBST and review of appropriate interventions by SBST need to be established.

3.7.1 Timeframe for District-Based Support Team feedback

The DBST should not delay in responding to the requests of the SBST for effective implementation of the policy. It is necessary to enquire from the Lejweleputswa DBST how long it takes for responding to the SBST submission and also the impact of the time taken to respond to the SBST.

3.7.2 Accountability for unjustifiable requests from School-Based Support Team

As has been stipulated by the policy that the DBST assesses the eligibility of requests made by SBST, it is necessary to know from the DBST what the impact of non-eligible requests from the SBST is.

3.7.3 Review of appropriate interventions by School-Based Support Team

The SNA 3 stipulates that the DBST should review the interventions provided by the SBST to address the barrier (-s) experienced by the learner. The form further requires the DBST to ascertain whether appropriate interventions have been implemented. This requirement is a concern because nowhere in the policy has it been stipulated what the nature of an appropriate intervention will be. This means the SBST is at liberty to render support and intervention in a manner that they would feel appropriate being guided by the policy principles. After such a long process of policy implementation, the DBST shall then be at liberty to decide whether the interventions by the SBST were appropriate yet there are still no guidelines for consistency purposes except the policy principles. It is necessary to establish from the DBST how the SBST is expected to support educators and what an appropriate or inappropriate intervention would be

and how the DBST would ensure that reliability of their decision on the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the SBST intervention is determined.

Now that the SNA 3 has been discussed the concluding word follows in the next paragraph.

3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, a review of appropriate literature that supports the inclusive education in Lejweleputswa schools was conducted in order to determine the implications for the effective implementation of the SIAS policy. The policy directives about screening, identification, assessment and support of learners experiencing barriers, as well as the following policy administrative forms were the main documentary sources of analysis in this chapter. The Learner Profile, Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1), Support Needs Assessment 2 (SNA 2), Individual Support Plan (ISP), Form DBE 120 – Request for support by SBST to DBST, and the Support Needs Assessment 3 (SNA 3) were all reviewed and analysed in relation to the stage of SIAS in which each one is administered according to the policy directive. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology that were implemented in this research.

CHAPTER 4

LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The first objective of this research of determining the nature of the SIAS 2014 policy was achieved in Chapters Two and Three by exploring literature related to the gestation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The aim of this chapter is to achieve the second objective of examining how the introduction of the SIAS 2014 policy leads to an all-inclusive and more effective teaching and learning process. This will be achieved by firstly exploring literature related to the role of educators, school governance as well as profiling of learners in facilitating effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. Secondly literature supporting the importance of effective screening, identification and assessment of barriers as well as support of learners who experience barriers to learning will also be reviewed. The next section discusses the role of educators.

4.2 THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS IN THE SIAS 2014 POLICY

Effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy starts with educators because they are the ones entrusted with the daily manifestation of the SIAS 2014 policy. This section is going to reveal without the commitment of educators, inclusive education policies such as the SIAS 2014 policy may not be effectively implemented.

External and internal training and development of educators

Effective external and internal training and development of educators play a crucial role in ensuring that an all-inclusive and quality education are realised. In order for an educational policy to be effectively implemented, it takes a well-trained educator to efficiently embrace such a policy rationale. Knowledge of an inclusive education policy and the ability to implement the directives of the policy safeguards the intended policy goal. Equally supporting this stance is the

notion that institutions of higher learning are to be the forerunners of an endeavour to adequately train aspiring educators about implementation of any educational policy that they will be entrusted with its implementation when they get to serve as qualified educators (Connor, 2014; Smith, Polloway, Patton & Dowdy, 2012). This will enable the novice educators to relate well with the practical SIAS 2014 policy implementation when they gain employment at schools which are already implementing the policy successfully. On the same note, some literature further emphasises the importance of capacitating and developing the personnel that is already serving in the field of education. In the context of this research that will also include department of education officials such as the DBST by increasing competent staff members who can reinforce the training and development of educators at schools to implement the SIAS 2014 policy effectively. This internal training and development of educators about inclusivity gives them awareness regarding the education of learners with learning barriers (Bryant, Bryant & Smith, 2017; Gore, 2010; Hoover, 2011; Singh, 2010).

Apart from the external training and development of educators, further internal induction and mentoring of educators are still essential. Educators at schools should be well inducted to adopt a positive mind-set to be passionate about inclusivity and the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy (Smith, Polloway, Patton & Dowdy, 2012; Dickins, 2014; Kuder, 2018; Singh, 2010). A positive attitude of the educators towards the SIAS 2014 policy can impact positively on the internal training and development strategies a lot easier. The importance of having educators who have a positive attitude towards embracing inclusive education policies is also attested by many academics as one of the cornerstones of effective implementation of policies such as the SIAS 2014 in schools.

On the other hand, some proponents of inclusive education further warn that training and development of all educators are not sufficient unless different professionals are also incorporated to work together with the trained educators to execute educational programmes for learners who may need what they regard an Individualized Educational Programme (IEP). The understanding of this research therefore is that such proponents support a notion of schools having school-based personnel such as psychologists, social workers and psychometric assessors who can conduct the internal training of educators on the rationale about inclusivity which in this

case is the SIAS 2014 policy implementation (Detter, Thurston, Knackendoffel & Dyck, 2009; Dickins, 2014; Kuder, 2018; Singh, 2010; Taylor, Smiley & Richards, 2015). The next section presents recommendations about the governance in schools.

4.3 THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN THE SIAS 2014 POLICY

Effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy may or may not be impacted by problems emanating from the governance in schools. It has been attested by some academics that dysfunctional school governance structures (which in the case of this research may be SBSTs and SGB sub-committees) contribute significantly to the ineffective implementation of inclusive education policies such as the SIAS 2014 policy. One such cause of dysfunctional school committees is when there are too many committees in which educators belong. Academics subscribing to the importance of functional school committees also claim that few or merged SGB sub-committees in a school assist members of such structures to focus their efficient expertise on the effective implementation of whatever school policy, in this case, the SIAS 2014 policy (Dickins, 2014; Kuder, 2018; Singh, 2010; Smith, Polloway, Patton & Dowdy, 2012).

A further confirmation of the importance of school governance in ensuring effective implementation of inclusive education policies is derived from studies undertaken by some researchers. A study conducted by Stofile (2008) has proven that active collaboration of stakeholders such as the members of a school governing body and their respective committees of governance is a corner stone for an effective inclusive reform in a school. In the study, Stofile (2008) further argues that non-involvement of the governing body in a school that aims to be inclusive is as futile as becoming a breeding space for negative attitudes and resistance towards any inclusive education practice. Another study by Acharya (2009) has proven that involvement of parents in decision-making and planning of school activities creates a climate where there is a two-way communication between the school and home and parents and families are regarded as partners in learning. Similarly the Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education & MIET Africa, (2014) equally attest that a school's level of inclusivity can be measured in the nature of its governing practices. This means that a school that is actively determined to make inclusive education possible is likely to have inclusive governing policies that cater for the needs of all

learners. However, some studies have revealed that inclusive governance depends more on the character traits of educators than the governing structures. For example, a study conducted by Ndou (2015) has found that educator traits determine the level of inclusive practices a school may sustain. The study says educators who have a negative attitude towards their work including the inclusive education are most likely to negatively influence the sub-committees of their respective schools' governance not to be inclusive. This means in the context of this research, the impact of school governance in the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy shall be profoundly noted by the researcher. The next section focuses on learners as a variable of this research.

4.4 LEARNER PROFILES AND RECORDS

Another area of importance for the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy is profiling of learners. One of the key requirements that are believed to be essential in making inclusive education a reality is that personal information about learners must be recorded on school system and be updated from time to time when need arises. The rationale for the establishing a record of learner information is stipulated in Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel and Tlale (2015) who attest that inclusive education is an opportunity for every learner to be known, understood and supported consistently and effectively throughout their education journey. It is through a consistently and effectively kept record that a learner's needs and strengths may be known by educators in an inclusive setting. The new dispensation of inclusive education compels all educators to administratively know all learners in their classes and be able to profile their individual needs. Academics suggest that educators should adopt an inclusive reform of not just knowing their learners in terms of their merit list of academic performance, but they should know their learners' respective worlds of existence (Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel & Tlale, 2015; Ntsanwisi, 2007).

Even though profiling of learners may be regarded by some academics as a perfect move towards establishing intervention strategies for learners who experience barriers to learning, other researchers such as Johnson, Reynolds and Salzman (2012) firmly warn against the complete dependence on the records of learner information. Through the study they conducted in Ohio University, they report that their study about determining learning disabilities in adult learners

has shown remarkable results. Their study reveals that a profiling tool for eliciting information from learners may request information that may yield misleadingly positive or negative conclusions. For example, an information tool that is aimed at screening for barriers to learning may ask a question whose response may give an implication that a learner is experiencing learning barriers or vice versa. One of the strategies recommended by these researchers for efficiently keeping track of learners who need support is by allocating full-time personnel to administrate and coordinate information about vulnerable learners with the institution as well as advising on how to support such vulnerable learners.

In the context of this research, it is imperative to establish whether or not profiling and records of learners is effectively undertaken in Lejweleputswa District schools and whether or not the tool (Learner Profile), which is used by the SIAS 2014 policy to acquire information about learners and the barriers they may be experiencing, is effectively used by educators during the policy implementation. The Learner Profile is a tool used for screening learning barriers that affect learners and a further discussion on screening is done in the next section.

4.5 SCREENING PROCESS

Some academics believe that effective screening of barriers involves having an organised list of disabilities that can act as barriers to learning. Screening educators simply have to choose the barrier(s) that affect a learner from the given list. However, such academics make a stern warning against the screening activity conducted in haste or under strict time constraints. Academics such as Eckert, Koenig, Hier and Arbolin (2013) suggest that the workloads of educators should be adjusted to allow a collaborative time for the subject curriculum screening process. They insist that an inclusive reform should allow all stakeholders to treat and be treated with care and understanding of diversity. This means for screening educators there should be an accommodation for educators who may conduct the screening process beyond the set time limit due to contextual factors that may be in existence. Similarly, information about a barrier affecting a learner may not always be readily available at the time of screening process due to some contextual factors also.

Screening of barriers should also be conducted professionally by competent personnel. Being a qualified educator may not always guarantee the effectiveness by which the screening process is conducted. Academics who subscribe to this notion suggest that competence should be at the apex of the screening process to avoid instances of barriers to learning being exaggerated or undermined. They advocate that training of educators based at a foundation or elementary phases of learning be intensive and effective (Eckert, Koenig, Hier & Arbolin, 2013; McLeskey, 2011; Thompson, 2012).

The above discussion about the screening process implies that effective implementation of the screening process in a SIAS 2014 policy should consider a number of factors. Firstly, this research shall establish whether or not the screening educators in the Lejweleputswa District schools are able to simply choose or pick from the list of barriers those that affect learners who are being screened; secondly, it shall be established whether or not screening educators have enough time to screen the barriers without racing against time for the completion of the syllabus. In other words it shall be known whether there is a harmoniously shared time between the subject curriculum and the SIAS 2014 inclusive education policy demands. Lastly, this research ought to establish whether or not the implementation of the screening process of SIAS 2014 is conducted by competently trained personnel. The next paragraph presents literature about the process of identifying and assessing barriers.

4.6 THE IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF BARRIERS

In the previous chapter, the process of identifying and assessing barriers using the second and third administrative forms which are called the Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1) and Individual Support Plan (ISP) respectively was discussed. In this section, the aim is to review related literature to the process of identifying and assessing barriers according to different academics. Academics such as Rosenberg, Westling and McLeskey (2011) believe that training of educators should be intensified to capacitate educators to identify and assess barriers professionally. They further suggest that when educators engage in the task of identifying and or

assessing any disability that affects a learner, they should do so under supervision of other personnel who may be at a higher level of expertise or who may be in a position to render a professional second opinion. In this instance it becomes reasonable to understand that these academics believe that identification and or assessment of a learning barrier or difficulty should not be determined by one particular educator. Instead, the process of declaring a particular barrier as a cause for difficult learning should be a collective exercise to ensure accuracy of the process. To some extent, the involvement of a supervisor or another colleague may also be a means of ensuring that monitoring and control take place on this crucial process.

The act of checking and balancing each other's performance on inclusive activities is similarly supported by some academics. They warn that educators should never attempt to make any assessment of barriers orally or informally. Instead the process has to be administratively done and all records be kept safely where they can always be reviewed when a need arises. They indicate that it is a common practice for two or more practitioners to give totally opposing identification and assessment outcomes from one another; hence a need for an effective record keeping of all endeavours (Thompson, 2012; Wheeler, 2010; Yell, Meadows, Drasgow & Shriner, 2009).

The inputs of these academics have an implication to this research. It has to be established by this research whether or not identification and assessment of barriers is done effectively in schools for the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy; and whether or not the process of identification and assessment of barriers involves control and monitoring by stakeholders in Lejweleputswa District schools setup. The next section of this chapter will focus on the literature about support processes of learners experiencing barriers to learning.

4.7 SUPPORT OF LEARNERS WHO EXPERIENCE BARRIERS TO LEARNING

Support of learners who need an extra assistance in order to learn effectively seems to be clouded by a number of controversies. In this section, literature about what other academics say about support of learners experiencing learning barriers will be reviewed.

Some academics strongly believe that unless there is a reasonable amount of both administrative and teaching workloads for educators, support for vulnerable and or disadvantaged learners can never be possible in any country or school. They argue that support or any commitment of educators to try and assist learners who have been confirmed to be experiencing learning difficulties can only be possible if the parameters such as time for curriculum coverage are not considered. What seems to be the dual stance of academics such as Deiner, (2013); Evers & Spencer (2011); Gargiulo & Metcalf (2013) and Pierangelo & Giulian (2009) firstly is that learners who experience barriers can only be supported effectively by educators if the workloads of educators could be minimal and if there would not be strict confinements of time set to finish the curriculum. Secondly, they seem to believe in the role of parents or caregivers in the support of the efforts made by schools. They attest that unless parents join hands with schools in determining what is right for their children, support strategies rendered by only the school may not yield positive results (Acharya, 2009).

A study conducted by Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Moolla, and Sylvester (2014) reveal that multi-sectoral provision of learning support and intervention in barriers to learning is effective. The study has noted a remarkable intervention in learning barriers in the selected Western Cape schools in South Africa. The major contributory factor to the effect is said to be the adoption of an approach of decentralising support from educators but involving other sectors of school community and professionals. The joined efforts of all the available support structures proved to be an effective means of rendering learning support.

Based on the literature presented above, this research shall have to establish how support of learners experiencing barriers to learning is conducted in Lejweleputswa schools during the

implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. If no effective support is noted for an effective implementation of the SIAS 2014, then this research will make a recommendation for an effective way of support for learners in Lejweleputswa schools. Having explored the aspects of support, a summary of the entire chapter will be presented next.

4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has examined how the introduction of the SIAS 2014 policy leads to an all-inclusive and more effective teaching and learning process by exploring the role of educators, school governance as well as profiling of learners in facilitating effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. Literature supporting the importance of effective screening, identification and assessment of barriers as well as support of learners who experience barriers to learning has also been reviewed. The next chapter will focus on research design and methodology.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Four a review of appropriate literature that supports inclusive education in Lejweleputswa was conducted in order to determine the implications for the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The policy directives as well as policy administrative forms were the main documentary sources of analysis in that chapter. This chapter aims to discuss the research paradigm, research approach, research design and methodology; the procedure followed when data collection was conducted, pilot study as well as the population and sample of the study. The data analysis techniques and how reliability and validity were ensured will also be discussed in this chapter. Finally, ethical considerations and limitations of the research will be presented before the conclusion in this chapter.

5.2 PRAGMATIST RESEARCH PARADIGM

Before any researcher can embark on a research activity, they need to take a stance on the kind of research paradigm on which they will be basing their research. The different underlying philosophies and world views of researchers are called paradigms or epistemologies (Muijs, 2011). In simple terms, a research paradigm can be defined as a school of thought to which a researcher affiliates in relation to the ideas, values and approach to research (Moyo, Modiba & Simwa, 2015). There are two basic research paradigms from which researchers can consider basing their research activity, namely the positivist, also known as the realist, and the interpretivist, also known as the subjectivist. The stance of this view is that there are two profoundly different world views that underlie quantitative and qualitative research: the quantitative view is associated with the positivist whilst the qualitative research is associated with subjectivist or interpretivist paradigm (Muijs, 2011).

The paradigm stance in this research is pragmatist paradigm. This paradigm approach offers an alternative worldview to those of positivism and interpretivism and focuses on the problem to be researched and the consequences of the research (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a). A pragmatist paradigm is distinguished from the positivist and interpretivist paradigms because its worldview does not simply employ both qualitative and quantitative methods, but it selects specific methods in a complementary way to find answers and solutions to problems. It departs from the assumption that objective reality cannot be represented accurately and empirical observation in itself cannot represent objective truth because people always view and experience things differently. Therefore it includes both positivist and interpretivist approaches (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a). A further contribution is made by Morgan (2014) who identified three widely shared elements of pragmatism as follows:

- There is no separation between actions and the situational contexts in which they occur.
- There is a link between actions and consequences.
- Actions are dependent on worldviews which are the socially shared sets of beliefs.

In this research, the pragmatist paradigm assisted the study to arrive at a logical conclusion about evaluation of the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa schools. This research does not only analyse the SIAS 2014 policy prescripts against the adopted theory of Bronfenbrenner in Chapter three (cf. 3.3.5) but also seeks to evaluate quantitatively and qualitatively the degree of the actual implementation of the policy through the research design and methodology.

The decision not to choose only one paradigm is also supported by Bergin (2018) who maintains that although in theory the divide between positivist and interpretivist traditions is vast, in practice the distinction between the two is not always clear cut. Many positivist researchers accept the interpretivist idea that researchers' own beliefs and perspective can shape their approaches to data analysis, although positivists may not describe these effects in as much detail as interpretivists. A researcher might bring a positivist perspective to the first part of research and an interpretivist perspective to the second part of research (Bergin, 2018). The complexity of trying to draw a line between a positivist and an interpretivist paradigm is also acknowledged by

Schwandt (2006) as quoted in Bergin (2018) who claims that different researchers advance diverse interpretations of the two perspectives' principles. As a result, a pragmatism paradigm has been selected because it enabled the incorporation of the principles of both paradigms in this research for the purpose of arriving at a sound conclusion about the nature of implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy being evaluated. The following sections summarise the nature of each paradigm that influenced the selection the pragmatist paradigm for this research.

A positivist paradigm believes that most occurrences are visible and can be quantified. Proponents of this paradigm claim that only the objective and observable facts can be the basis for science and they believe that reality is separate from an individual who observes it. They consider the researcher and the phenomenon being researched to be separate and independent. The researcher's role in positivism is to stand apart from that which is being studied with personal biases and values excluded through experimental design and control. The philosophy of positivism, optimism, reason and progress assert that reality lies only in things that can be seen with the naked eye. The stance of positivism insists that only what researchers can empirically observe is important and that science is the only true source of knowledge. With appropriate measurement tools, positivists believe that absolute truth can be uncovered about cause-and-effect relationships within the physical world and human experience. In a positivist paradigm observation and reason are used as means of understanding behaviour (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2015; Grbich, 2013; Jansen, 2016a; Johnson & Christensen, 2017; Leedy & Ormord, 2015; Moyo, Modiba & Simwa, 2015).

One can deduce that a positivist stance is that a body of knowledge and the one researching it are two different entities which never influence each other. According to this paradigm, it is as if reality is in the open waiting to be captured and presented to the world of interest as is, without its interpretation ever being influenced by a researcher, or conversely, it' influencing the opinion of the one collecting it. A positivist paradigm seems to be reliant only on the reality that can be objectively proved and any form of knowledge that does not match the standard of objectivity required by positivists is rejected. However, the positivist paradigm has critics who blame it for its severe ignorance of the role played by a researcher on the body of knowledge being

researched as well as the influence the very same body of knowledge has on the researcher. Such philosophers of the world view are advocates of the interpretivist paradigm which is discussed below.

The interpretivist paradigm is called constructivism and maintains that, unlike positivism, there are multiple socially constructed realities. Rather than trying to be objective, professional judgments and perspective of researchers in interpretivism are considered in the interpretation of data. It is a view believing that the human mind and objectivity are inseparable because they are intricately connected such that the knower and the process of knowing cannot be separated from what is known and the facts cannot be separated from values. Researchers in the interpretivist paradigm are often inclined to prefer qualitative research methods. In simple terms, it asserts that no distinction is made between the researcher and the event being studied. Therefore there is no singular, objective reality because individuals interpret the world in their different ways. Interpretations of the world are shaped by people's experiences, and by the societies in which they live (Bergin, 2018; Jansen, 2016a; Mcmillan & Schumacher, 2010; Vogt, Vogt, Gardner & Haefel, 2014; Waring, 2017a). Nieuwenhuis (2016a) suggests that the interpretivist paradigm is based on the following five assumptions:

- Understanding of human life can only be done from inside;
- Social life is a distinctive human product;
- Meaning is a purposive product of human mind;
- The social world affects human behaviour; and
- There is no independent existence between the social world and the human knowledge but they co-exist.

Apart from the above-mentioned assumptions, Nieuwenhuis (2016a) further asserts that social reality is typified by a multiplicity since dissimilar people interpret events differently and so a researcher may need to enter their world, be part of such world and observe it from within through the direct experience of the people being researched.

According to this notion of the interpretivist paradigm one may adopt an understanding that the paradigm in question does not believe in the existence of total objectivity but acknowledges the role played by researchers in interpreting what they may regard as the truth. The interpretivist paradigm seems to view the world through a lens that portrays both a researcher and phenomenon as complementing each other's identity. Researchers' subjectivity is not entirely divorced from the findings they present after analysing data; and the results also have an influence on the researchers' interpretive mind.

In the context of this research, the SIAS policy is an inclusive education stance that seems to hold an interpretivist paradigm in high regard even though it may not entirely be based on it alone. The SIAS 2014 policy can be attributed to the renowned Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory. The theory attests that for an education system to be effectively inclusive there should be a shift from a paradigm that views barriers within a learner in isolation, to a paradigm that views the barriers in a learner as a result of interconnectedness of the barriers with the rest of the systems within and outside the learner. The barriers are observed in all the systems of community functioning (cf. 2.2). Furthermore, the use of interviews' responses to present the findings indicates that this research is also interpretative in nature. The next paragraph presents the research approach that was adopted in this research.

5.3 RESEARCH APPROACHES

In research there are two basic approaches, namely a deductive approach and an inductive approach. The following paragraphs give an insight into the nature of the two approaches. The first approach to be discussed is a deductive approach, followed by an inductive approach. Afterwards, a combination of the two basic approaches, namely the mixed-methods research design, will be discussed.

A deductive approach to research is intended to test an existing theory logically (Blackstone, 2012). Leedy and Ormord (2015) further state that the theory or theories being tested can be statements or assumptions that a researcher believes to be true. This approach can then be viewed

in the light that the researchers do not bring any new theory or assumption into their research but they only affirm or nullify an existing theory. A deductive research approach is regarded as a quantitative research approach whereby numerical data is generated and analysed (Leedy & Ormord, 2015).

In other words, a deductive research approach excludes a researcher from bringing any form of intervention to an existing social issue except to prove or disprove a body of knowledge that was initially thought to be true. A deductive research approach, applied as a quantitative research approach, describes current conditions, investigates relations and studies cause-effect phenomena (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009).

A further explanation of the four forms of quantitative research as perceived by Gay *et al.* (2009) is presented as the survey research which describes current conditions, correlational research which investigates the relations between two or more variables, experimental and casual-comparative studies which provide information about cause-effect outcomes, and lastly, the single-subject research which focuses on behaviour change that an individual exhibits as a result of some intervention.

In all the aforementioned forms of the quantitative research approach, the one common factor is that they involve the testing of theories, propositions or hypotheses (Bitzer, 2017). In this study, survey research was conducted because it afforded an opportunity to evaluate the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in the sampled schools in Lejweleputswa using quantitative research methods. Figure 4.1 below shows a deductive approach to research used in quantitative research as suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2018).

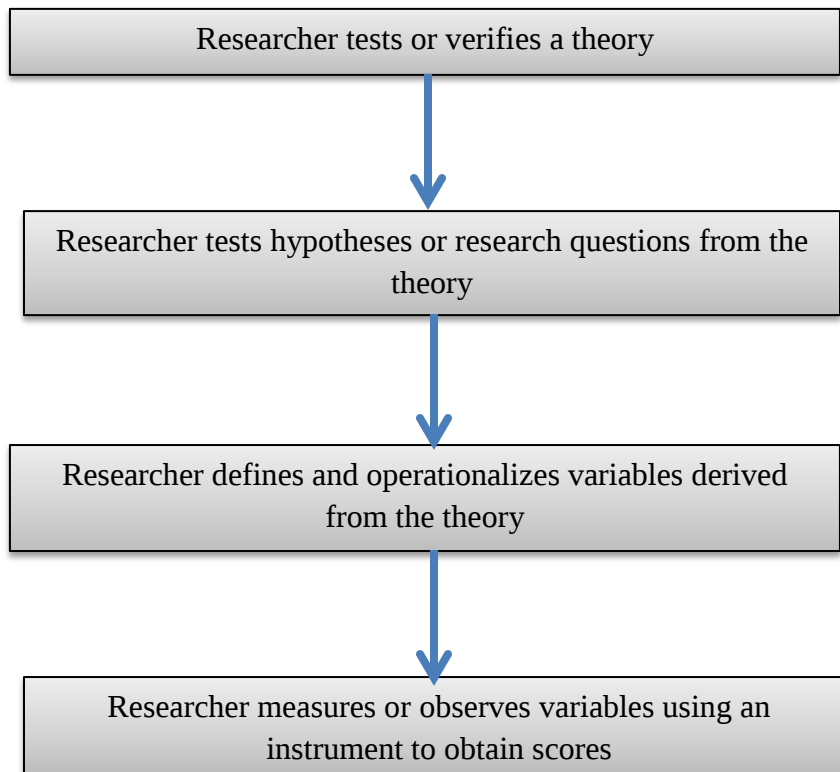


Figure 5.1: Deductive approach used in quantitative research (Source: Creswell & Creswell 2018).

A deductive research approach normally begins with one or more logical premises². A logical premise in this case is the formulation of a hypothesis to be tested. In this research, the SIAS 2014 policy implementation variables that informed the tested hypothesis were screening, identification, assessment and support. For each belief that the researcher wants to test, two hypotheses are formulated, known as the null hypothesis (H_o) and the alternative hypothesis (H_i) where H_o denotes that there is no difference while H_i means there is a difference in the given scenario (Pietersen & Maree, 2016a). In this research, a deductive research approach was used to test the hypotheses (cf. 5.7.2.2).

While a deductive research approach is associated with quantitative research, an inductive research approach is associated with qualitative research. The approach focuses more on introducing a new theory from data that has been collected and analysed (Blackstone 2012).

² Premises are statements or assumptions that the researcher initially takes to be true (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013: 17).

Although data is carefully studied to identify patterns that can be used for generalisation in order to establish a theory that explains the identified patterns, Ritchie and Spencer (1994) as quoted in Barbour (2018) attest that an inductive or interpretive philosophy is not easy to undertake, hence many researchers avoid it. Gay *et al.* (2011) also attest to the fact that qualitative researchers choose not to make premature decisions about their research but they prefer to remain open to alternative explanations. The basis of qualitative research is to facilitate a sound understanding of a social activity viewed from the research participants' perspective (Gay *et al.*, 2011).

Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2016) state some characteristic aspects of an inductive research approach to be concerned with the meanings people attach to things in their lives. They further contend that qualitative research is inductive because it allows researchers to develop concepts, insights, and understandings from patterns in the data rather than collecting data to assess preconceived models, hypotheses or theories. The interest of researchers is on people's thinking and actions on daily life (Taylor *et al.*, 2016). This means inductive researchers strive to be original in their inductive thinking and analysis. They carefully analyse what they observe from people's natural settings and develop a theory or an insight based on what the patterns of data reveal.

From the above-mentioned sources it can be deduced that inductive reasoning in research is that which does not compel researchers to make a claim or conclusion even when they feel that the data patterns before them are not distinct enough to make a bold declaration about them. Inductive researchers, as much as they are at liberty to make declarations about data patterns before them, always opt for the best and most logical way of reasoning and analysing data before making any statements of reasoning or concluding theories. In other words, inductive reasoning favours time, not speed; declarative statements and theories are made when the time is right neither within a certain period of time nor when certain stages have been accomplished. In the context of this research, an inductive research approach was conducted to study the views of key role players in the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa District schools. This approach is depicted in Figure 4.2 below in qualitative research as suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2018).

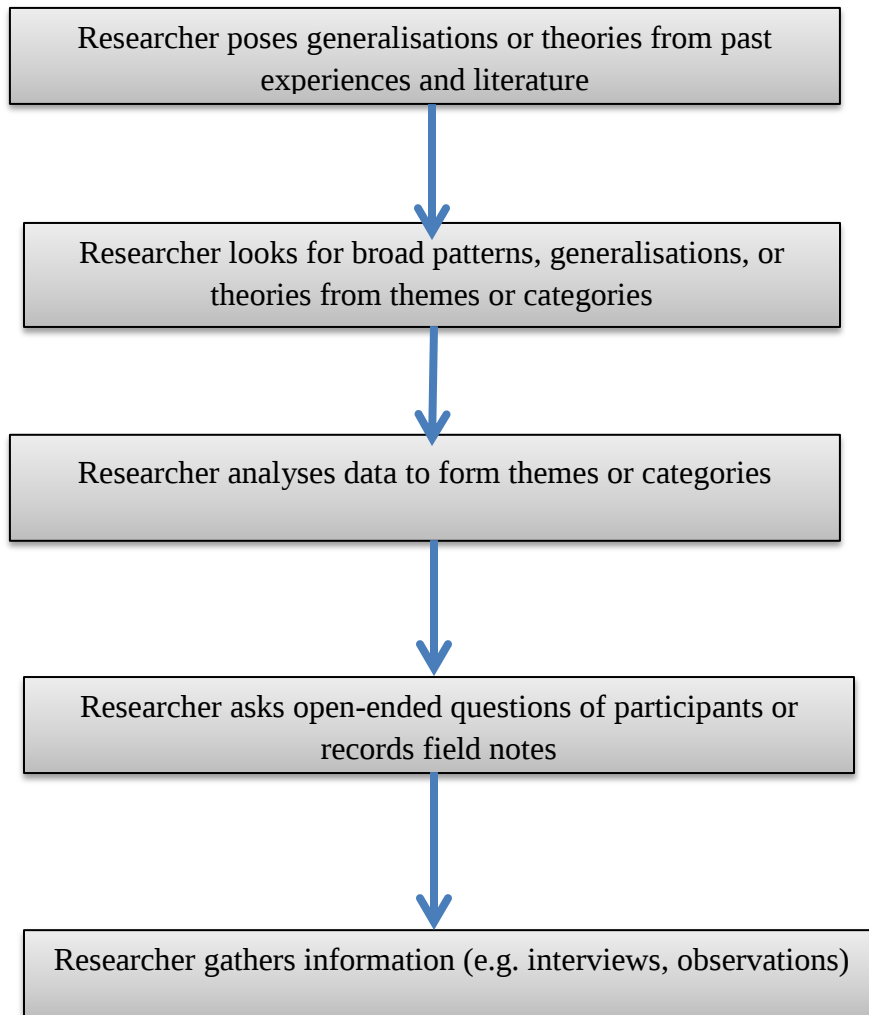


Figure 5.2: Inductive logic in qualitative research (Source: Creswell & Creswell 2018)

At this juncture, it is important to note that both inductive and deductive approaches were useful in eliciting a body of knowledge about the implementation of SIAS 2014 in this research. These two approaches complement each other in such a way that no one approach could be said to be better than the other. In addition, they are similar in some ways just as Creswell (2012) indicates that the basic similarity of the two approaches could be seen in the data collection procedure. Both approaches seem to employ similar approaches, such as interviews or observations. However, a deductive approach uses more closed-ended methods in which the researcher identifies set response categories such as “strongly agree” and/or “strongly disagree”. On the other hand, an inductive approach uses more open-ended approaches in which the researcher

asks general questions of participants, and the participants shape the response possibilities (Creswell 2012). The next section will explain the research design and methodology used in this research.

5.4 MIXED METHODS RESEARCH APPROACH

As it has been explained in Chapter One (cf. 1.7), a research design is an overall plan for conducting a scientific enquiry. It is a composite plan that outlines how the research will be conducted concerning the key aspects such as the selection of participants, data-gathering methods and how data analysis will be conducted (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). The research design for the evaluative study of the implementation of the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa District, Free State, is a mixed- methods research design (cf.1.7.1) which is discussed in the following sections.

The complex nature of mixed-methods research needs to be understood by acknowledging the procedural diagrams that convey the aspects of the research process implemented in a mixed-methods study. Morse (1991) as quoted in Ivankova, Creswell and Plano Clark (2016), is one of the early writers who developed a notation system that reflects labels used for the quantitative (Quan) and qualitative (Qual) approaches and the timing of the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. Figures 5.3 and 5.4 below show the notation system for mixed-methods research.

Quan + Qual or Qual + Quan
Qual - Quan or Quan - Qual

Figure 5.3: Notation system for mixed-methods research (Source: Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2016).

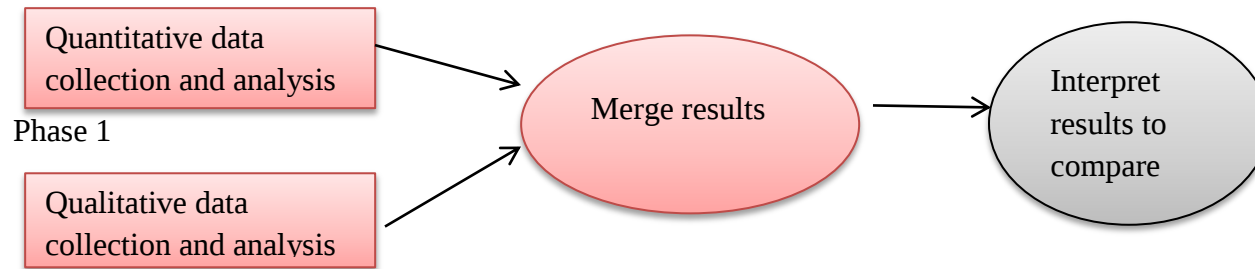
QUAN + QUAL or QUAL + QUAN
QUAN - qual or QUAL - quan

Figure 5.4: Notation system for mixed-methods (Source: Creswell 2005)

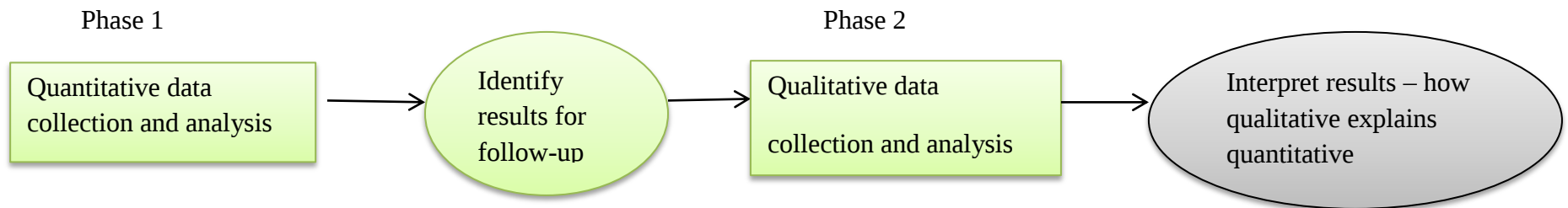
In Figures 5.3 and 5.4 above, a plus sign is depicted to indicate the simultaneous collection of quantitative and qualitative data while the arrows show the sequential collection of quantitative and qualitative data. For the purpose of this research, a dash was used instead of an arrow. The uppercase letters show a priority or increased weight for either the quantitative or qualitative data. Lowercase letters indicate a lower priority or weight for either the quantitative or qualitative data.

Mixed-methods research design is regarded as a method for collection, analysis, and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single research study in order to understand a research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010 as quoted in Creswell, 2012). Figure 4.5 below shows a summative structure of the three core mixed-methods designs as suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2018) in which the mixed-methods design is depicted as a three-dimensional model made up of the convergent, explanatory sequential and exploratory sequential designs which are discussed below.

Convergent design (one-phase design)



Explanatory sequential design (two-phase design)



Exploratory sequential design (three-phase design)

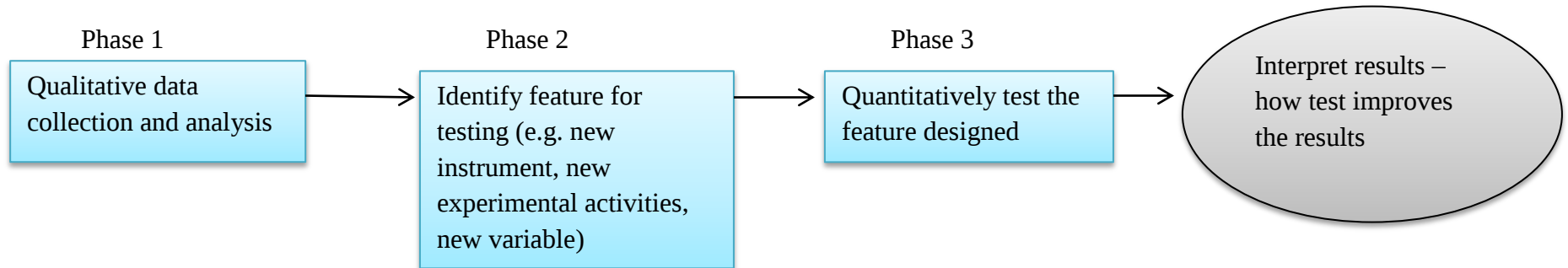


Figure 5.5: Three core mixed-methods designs (Source: Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

5.4.1 Convergent design

In Figure 5.5 above, a convergent design is depicted as having only one phase of data collection where there is a separate collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data and then the results are compared before being merged for a one solid conclusion. The underlying assumption of the convergent mixed-methods design is that both quantitative and qualitative data provide different types of information in which the former gives scores while the latter gives views of participants and yet both yield results that should be the same (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A research quest to obtain same results from comparing quantitative and qualitative results is also acknowledged by Bergin (2018) who states that the mixed-methods design is used for the purpose of triangulation, or exploring whether similar findings are obtained from both methods so as to bring credence to the results.

5.4.2 Explanatory sequential design

Apart from the convergent design, the explanatory sequential design is portrayed as having two phases in Figure 5.5. The first phase of the mixed-method design comprises collecting and analysing quantitative data, then studying the results for any identifiable complexities which may need to be researched further. The researcher then embarks upon the second phase which is the second data collection which now is done qualitatively.

Unlike the convergent design where the same data is collected using different modes, the second phase of the explanatory sequential design is such that the data being collected is aimed at explaining the findings of the first phase; hence it is called explanatory sequential. Creswell and Creswell (2018) succinctly point out that the quantitative results are used to plan the qualitative follow-up. This same viewpoint is held by Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011) who indicate that the findings of the quantitative research determine the type of data collection in the second phase of the research which also includes qualitative data collection, analysis, and interpretation. In this model quantitative data is generated first and is more heavily weighted than qualitative data. Therefore the results of the qualitative design are then interpreted with an intention of providing more depth and more insight into the quantitative results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Gay *et al.*, 2011).

5.4.3 Exploratory sequential design

The last dimension of the mixed-methods design depicted in Figure 5.5 is the exploratory sequential design. It starts with qualitative research. From the qualitative responses, questionnaire items are constructed, then quantitative data is gathered, analysed and interpreted.

In this research study, evaluation of the implementation of the SIAS 2014 education policy in Lejweleputswa needed a type of design that allowed a collection of complementary quantitative and qualitative data. As it has been claimed by Bryman, Greene, Caracelli and Graham (2006) cited in Leedy and Ormrod (2015), it was realised that the sequential explanatory mixed-methods design enabled an opportunity to arrive at more convincing and logical conclusions when quantitative data was collected first and qualitative data collected afterwards. The following diagram shows how the sequential explanatory mixed-methods research design was conducted as advised by Ivankova *et al.* (2016):

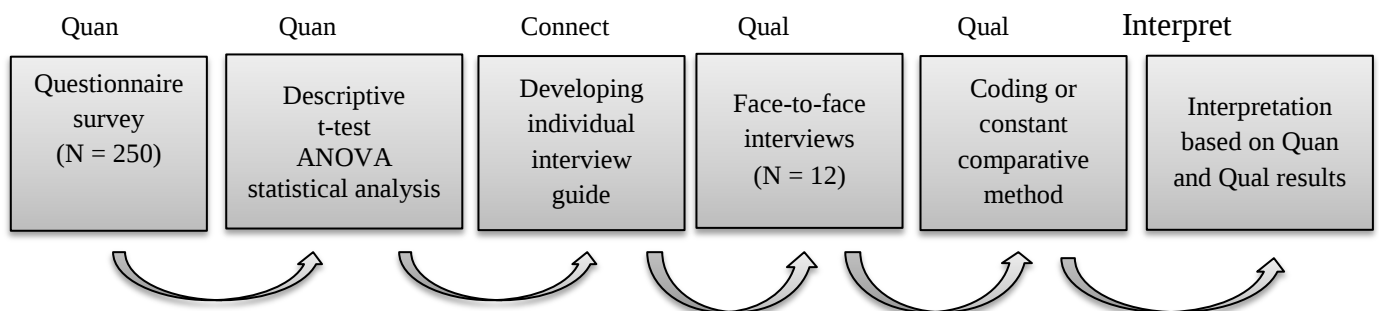


Figure 5.6: Explanatory sequential mixed-methods design procedures (Source: Ivankova *et al.*, 2016).

The purpose of the explanatory sequential mixed-methods study was to evaluate the implementation of the 2014 screening, identification, assessment and support policy. The goal of the quantitative phase of the study was to determine how educators screen, identify, assess and support learners with barriers; hence a questionnaire was administered to both primary and secondary school educators. The purpose of the qualitative phase of the study was to find out from the SIAS 2014 policy steering personnel why there was a moderate

implementation of the policy in the Lejweleputswa District; hence interviews were conducted with school principals and members of the DBST. The following paragraphs highlight the characteristics of the questionnaire as research instrument for this study.

5.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE AS A RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The following paragraphs discuss how quantitative data were collected in this research. Bearing in mind that a mixed-methods research design was adopted, the first discussion is based on the quantitative data collection and analysis denoted as ‘QUAN’.

5.5.1 QUAN data collection instrument

One of the basic instruments for data collection in a quantitative approach of mixed-methods research is a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a tool for measuring, observing, or documenting data and it contains specific questions (or items) which may be open-ended or closed-ended (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Creswell, 2015; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2015; Maree & Pietersen, 2016a; Ganga & Maphalala, 2015). Maree and Pietersen (2016a) believe that a carefully designed and applied questionnaire makes it a natural and ready-to-use instrument that elicits information. The following paragraphs discuss the five aspects taken into cognizance when constructing and administering the questionnaire.

5.5.1.1 Administration of the questionnaire

The first point of departure about questionnaire administration is the procedure to be employed. Tymms (2017) has identified five questionnaire administration procedures and the advantages and disadvantages of each procedure are portrayed in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaire administration

Administrative procedure	Advantages	Disadvantages
Paper-based	Easy to administer to small samples. Simple to run off copies. Well established. Tried and tested.	Cost of paper and data entry. Difficult to use over large distances such as overseas. Scanning can be troublesome. Papers can be lost in transit.
Computer delivered	Useable on a very wide scale. Very economical. Rapid data collection. No data entry. Branching questionnaires are possible.	A major problem is the potential bias because those who do not have computers would not be able to respond.
Face-to-face	A skilled interviewer can encourage responses. He/she can flip between open and closed ended questions without difficulty. Additional notes can be taken relating to information that does not appear in a questionnaire. People can be approached in the street, in the pub or elsewhere.	An interview can be off-putting. An individual asked sensitive questions may be less likely to be honest. It can be expensive.
Phone	Perhaps surprisingly, phones can generate more revealing responses than face-to-face interviews. As with interviews, points of interest can be followed up. Can be recorded although by law one must ask permission and a reminder beep must be put on the line. Can be automated.	Some people may not want to respond on the phone. Phone numbers may not be readily available. It can be expensive.

(Source: Tymms, 2017).

It can be seen in Table 5.1 that all forms of questionnaire administration have both advantages and disadvantages. In this research, a paper-based form of administrative procedure was selected owing to the advantages mentioned in Table 5.1 which prevailed over the circumstances faced during the time of data collection. Next to be considered after deciding the administration procedure were the instructions. The researcher was also mindful that the instructions should be simple, clear and concise as advocated by Maree and Pietersen (2016a). This stance is also supported by Salkind (2018) who confirms that good

questionnaires have directions that are complete and to the point. The instructions tell the respondents exactly what to do and how to do it. A questionnaire should be attractive, brief, and easy to respond to; the face validity of a questionnaire determines the manner in which it will be accepted by its users (Ganga & Maphalala, 2015; Gay *et al.*, 2011; Salkind, 2018). The instructions that were in the questionnaire are outlined in the next paragraph.

Lastly, the questionnaire cover letter is equally important because it helps set the scene for what is to come. Among the essentials of a cover letter is the date to show the urgency of the request; the purpose of the questionnaire; the time estimate for respondents to know when to return it; and clear promises of confidentiality and how this will be ensured (Salkind 2018). To meet the above-mentioned requirements, the QUAN data collection documentation that was delivered by the researcher to each school comprised the following:

- Cover letter to the principals requesting permission to conduct research in their school; explanation of the research essence and purpose, and assurance of total confidentiality were outlined (cf. Appendix 4).
- An approval letter to conduct research in the schools from the Free State Department of Education to the researcher was attached to confirm the authenticity and credibility of the research (cf. Appendix 3).
- Cover letter to individual educators inviting them to participate voluntarily in the research, explaining the purpose and significance of the research as well as guaranteeing treatment of their responses with confidentiality (cf. Appendix 5).
- The actual questionnaire to individual educators (cf. Appendix 6). The questionnaire was a final product of the following aspects discussed below.

Questions in a questionnaire fall within two main categories, namely the close-ended questions (also known as closed or structured types) and the open-ended (also known as unstructured) questions. Close-ended questions are those that require ‘yes’ or ‘no’ responses; ‘true’ or ‘false’ responses or one with rating scales such as the Likert scale or semantic differential scale. In a close-ended questionnaire, responses are fixed and they take a longer

time to construct. The key advantage of a close-ended questionnaire is that it takes a shorter time to complete and its administration enables researchers to analyse results in a much simpler way; hence the responses are easier to compare (Creswell, 2015; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2015; Ganga & Maphalala, 2015; Maree & Pietersen, 2016a). However, unlike the close-ended questions, open-ended questions give participants an opportunity to respond to questions in their own words because there are no fixed alternatives as in close-ended questions. Participants are able to clarify their creative responses. One of the drawbacks of an open-ended questionnaire is that in some instances participants may lose track of the requirement of the question in their quest to provide a fully detailed answer or they may provide no answer at all which may cause a questionnaire to be incomplete and so distort the coding procedure (Ganga & Maphalala, 2015).

In this research a structured questionnaire was designed for data collection from educators (cf. Appendix 6). This type of questionnaire was chosen because it is often directly to the point and more focused (Cohen *et al.*, 2018). Variables of closed-ended items were measured on a seven-point semantic differential scale, where the respondents chose 1, 2 or 3 to denote how strongly they disagreed with a questionnaire statement; or chose 5, 6 or 7 to denote how strongly they agreed. Then (four 4) represented the level of uncertainty between ‘strongly disagreeing’ and ‘strongly agreeing’.

The rationale for the choice of a seven-point semantic differential scale was based on the researcher’s perception that it offered a wide range of options for respondents to choose the position that best described their degree of the implementation of the 2014 SIAS policy in their respective schools. This scale was also suitable for descriptive and inferential statistics that were used to present and analyse data.

Before and after the pilot study (cf. 5.6), the questionnaire originally constituted two sections, namely sections A and B. Section B largely evaluated the policy implementation by educators and so formed the crux of the enquiry while Section A which was the beginning of the questionnaire consisted of various independent variables with a few easy-to-answer, non-threatening questions such as biographical details which put the respondents at ease. The rationale for this sequencing is also supported by some researchers (Creswell, 2015; Leedy &

Ormrod, 2015; Maree & Pietersen, 2016a). These researchers argue that the sequence of question items should strive to motivate the respondents to be willing to answer the questions without fear or prejudice. The following section describes how the questionnaire was constructed.

5.5.1.2 Construction of the questionnaire

Items in all parts of the questionnaire were derived from the literature review in Chapters 2 and 3. Part A consisted of independent variable items that inquired about the biographical information of the respondents because, as has been indicated in Chapter two, educator profiles can influence learning barriers (cf. 2.2). The items inquired about independent variables such as gender, age, teaching experience of educators, their highest qualifications, post level, the type of school at which they teach and whether they had studied any course in inclusive education. Parts B and C of the questionnaire were informed by the contents of the literature review (cf.2.5) relating to the importance of the culture of the parents and that of children in influencing learning barriers as well as educators' understanding of the policy framework, rationale and principles about learning barriers.

The SIAS 2014 policy framework, rationale and principles discussed in Chapter two informed Parts B and C items because it was only through Parts B and C of the questionnaire that the researcher could determine whether the educators understood the framework, rationale and principles of the SIAS 2014 policy.

Parts C, D, E and F of the questionnaire focused on the implementation process of the SIAS 2014 policy prescripts as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 (cf. 2.5, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 & 3.5). The questionnaire items in Parts C, D, E and F served as means by which the researcher could determine how the policy was implemented at both primary and secondary schools as compared with the prescribed way of implementation. Through the information gained in all the sections of the questionnaire, the researcher was able to analyse the nature of implementation of the policy at schools objectively. The format of the questionnaire is presented summatively in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: Format of the pilot study's questionnaire

Section A		Section B			
Part A Consisted of items about personal information of respondents (Independent variables)		Parts	Dependent variables measured	Number of items before piloting	Number of items after piloting
Number of items before piloting	Number of items after piloting	Part B	Policy framework	5	6
10	10	Part C	Policy rationale and principles	8	3
		Part D	Implementation of screening	69	25
		Part E	Implementation of identification and assessment	5	7
		Part F	Implementation of support	8	14
		TOTAL		95	55

The questionnaire that was used to collect quantitative data was refined after the pilot study. Since the questionnaire has been discussed above as a research instrument, the following sections present the developments of the pilot study.

5.6 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study is a small-scale trial of a study which is conducted before a full-scale research. It tests the research plan by following every procedure exactly as planned to identify unanticipated problems or issues. It also allows a researcher to test and refine research methodologies before conducting the actual, larger research. A pilot study assists a researcher to know whether the participants in the sample are able to complete the survey questions with understanding (Bergin, 2018; Creswell, 2012; Gay *et al.*, 2011). Two schools from a sample list in Lejweleputswa were sampled for piloting. The pilot schools were sampled based on their proximal convenience to the researcher. As advocated by McMillan and Schumacher

(2010), the questionnaire that was piloted between the two schools bore the following requirements from the researcher to the respondents who were School-Based educators, including the principals:

- To respond to all the questionnaire items;
- To skip and note with a pen all items which did not have a clear meaning to them; and
- To note any ideas that they had about the questionnaire that made it difficult for them to respond to the questionnaire.

5.6.1 Findings of the pilot study

The following paragraphs are not a presentation of the pilot data analysis or its interpretation; however, they give a general overview of the contextual observations and lessons learnt during the piloting. This view from the pilot study of what not to include is also shared by Gumbo (2015). It is suggested that the focus of a pilot research is to get a response from the pilot participants regarding their personal experience when completing the questionnaire. The researcher does not need to make an effort to analyse the findings of a pilot study; if the findings are analysed, it is not advisable to report such findings because that may be a contamination of the main research. For these reasons an overview of the pilot study is presented by focusing on the observations noted and the lessons gained.

5.6.1.1 Observation 1 – Questionnaire turnout

Thirty-five questionnaires were distributed but only twenty-six (74.29%) were returned. Out of the twenty-six that were returned, fifteen had not been returned by the agreed time for their collection.

5.6.1.2 Lesson gained from observation 1

The low response rate gave a clear indication of what could be expected in the main research. It was through this reluctance of the educators that the researcher was able to realise that the full-scale research would definitely meet challenges if modifications were not done. The pilot study became an advantage as rightfully indicated by Gumbo (2015), namely that one of the advantages of conducting a pilot study was that it could give a warning about where the main research project could fail. It was upon this basis that the researcher embarked on finding out from the pilot study's participants why the questionnaires were returned late or why they were not returned at all. The following were the main reasons which were given:

- The 95 questionnaire items were considered to be too many.
- The respondents did not have enough time to complete the questionnaire Owing to their heavy workload and busy lifestyle schedules.
- The respondents were too tired after work to complete the questionnaire.

5.6.1.3 Observation 2 – Length of the questionnaire

The researcher further established that not only the non-respondents and late submitters considered the questionnaire items were too many but the punctual submitters also shared the same sentiment.

5.6.1.4 Lesson gained from observation 2

As a result of the feedback from the pilot study's respondents, the researcher realised that respondents in the main research would most likely find the questionnaire too lengthy to complete. The 26 submitted questionnaires of 95 items were then subjected to factor analysis using SPSS version 25. Factor analysis is a procedure used to identify relations among variables in a questionnaire. It is often employed to decrease a large number of responses to a few more meaningful groupings known as factors (Gay *et al.*, 2011). After factor analysis, thirteen items were removed in the final questionnaire because they had loadings which were below .5. As a result of factor analysis, eight items that measured the implementation of screening and five items which measured educators' understanding of the policy rationale and its principles were removed from the final questionnaire. Furthermore, thirty-six items which measured the implementation of screening were removed owing to the advice of the respondents as they felt that they were repetitive. Information from the respondents also led to the addition of nine new additional items to the final questionnaire. Of these, one item measured educators' understanding of the policy framework, two measured educators' implementation of identification and assessment of learning barriers, and six measured the implementation of support.

5.6.1.5 Observation 3 - Reliability

Reliability in quantitative research is referred to as the extent to which a questionnaire consistently measures and produces the kind of results that it is intended to measure and

produce (Gumbo, 2015). The pilot questionnaire reliability revealed a high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .91.

5.6.1.6 Lesson gained from observation 3

The questionnaire showed a high internal consistency which means that the questionnaire was highly reliable and could be administered in the main research.

5.6.1.7 Observation 4 - Responses

There were some responses that the researcher found anomalous. For example, an item inquired whether there was an SBST in the respondent's school. The respondent answered that there was none though the researcher knew very well that the answer was not true since both the researcher and the respondent work in the same school where the SBST was in existence. The researcher had to capture the answer of the respondent as it was given. However, it was suspected that the respondent had not intended to mislead the researcher but that this was a human error, probably caused by failure to proofread the response or the influence of fatigue as had been indicated by some participants earlier (cf. 4.6.1.2). Unfortunately, such anomalous responses could not be rectified by the researcher but were ethically captured as they had been given.

5.6.1.8 Lesson gained from observation 4

The researcher would have to advise the respondents to the main research questionnaire during its distribution to always proofread their responses and take a break whenever they felt tired during the completion of the questionnaire. This would help to avoid having responses that were not intended due to failure to check their own responses while fresh and energised.

5.6.1.9 Observation 5 – Reluctance and attitude

Some of the respondents showed reluctance and a negative attitude towards completing the questionnaire when requested by the researcher as soon as they learnt that the questionnaire was about the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The respondents revealed that they were not eager to respond to any enquiry on the SIAS 2014 policy because they found that it required a great deal of time and effort to implement.

5.6.1.10 Lesson gained from observation 5

Though the researcher could not do anything about it, the reluctance and negative attitude towards the questionnaire about the policy was to be expected during the administration of the questionnaire in the main research. From the researcher's experience as a School-Based

educator, the implementation of the policy is often neglected by educators owing to more curriculum demands made on them, which also take up most of their time.

5.6.1.11 Observation 6 – Exoneration

The principals of the two pilot schools were also requested to complete the questionnaire but they both exonerated themselves without any reason given.

5.6.1.12 Lesson gained from observation 6

From the principals refusing to complete the questionnaire, it was noted by the researcher that some principals might also excuse themselves from completing the questionnaire during the main research. As a result this, the main research results might not then be free from bias because they would be a partial and not a full representation of how 2014 SIAS policy was implemented at schools. The following section discusses the sampling strategy for the final questionnaire.

5.7 TARGET AND SAMPLE POPULATION FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Bergin (2018) defines a population as a group of potential participants with a common attribute which is of interest to a researcher and to whom a researcher wants to generalise the results of a study. It is sometimes called a target population while a sample population is a subset of the target population which is made up of participants from the target population from whom data is collected (Bergin, 2018; McMillan, 2012; Salkind, 2018). In the context of this research, there was one target population for the questionnaire. The target population was educators in primary and secondary schools in the Lejweleputswa District. The researcher regards educators as the first line of effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy at school level. Both primary and secondary school educators were sampled in order to collect data from an unbiased sample. An unbiased sample is representative of the population being studied and is not skewed towards one group or another (Muijs, 2011). Out of the target population, 250 educators were sampled. An explanation of how sampling of the target population was done in this research follows hereafter.

5.7.1 Sampling for the questionnaire respondents

Research methodology experts declare that to understand sampling, a researcher first has to distinguish between two general sampling strategies, namely probability sampling and

nonprobability sampling (Bergin, 2018; Creswell, 2015; Gall *et al.*, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; McMillan, 2012; Salkind, 2018). Probability sampling entails that the likelihood of any one member of the target population being selected is known while in the nonprobability sampling the likelihood of selecting any one member from the population is not known (Bergin, 2018; Creswell, 2015; Gall *et al.*, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; McMillan, 2012; Salkind, 2018). Table 4.3 below displays different types of probability sampling, when they can be used, and the advantages and disadvantages of using them.

Table 5.3: Types of probability sampling strategies

Type of Sampling	When to use it	Advantages	Disadvantages
Probability Strategies			
Simple random sampling	When the population members are similar to one another on important variables	Ensures a high degree of representativeness	It is boring and takes too much time
Systematic sampling	When the population members are similar to one another on important variables	Ensures a high degree of representatives and no need to use a table of random numbers	Less random than simple random sampling
Stratified random sampling	When the population is heterogeneous and contains several different groups, some of which are related to the topic of study	Ensures a high degree of representatives of all the strata or layers in the population	Time consuming and tedious
Cluster sampling	When the population consists of units rather than individuals	Easy and convenient	Possibly members of units are different from one another, decreasing the technique's effectiveness

(Source: Salkind 2018).

Of the two sampling methods, the use of probability sampling methods is the most ideal way to ensure that a sample is unbiased (Muijs, 2011). In this research a probability random sampling technique for the administration of the questionnaire was used. This is a method of choosing a sample using a sampling technique that allows the researcher to stipulate the chance that each member of a particular population will be chosen for the sample. As advocated by Gay *et al.* (2011), in this research the type of random sampling technique used was stratified random sampling, in which Lejweleputswa educators were selected to respond

to the questionnaire in such a way that all educators in the primary and secondary schools had an equal and independent chance of selection for the sample. The sample was stratified according to gender and type of school. Figure 4.7 below is a representation of how the stratified random sampling was conducted as suggested by McMillan (2012).

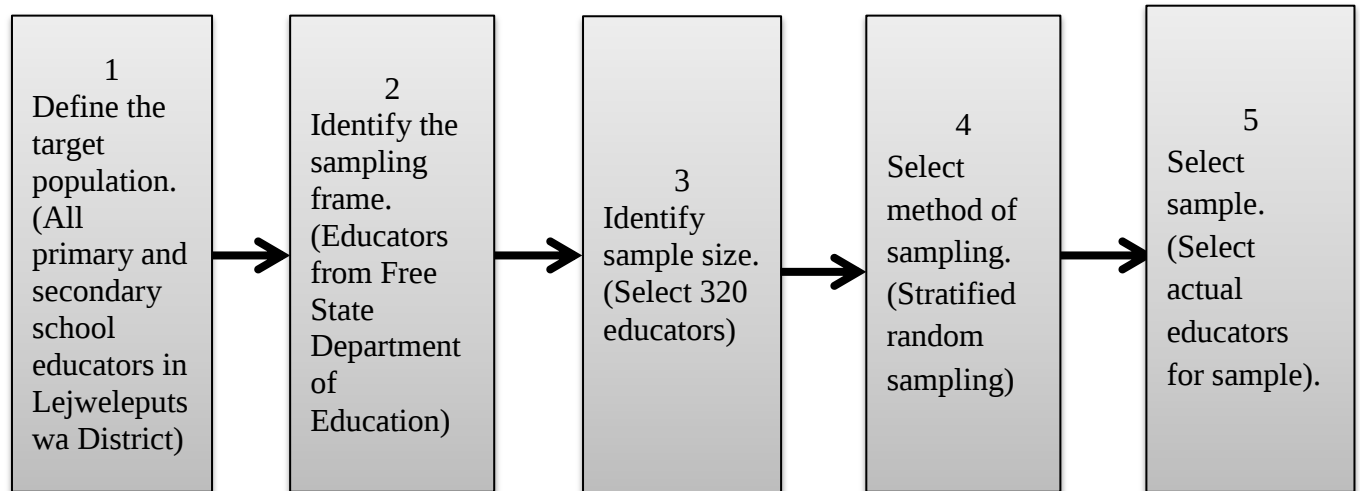


Figure 5.7: Steps in probability sampling (Source: McMillan, 2012).

In this research, the target population was all primary and secondary school educators in the Lejweleputswa District. Primary and secondary school educators are the first line of SIAS 2014 policy implementation because they are the ones who first register learners in their classes and establish Learner Profiles for them. As a result, the first step of the SIAS 2014 policy implementation starts with educators in the classroom screening learners using a Learner Profile. Since the research aims to evaluate the SIAS 2014 policy implementation in public schools, only educators in the Free State Department of Education were identified as the sample frame. The identified sample size was 160 male and 160 female educators who totalled 320 in all. A stratified random sampling was employed to administer the 320 questionnaires of which 250 (78.12%) were returned while 7 (2.19%) were spoiled. 63 (19.68%) questionnaires were never returned and reasons forwarded by respondents ranged from misplacement to lack of time to fill them in.

5.7.2 Questionnaire data analysis techniques

Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in this research to analyse QUAN data collected from the questionnaire using the SPSS version 25. Two statistical techniques of

quantitative data analysis, namely checking the reliability of the scale and factor analysis were done during the pilot study. The following paragraphs elaborate more on the data analysis techniques.

5.7.2.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics involves a meaningful analysis of collected data by describing the many pieces of data with numerical indices (Fraenkel *et al.*, 2015). A further explanation by Johnson and Christensen (2017) indicates that descriptive statistics starts with a set of data which is called a data set from which a researcher conveys the essential characteristics of the data by arranging the data into a more interpretable form such as frequency distributions and or generating graphical displays. Descriptive statistics fall under six different categories as explained by Vogt *et al.* (2014: 208) below:

- Measures of **central tendency**, such as mean, median, and mode. These are used to identify the typical or middle score in a distribution.
- Measures of dispersion, such as the variance and the standard deviation (SD). These describe the amount of deviation from the central tendency, especially from the mean.
- Measures of **relative position**, such as the percentile and the z-score. These describe the location of a given score in a distribution of scores.
- Measures of **association**, such as the correlation. These describe how the values of two or more variables vary together, or covary.
- Measures of **effect size (ES)** such as Cohen's d. These are used to describe magnitude.
- Measures of **likely error** (or margins of error), such as the **standard error (SE)** and **confidence interval (CI)**. These are used to estimate the likely range of probable error of estimation in other statistics.

In this research, measures of central tendency, such as mean (*M*) and median (*MD*), and a measure of dispersion, namely standard deviation (*SD*) were used to present and analyse descriptive data. These forms of descriptive statistics techniques are called numerical statistics. This choice was informed by the fact that the scale of the questionnaire used in this research was numerical (semantic differential scale). The next paragraph discusses the inferential statistics that were used to test hypotheses.

5.7.2.2 Inferential statistics

In a statistical inference the known quantities are used to conclude the probability of unknown quantities (Bergin, 2018; Creswell, 2015; Gall *et al.*, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; McMillan, 2012; Salkind, 2018). These techniques are used for speculating the likelihood that the results which are based on a sample bear resemblance to the results that would have been obtained for the entire population. With inferential statistics, a researcher studies samples when they are actually much more interested in populations. Populations are not studied directly because it would be cost prohibitive and logistically impossible to study everyone in most populations that are the focus of research studies (Fraenkel *et al.*, 2015; Johnson & Christensen, 2017; Vogt *et al.*, 2014). Furthermore, Vogt *et al.* (2014) state that inferential statistics have two main approaches which are called the null hypothesis significance testing (NHST) and effect sizes with confidence intervals (ESCI). In research that uses inferential statistics, the aim is to be able to reject the null hypothesis of no difference between sampled populations. The two most commonly used significance tests are the *t*-test and the *F*-test, usually known as analysis of variance, almost always abbreviated as ANOVA. The *t*-test is most commonly used to study two groups defined by one categorical independent variable, such as large and small classes, and how those two differ on average on one continuous dependent variable, such as scores on an achievement test (Vogt *et al.*, 2014; Devlin, 2018). In this research, methods of data analysis were done through the two parametric techniques, namely *t*-test and ANOVA. The application of these statistical techniques can be represented diagrammatically as follows in Table 5.4:

Table 5.4: Independent samples *t*-test – Gender

Continuous dependent variables	Gender	
	Males	Females
Screening of learning barriers		
Identification and assessment of barriers		
Support of learners with learning barriers		

Table 5.4 above indicates how the following hypotheses were tested in this research:

- H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for male and female educators.

- H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for male and female educators.
- H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for male and female educators.
- H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for male and female educators.
- H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners with learning barriers scores for male and female educators.
- H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners with learning barriers scores for male and female educators.

Table 5.5: Independent Samples t-test – Type of School

Continuous dependent variables	Type of School	
	Primary schools	Secondary schools
Screening of learning barriers		
Identification and assessment of learning barriers		
Support of learners with learning barriers		

Table 5.5 above indicates how the following hypotheses were tested in this research:

- H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.
- H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.
- H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.
- H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.
- H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners with learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.
- H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners with learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.

Table 5.6: One-way between-groups ANOVA – Teaching Experience

Continuous dependent variables	Teaching Experience		
	5 years and under	6 – 20 years	21 years and over
Screening of barriers			
Identification and assessment of barriers			
Support of learners with learning barriers			

Table 5.6 above illustrates how the following hypotheses were tested in this research:

- H_o = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.
- H_i = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.
- H_o = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.
- H_i = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.
- H_o = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners with learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.
- H_i = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners with learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

The results that emanated from quantitative data analyses were clarified through interviews; hence the following section outlines characteristics of the interview as a research instrument.

5.8 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERVIEW AS A RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The following paragraphs aim to discuss how qualitative data were collected in this research. Subsequently the interview as a data collection instrument is highlighted. The discussion is based on the qualitative data collection and analysis denoted as ‘qual’.

Morgan (2014) notes the three common reasons for qual data collection are for exploration, investigation, and illustration. The reasons can be distinguished by what the needs of the core quantitative study are. With exploration, the purpose is to produce broad insights into how and why a particular set of results occurred during the quantitative study, while with investigation the goal is to explain specific patterns in the quantitative data. Lastly, the follow-up studies provide descriptions of the sources for the quantitative portion of the project. As has been stated earlier in this chapter (cf. 5.4), interviews were conducted as soon as the quantitative data had been collected and analysed. In this research, the results of the quantitative data determined a need for exploration, investigation and explanation of the quantitative results.

5.8.1 Qualitative data collection techniques and procedure

Structured interviews were conducted for data collection. A structured interview is a qualitative data collection method which helps a researcher to ask participants questions that help to know more about their social settings, including their opinions and beliefs about certain phenomena (Bergin, 2018; Creswell, 2015; Gall, *et al.*, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; McMillan, 2012; Salkind, 2018; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). Data was mechanically recorded using a cell phone recording mode during a face-to-face interview. Data collection among the DBST members and school principals occurred over a three-week period by the researcher. Interviews were conducted during the day but at the time and place which the respondents would find convenient to them.

5.8.1.1 Construction of the interview schedule

Two interview schedules were constructed (Appendices 7 & 8), one for the DBST members and the other one for the school principals. Strydom and Bezuidenhout (2014) distinguish between three types of interview schedules, the first one being informal, conversational interviews where a researcher does not ask specific predetermined questions, but allows the interview to progress as it goes along. The advantage of this type of schedule is that it allows a researcher to be as open and adaptable as possible to the responses of the interviewee. The second one is the general interview approach where the interview follows a conversational approach by having certain themes being covered by the predetermined questions while a great degree of freedom is given to the interviewee. The advantage of this schedule is that it is a very adaptable approach and allows the researcher to adjust the focus of the interview when necessary. The last type is called the standardised, open-ended interview which focuses on asking the same set of open-ended questions to all the participants. Its advantage is that the information obtained can be analysed more easily and this format also allows a researcher to compare notes on the views and opinions of the participants in a more organised manner (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b; Nieuwenhuis, 2016c; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). In this research, a standardised, open-ended interview schedule was constructed and the details of the schedule were based on the outcomes of the descriptive and inferential quantitative data about the following:

- Why there was a moderate implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa schools.
- Why primary schools' level of implementation of the SIAS 2014 was better than that of secondary schools.
- Why educators did not like to teach learners who experienced barriers to learning.

The quantitative outcome revealed that in both primary and secondary schools, screening, identification and assessment of barriers in learners as well as supporting such learners occurred moderately at schools. There was moderate implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy and it was necessary to find out from the SIAS 2014 policy steering personnel why that was the case.

5.8.1.2 Population and sample

The following table 4.7 portrays types of non-probability strategies that are most used when selecting a sample research participants:

Table 5.7: Types of non-probability sampling strategies

Non-probability sampling strategies			
Type	When to use it	Advantages	Disadvantages
Convenience sampling	When the members of the population are convenient to sample	Convenient and inexpensive	Degree of generalisation is questionable
Purposeful sampling	Selects specific types of people according to carefully stated eligibility criteria	Important when working with small numbers.	Few mistakes in choosing people or cases can impact on research.
Quota sampling	When strata are present and stratified sampling is not possible	Ensures some degree of representativeness of all the strata in the population	Degree of generalisability is questionable

(Source: Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Morgan, 2014; Salkind, 2018).

A non-probability sampling technique, namely the purposeful sampling technique, was used to select the interviewees. DBST members and school principals in the Lejweleputswa District were the ideal population for the research because they were the chief accounting officers, each group in their sphere of sovereignty relating to the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy at schools. The decision to interview the DBST members and school principals was founded on the belief of Morgan (2014) who asserts that a purposive selection of interviewees is the practice of collecting detailed information from carefully chosen sources. If a researcher intends to generate a theory inductively, it has to be a theory about something; but if a researcher is going to understand someone's subjective perspective, then the researcher has to find people who share that perspective; and if a researcher is going to study something in context, then the researcher needs to define the nature of those circumstances (Morgan, 2014). As has been mentioned in chapter one (cf. 1.7.2.1), five DBST members were sampled and seven school principals were sampled.

5.8.1.3 Data analysis techniques

After the interviews, data collected was analysed following the steps discussed below:

i Step 1: Transcription of the orally recorded interviews into a manuscript

Transcription is the process of changing qualitative research data into typed text. The typed text is called a transcript (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). One important advantage of preparing a transcript is that it offers the researcher an opportunity to become familiar with data collected and to jot down notes about how to code data (Vogt *et al.*, 2014). The audio recordings of the interviews conducted with the DBST members and the school principals were transcribed by the researcher.

ii Step 2: Assigning variables codes to the transcriptions

Coding is the process of making segments of data with symbols, descriptive words, or category names (Johnson & Christensen, 2017; Nieuwenhuis, 2016b; Nieuwenhuis, 2016c). There are many types of data coding such as causation coding, dramaturgical coding, emotion coding, hypothesis coding, longitudinal coding magnitude coding, pattern coding, process coding and protocol coding (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Of these various forms of coding, protocol coding was selected for the analysis of the qualitative data. Protocol coding of qualitative data involves segmenting data according to pre-established, recommended, standardised, or prescribed systems (Johnson & Christensen, 2017, Nieuwenhuis, 2016b; Nieuwenhuis, 2016c). In this research, qualitative data collected during interviews with the DBST members and school principals was coded according to the SIAS 2014 Policy Constructs (cf. Appendix C, Table 5.14).

iii Step 3: Analysing causes and effects of participants' inputs

Lastly, data was analysed focusing on the cause and effect of the participants' inputs. The main aim of the researcher in this step was to find answers in the interviewees' inputs on why there was only a moderate implementation of policy at schools and how the rate of the implementation could be improved. The two research instruments that were used to gather data were reliable and valid; hence the next section highlights reliability and validity of the research instruments

5.9 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The distinction between research reliability and validity is that for the former to be regarded as present in a research, the same results of the study should be obtained if the research should be replicated, while the latter refers to the correctness or truthfulness of the inferences that are made from the results of the research (Bergin, 2018; Creswell, 2015; Gall *et al.*, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; McMillan, 2012; Pietersen & Maree, 2016b; Salkind, 2018). Reliability means that scores from a research instrument are almost similar when the research

instrument is administered by researchers at different times. On the other hand, validity means the degree to which all the evidence points to the intended interpretation of test scores for the proposed purpose. Simply put, reliability means consistency of findings or measures while validity means accuracy of findings or measures (Adams & Lawrence, 2015; Burke & Christensen, 2017; Creswell, 2012; Peräkylä, 2011). The following sections discuss how reliability and validity of the research instruments were achieved.

5.9.1 Reliability of the questionnaire

Questionnaire reliability can be confirmed using one or some of the many types of reliability. One of these is internal consistency, which is a measure of how consistently each questionnaire item measures the same construct. The coefficient that is used to measure the internal consistency of a questionnaire is called Cronbach's alpha (Devlin, 2018; Pietersen & Maree, 2016b; Vogt *et al.*, 2014).

In this research, the type of reliability used was internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha for the final questionnaire was .97 which suggested an excellent internal consistency for the questionnaire.

5.9.2 Validity of the questionnaire

In this research, face validity and construct validity were used. Face validity refers to the extent to which a questionnaire appears to measure what it is supposed to measure by being scrutinised by experts in the research field who also check whether the questionnaire is well-designed (Pietersen & Maree, 2016b). On the other hand, construct validity inquires how well the constructs covered by the questionnaire are measured by different groups of related items (Bergin, 2018; Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014; Gay *et al.*, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2017; McMillan, 2012; Pietersen & Maree, 2016b). For face validity, the researcher gave the structured questionnaire to her promoter and statistician for thorough scrutiny. Similarly, in order to ensure construct validity, the researcher ensured that all the items emanated from the literature review contexts. For example, all items were either about the theoretical or conceptual frameworks of the SIAS 2014 policy constructs which are screening, identification, assessment and support.

5.9.3 Reliability of the interview questions

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) acknowledge that there is a debate among researchers about whether reliability can be attained in qualitative research. These academics view reliability in qualitative research as a bridge that merges the data that is recorded with the actual occurrences of a natural setting that is being researched. Flick (2018) argues that researchers can follow different ways to achieve reliability of data and interpretations in qualitative research. One such researcher is Kleven (1995) in Cohen *et al.*, (2018) who presents the following three guideline questions by which reliability can be ensured in qualitative research:

- Would the research yield the same observations and interpretations if the research had been conducted at different times?
- Would similar observations and interpretations have been made if other observations had been done at the time?
- Would another observer, working in the same theoretical framework, have made similar observations and interpretations?

The researcher ensured reliability of the interview questions by recording the responses of the respondents as they occurred using a cellular phone recording application and then also made a back-up by note taking.

5.9.4 Validity of the interview questions

The researcher did member checking to ensure validity of the interview questions. Marriam (1998) as quoted in Maree (2016) states that member checking is about data and findings that are verified by other respondents than those originally involved. After interviewing one or more respondents, the researcher always verified the inputs of the previous respondents against the current respondent to check whether the feelings or attitudes of the previous respondents could be generalised for that sampled group consulted. For example, the researcher always validated the inputs of every other principal interviewed with the next principal being interviewed. Similarly, the researcher also validated the inputs of every other DBST member with the next DBST member being interviewed.

5.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

Trustworthiness and credibility are some of the key factors by means of which qualitative data can be tested. The credibility of qualitative data results is determined by the extent to which the data, data analysis, and conclusions are accurate and trustworthy (McMillan, 2012; Nieuwenhuis, 2016c). Creswell (2014: 201) further recommends the use of eight approaches that enhance a researcher's ability to assess the accuracy of findings and convince readers about that accuracy. These approaches can be summarised below as follows:

- Different data sources should be triangulated by assessing evidence from the sources and then using it to build a coherent justification for themes.
- Use of member checking can be employed by taking the final qualitative report to participants for them to determine whether the findings are accurate.
- Rich and thick qualitative description can be used to convey the research findings.
- Clarification of any possible bias brought by the researcher to the research should be done.
- Negative or discrepant information that runs counter to the themes should also be presented.
- Ample time should be spent in the field.
- Peer debriefing can be used for accuracy enhancement of the account.
- An external auditor may be used to review the qualitative research.

Not so different in essence from the suggested approaches by Creswell (2014) are the four criteria embraced by Guba (1981) in Nieuwenhuis (2016c). The criteria calls for qualitative researchers to ensure *credibility* by asking themselves questions on how to ensure that readers would believe their findings; *transferability* by avoiding generalised claims but instead inviting readers of the research to make connections between elements of the research; *dependability* by demonstrating how the design of the research was implemented, including the operational details of data gathering; and *confirmability* by avoiding biasness but instead reproducing enough of the text to allow the reader to decide what the respondent is trying to convey. In this research, the researcher adopted the four criteria as discussed in Nieuwenhuis (2016c) in the manner presented below.

5.10.1 Credibility

Credibility checks the extent to which the qualitative research participants' perceptions match up with the research's portrayal of them such as using member checks. The key questions that are addressed in credibility (which is also called descriptive validity) are: Did what was reported as taking place in the group being studied actually happen? Did the researcher accurately report what was seen and heard? Credibility has parallels with internal validity relating to the 'truth' of the findings. It refers to the accuracy of the documentation, and freedom from errors (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Flick, 2018; Johnson & Christensen, 2012; McKenney & Reeves, 2012). In this research, a review and discussion of findings with the researcher's promoter served as a way of ensuring that the reality of the participants was adequately reflected in the findings.

5.10.2 Transferability

Transferability entails applying the findings from qualitative research to populations or settings beyond the particular sample of the research. This also means the appropriateness of applying the results to other contexts and settings. Transferability entails the degree by which the research has enabled readers to decide whether similar processes would exist in their own settings by understanding in depth how they occur at the research site. It is similar to external validity and shows through thick descriptions that the findings can be informative for other contexts (Aurini, Heath & Howells, 2016; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; McKenney & Reeves, 2012; McMillan, 2012). In this research about evaluating the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa schools, the researcher made efforts to cater for the concept of transferability by way of thick and rich description of the participants in the research objectively. The context within which the research took place as well as the context within which the SIAS 2014 policy was implemented at schools was objectively and broadly discussed.

5.10.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to whether readers of the research can track the processes and procedures used to collect and interpret data by providing a detailed and thorough explanation of how data was collected and analysed. It is similar to reliability in that it shows that the findings are consistent and could be repeated (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; McKenney & Reeves, 2012). The researcher believes that the research on the evaluation of the SIAS 2014 policy implementation in Lejweleputswa is dependable because an effort has been made to present all the processes and procedures used to collect and analyse data. To ensure

consistency of the findings, from time to time the researcher consulted research literature on the collection and analysis of data and also received guidance from the promoter on how to interpret data results.

5.10.4 Confirmability

Researchers can avoid biasness or subjectivity in research by identifying possible impacts of their predispositions on their research project and in return allowing them to retain the positive effects. The implication of confirmability is that the findings are the results of the research, not an outcome of the biases and subjectivity of the researcher. It is associated with objectivity and the extent to which the outcomes of a research are shaped by the participants and not the biasness of the researcher (Aurini, Heath & Howells, 2016; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; McKenney & Reeves, 2012). In this research, an effort was made to identify and uncover the decision trail for public judgement. A record of field voice notes and transcripts was kept to grant readers the opportunity to assess the findings of this research.

5.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As it was indicated in Chapter one (cf. 1.7.2.4), the researcher ensured that the following ethical guidelines were observed by doing the following:

- Presentation of the research proposal to the Title Registration Committee (TRC) of the Faculty of Humanities for its approval. The research proposal was submitted to the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee (FRIC) of the Faculty of Humanities for approval (Appendix 1).
- An ethical clearance certificate was granted a number by FRIC [D.FRIC.18/2/8] (Appendix 2).
- Completion of a research application form to seek for permission from the Free State Department of Education to conduct the research at schools in the Lejweleputswa District. The Free State Department of Education granted the approval with attached conditions (Appendix 3).
- Carefully considering all possible consequences for educators who participated in this research.
- Ensured that the consent of sampled educators was voluntary and informed, without any implied deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate, and with regard to their

privacy and dignity. The participants were told that they could withdraw their participation at any stage of the research.

- Protected all participants from unwarranted physical or mental discomfort, distress, harm, danger or deprivation.
- Assured all participants that information obtained from them would be treated confidentially.
- Took credit only for work actually done in direct connection with scholarly and research endeavours and gave credit to the contributions made by others.

5.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The following are the limitations experienced in this research:

Dissertations as sources of information: Some of the sources in this research were dissertations of former students. The researcher acknowledges that whilst the information in these sources is vital, it represents work of individual students albeit conducted under supervision and may not be fully infallible.

Use of questionnaires for data collection: The researcher noted that the use of questionnaires to collect data resulted in non-response by participants owing to fatigue on some or all items in the questionnaire and this led to non-response bias.

Use of interviews for data collection: The researcher was aware that the use of interviews to collect data could have posed the following limitations:

- It was sometimes logistically difficult to arrange for an efficient interview.
- It was sometimes time-consuming for both the researcher and the interviewees.

5.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, a discussion of the research design and methodology was presented. The procedure followed when data collection had been conducted and the pilot study had taken place. In addition, the population and sample of the study were also discussed. Furthermore, the data analysis techniques and how reliability and validity were ensured were both dealt

with in this chapter. Finally, ethical considerations and limitations of the research were explained. The next chapter will focus on the presentation and analysis of data.

CHAPTER 6

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Five a discussion of the research design and methodology was presented. This not only included exploring the procedure followed for data collection and the pilot study, but an explanation of the population and sample of the study were included, as well as the data analysis techniques and how reliability and validity were ensured in this research. As has been stipulated in Chapter One (cf. 1.4), the aim of this research is to evaluate the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa, Free State. In this chapter, data presentation and analysis will be presented under the following headings:

- Presentation and analysis of descriptive data
- Presentation and analysis of inferential statistics data

6.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

The following section of the chapter will first present and analyse descriptive data in this research. Subsequently, inferential statistical data will be presented and analysed.

6.2.1 Presentation and analysis of descriptive statistics data

In this section the data generated using a structured questionnaire will be presented, as well as a meaningful analysis. The first description will commence with biographical data of participants followed by an analysis of data about the SIAS 2014 policy variables. The following table 6.1 shows the biographical data of participants in this research.

Table 6.1: Biographical variables of respondents in the research (N = 250)

	Biographical variable	Variable description	Responses in %
A1	Gender	Male	66 (26.4)
		Female	184 (73.6)
A4	Type of employment	Temporary	25 (10.0)
		SGB post	41 (16.4)
		Permanent	184 (73.6)
A5	Highest qualification	Matric & teaching qualification	126 (50.4)
		Undergraduate & teaching qualification	26 (10.4)
		Postgraduate & teaching qualification	98 (39.2)
A6	Studied inclusive education	Yes	117 (46.8)
		No	133 (53.2)
A7	Post level at school	Principal	2 (0.8)
		Deputy principal	8 (3.2)
		HOD	22 (8.8)
		Post Level 1	218 (87.2)
A8	Type of school	Primary	89 (35.6)
		Secondary	161 (64.4)
A2	Age	18 – 35	105 (42.0)
		36 – 50	70 (28.0)
		51+	75 (30.0)
A3	Teaching experience	1 – 5	72 (28.8)
		6 – 20	98 (39.2)
		21+	80 (32.0)

From Table 6.1 above, it can be observed that there were more female participants than males. Only 66 males participated in this research while 184 females participated. Participants in this research are predominantly of a permanent (73.6%) type of employment while the rest of the participants are employed on a temporary basis (10%) or in SGB posts (16.4%) provision.

As can be noted from table 6.1 above, the majority of the participants (50.4%) held a Matric plus a teaching qualification while the rest, namely 39.2% and 10.4% represented educators who held an undergraduate qualification plus a teaching qualification, and a postgraduate qualification and a teaching qualification respectively. More than half of the total participants have not studied anything regarding inclusive education. Only 46.8% of the respondents admitted that at least they have acquired the idea of inclusive education from their studies while 53.2% responded that they have never studied anything on inclusive education. Table 6.1 further indicates that 87.2% of the participants are Post Level 1 (PL 1) educators while

the rest are the School Management Team members (SMT). Of the SMT members, only two (2) (0.8%) principals responded to the questionnaire while eight (8) (3.2%) deputy principals and 22 (8.8%) Heads of Departments (HODs) responded.

The secondary schools' participation has been more than that of primary schools, according to Table 6.1. Even though the research had intended to balance the participation among the two types of schools by extending the invitation to participate in this research evenly, it seems 64% of secondary schools positively responded while only 35% were the primary schools. It can be noted that the percentage of participants' age groups differs.

The first group which can be regarded as youth (18 – 35 years) comprised 42 % while the second group of middle-aged participants (36 – 50 years) was 28% and the last group of participants who are 51 years and above totalled 30%. Table 5.1 above shows the percentage distribution among participants who are inexperienced (1 – 5 years) to be 28.8%; experienced (6 – 20 years) to be 39.2% and the more experienced educators (21 years and above) in the teaching profession to be 32.0%. As can be noted, a smaller number (72) of inexperienced educators participated in this research while the largest number of participants (98) represents the experienced educators.

6.2.1.2 Implementation of the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support 2014 Policy

The importance of effective SIAS 2014 policy implementation in Lejweleputswa District in Free State has been discussed in Chapter Two (cf. 2.2.2.1). The findings of this research about this policy implementation are presented in the form of tables below. In each table, the first column represents the code and statements stated in Section B of the questionnaire (cf. Appendix 2) that was on a seven-point scale.

The remaining three columns represent the mean, median and standard deviation scores respectively. An analysis of the data scores is done after each table. The first of descriptive data to be presented and analysed hereafter is the characteristics, traits and qualities of educators.

Table 6.2: Educators' characteristics, traits and qualities (N = 250)

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
B1	My characteristics may influence barriers within learners.	4.01	4.00	1.67
B4	I have empathy for learners with learning disabilities.	5.68	6.00	1.40
B5	I love teaching learners with learning difficulties.	4.21	4.00	1.69

Analysis of data in Table 6.2 reveals that educators have empathy for learners with learning disabilities ($M = 5.68$; $MD = 6.00$; $SD = 1.40$). These statistics indicate that data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median and there is agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. Another revelation is that educators moderately love teaching learners with learning barriers ($M = 4.21$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.69$). These statistics indicate that data is positively skewed because the mean is higher than the median. There is agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. Lastly, educators' characteristics moderately influence barriers within learners ($M = 4.01$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.67$). These statistics indicate that data is positively skewed because the mean is higher than the median. There is agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. The next description of data to be presented and analysed relates to the internal and external training of educators about the SIAS 2014 policy.

Table 6.3: Educator training and development (N = 250)

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
D12	My school outsources professional experts and practitioners to develop me on how to screen barriers in the learners I teach.	3.46	3.00	1.92
D22	I can complete the Area of Need because I was taught how to do it in my teacher training programme.	3.49	4.00	1.93
D23	The SBST has developed me to complete the Area of Need.	3.68	4.00	1.89
D24	The DBST has developed me to complete the Area of Need.	3.57	4.00	1.82
D25	I can complete the Area of Need because I have been developed through IQMS programmes.	3.60	4.00	1.89

Analysis of data in Table 6.3 reveals that the SBST does not develop educators ($M = 3.68$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.89$). These statistics indicate that data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median. There is no agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Furthermore, educators are not developed through IQMS programmes how to complete an enquiry about the area of need of a learner in a Learner Profile ($M = 3.60$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.89$). These statistics indicate that data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median. There is no agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. The revelation in this table is that the DBST does not develop educators about how to complete a Learner Profile relating to a specific area of need of a learner ($M = 3.57$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.82$). Data in this item is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median. There is also no agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Educators' responses also reveal that training institutions for educators did not train them to complete the Area of Need shown in the Learner Profile ($M = 3.49$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.93$). Data on this questionnaire item is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median. There is no agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. The schools are also revealed not be taking the initiative of outsourcing professional experts and practitioners to develop educators on how to screen barriers in the learners they teach ($M = 3.46$; $MD = 3.00$; $SD = 1.92$). Statistical data in this questionnaire item show that it is positively skewed because the mean is above the median but there is no agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean. The next table will present data about educators' perceptions of their ability to implement the SIAS 2014 policy.

Table 6.4: Educators' perceived implementation ability **N=250**

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
B2	I am able to implement the SIAS 2014 policy effectively.	3.98	4.00	1.76
B3	I can screen, identify, assess and support learners who experience barriers to learning.	4.50	5.00	1.60
B6	I am able to keep CAPS pace in an inclusive teaching and learning environment.	4.33	5.00	1.81

Data in Table 6.4 reveal that educators can moderately screen, identify, assess and support learners who experience barriers to learning ($M = 4.50$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.60$). These statistics indicate that data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median and there is agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is not far from the mean.

The data also reveals that educators are moderately able to keep CAPS pace in an inclusive teaching learning environment ($M = 4.33$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.81$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median. There is no agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Finally, regarding data about the educator perceptions, it appears that educators are not able to implement the SIAS 2014 policy effectively ($M = 3.98$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.76$).

Data about this item is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median and there is no agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Next to be discussed is data about knowledge of educators about the SIAS 2014 policy.

Table 6.5: Educators' knowledge of SIAS 2014 policy (N = 250)

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
C1	I understand the policy rationale about learning barriers.	4.34	5.00	1.68
C2	I understand that the policy is a shift from a clinical model to one that emphasizes human rights.	4.50	5.00	1.54
C3	I understand the difference about the learning barriers that are systemic, societal, pedagogical and/or intrinsic.	4.46	5.00	1.59

Data in Table 6.5 reveals that educators moderately understand that the policy is a shift from a clinical model of support to one that emphasises human rights ($M = 4.50$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.54$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median and the respondents generally agree on this item because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. Data furthermore reveals that educators moderately understand the differences about the learning barriers that are systemic, societal, pedagogical and/or intrinsic ($M = 4.46$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.59$).

These statistics show that data is negatively skewed and there is also agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. Lastly, regarding the knowledge of educators about the policy, data on this table shows that educators moderately understand the policy rationale about learning barriers ($M = 4.34$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.68$).

The statistical data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median and there is agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. Data about the functionality of the SBST and SGB sub-committee is to be presented in the table below.

Table 6.6: Functionality of the school-based support team and the sub-committee of the school governing body
N=250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
D3	My principal ensures functionality of the SBST.	5.32	6.00	1.53
D10	My principal ensures functionality of the SGB sub-committee for support of learners with barriers.	4.72	5.00	1.74

Table 6.6 above shows that school principals ensure the functionality of the SBST in their respective schools ($M = 5.32$; $MD = 6.00$; $SD = 1.53$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median and there is agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is not far from the mean.

The data also reveals that school principals moderately ensure functionality of the SGB sub-committee for support of learners with barriers ($M = 4.72$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.74$). Data is also negatively skewed in this item because the mean is lower than the median. There is no agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Table 6.7: Learner vulnerability and profile

N=250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
D1	I can establish vulnerability of learners in the subject(s) that I teach.	5.05	5.00	1.36
F11	My HOD/supervisor develops me with how I should best support vulnerable learners in my class.	3.63	4.00	1.91
F12	We discuss support to vulnerable learners as an item in staff meetings.	4.19	4.00	1.87
D6	The information on each Learner Profile is sufficiently detailed for me to understand all learning barriers that exist in each learner's environment.	4.14	4.00	1.72
D8	There should be a photograph of a learner on the Learner's Profile during the screening process.	4.60	5.00	1.99
E5	I ensure that a learner has a Learner Profile before I fill in the SNA 1 for such a learner.	3.72	4.00	2.07
D2	My supervisor controls and monitors all Learner Profiles of learners I have screened.	4.41	5.00	1.76

Data about learner vulnerability in Table 6.7 shows that educators can establish vulnerability of learners in the subjects that they teach them ($M = 5.05$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.36$). This statistical data reveals a positively skewed tendency because the mean is above the median and there is an agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is not far from the mean.

The data also reveals that educators moderately feel that there should be a photograph of a learner on the Learner Profile during the screening process ($M = 4.60$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.99$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median. The respondents also do not agree on this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Supervisors are also reported by educators to be moderately controlling and monitoring all Learner Profiles of screened learners by educators ($M = 4.41$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.76$). Data about this item is negatively skewed because the mean is lower than the median and the respondents seem to disagree about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Data about discussions relating to support of vulnerable learners during staff meetings reveal that such discussions are moderately held ($M = 4.19$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.87$). Here data is positively skewed because the mean is above the median and the respondents do not agree on this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Data also reveals that educators feel that the information on each Learner Profile is moderately sufficient and detailed for them to understand all learning barriers that exist in each learner's environment ($M = 4.14$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.72$). Data is positively skewed since the mean is above the median and the respondents disagree on this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. The data also reveals that individual educators do not ensure that a learner has a learner profile before they fill up the SNA1 for such a learner ($M = 3.72$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 2.07$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and the respondents also disagree on this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Lastly, data in this table reveals that supervisors do not develop educators on how to support vulnerable learners in their classes ($M = 3.63$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.91$). Data is negatively skewed in this item because the mean is below the median and the respondents disagree among themselves given that the standard deviation is far from the mean. Data about screening the barriers in learners and the screening resources is revealed in the table below.

Table 6.8: Barrier screening and screening resources

N=250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
D9	I screen all barriers in learners I teach regardless of whether I am their class register teacher.	4.24	4.50	1.83
D4	I use the School Self Evaluation (SSE) to screen barriers that influence learning of learners.	4.15	4.00	1.69
D5	I use the Subject Improvement Plan (SIP) to screen barriers that influence learning of learners.	4.84	5.00	1.57

Data in Table 6.8 shows that educators moderately use the Subject Improvement Plan (SIP) to screen barriers that influence the learning of learners ($M = 4.84$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.57$). This statistical data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and the respondents agree on this item since the standard deviation is not far from the mean.

Another revelation of the data is that educators moderately screen all barriers in learners they teach regardless of whether they are their class register teachers ($M = 4.24$; $MD = 4.50$; $SD = 1.83$). This statistical data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median. There is no agreement among the respondents on this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Still on screening, data reveals that educators moderately use the School Self Evaluation (SSE) to screen barriers that influence learning of learners ($M = 4.15$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.69$). These statistics show that data is positively skewed because the mean is above the median and the respondents agree about this item because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. In the next table, data about learner referral is analysed.

Table 6.9: Learner referral

N=250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
D7	My SBST consults with my HOD after I have made a referral about a learner who experiences learning barriers.	4.50	5.00	1.66
D14	The SBST provides timeous support to my referrals of screened learners.	4.08	4.00	1.82
E6	I use Form 124 (List of Accommodations and Exemptions) to identify, assess and track progress of the needs of learners I have screened.	3.20	3.00	1.86
E7	I use Form 125 (Curriculum Differentiation Schedule) to identify, assess and track progress of the needs of learners I have screened.	3.16	3.00	1.82

In Table 6.9 above data analysis reveals that the SBST moderately consults with subject supervisors after educators have made a referral about a learner who experiences learning barriers ($M = 4.50$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.66$). The statistical data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is agreement among respondents about this item since the standard deviation is not far from the mean. Data also reveals that the SBST moderately provides timeous support to educators regarding referrals of screened learners ($M = 4.08$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.82$). Data in this statistics is positively skewed because the mean is above the median. There is no agreement among respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Data also reveals that educators do not use Form 124 to identify, assess and track progress of needs of learners they have screened ($M = 3.20$; $MD = 3.00$; $SD = 1.86$). Statistical data is positively skewed since the mean is above the median and there is no agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Lastly on data about learner referral, it is revealed in the table that educators do not use the Form 125 to identify, assess and track progress of the needs of learners they have screened ($M = 3.16$; $MD = 3.00$; $SD = 1.82$). The statistical data is positively skewed because the mean is above the median and there is no agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. In the next table data about early intervention services will be explored.

Table 6.10: Early intervention services

N=250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
D15	I write one or two different years within the age of five when a learner received a service and intervention on their area of need at the time.	3.14	4.00	1.64
D16	I write anything when I deal with learners above the age of five.	3.10	4.00	1.71
D17	I know where and how I should gather information about the area of need of the learner I screen.	3.53	4.00	1.76
D18	I write the services and/or interventions that a learner received during their 6-10 year-old period and 11-15 year old period respectively.	3.30	4.00	1.70
D19	On the MM/YY, I write the month and year in which the area of need was first discovered.	3.93	4.00	2.01
D20	On the grade, I write the grade in which the learner was when the barrier was first discovered.	4.10	4.00	2.02
D21	I am guided by the SIAS policy directives on how to identify a learner's area of need.	3.92	4.00	1.87

Data in the above table reveals that educators moderately screen the history of learners' early intervention on the barriers by writing the grade in which the learner was when the barrier was first discovered ($M = 4.10$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 2.02$). Data is positively skewed because the mean is above the median and there is also no agreement among the respondents about this item since the standard deviation is far from the mean. The data also reveals that educators do not write the month and year in which the area of need was first discovered ($M = 3.93$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 2.01$). This statistical data is negatively skewed since the mean is

below the median and there is no agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Educators do not refer to the SIAS policy directives to guide them on how to identify a learner's area of need ($M = 3.92$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.87$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among respondents since the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Educators also do not know where and how they should gather information about the area of need of the learners they screen ($M = 3.53$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.76$). This data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Educators do not write the early interventions received during their learners' previous years ($M = 3.30$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.70$). This data is negatively skewed since the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Data also reveals that educators do not write the age within five years when a learner had received an intervention on their area of need ($M = 3.14$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.64$). Data is negatively skewed since the mean is below the median and there is agreement among respondents because there is a narrow standard deviation from the mean. Lastly, educators do not complete the area enquiring about early intervention when they screen barriers in the learners who are above the age of five ($M = 3.10$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.71$).

The statistical data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among respondents about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. The next table will present data about the assessment of support needs of learners.

Table 6.11: Support needs assessment

N=250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
E1	I fill up the Support Needs Assessment (SNA) 1 from secondary sources of information	3.40	4.00	1.87
E2	I fill up the Support Needs Assessment (SNA) 1 through the completion and implementation of the Individual Support Plan (ISP).	3.44	4.00	1.85
E3	I include the learner during the administration of SNA 1.	3.38	4.00	1.83
E4	I include the parent or caregiver of the learner during the administration of SNA 1.	3.62	4.00	1.99
F14	I implement recommendations from professional practitioners in the Form DBE 126 (Health and Disability Assessment Form) to support learners who have been assessed by professional experts.	3.62	4.00	1.89

The table above shows data that reveals that educators do not include parents or caregivers of learners during the administration of SNA 1 ($M = 3.62$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.99$). Data is negatively skewed since the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among respondents regarding this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Educators also do not implement the recommendations from professional practitioners in the Form DBE 126 to support learners who have been assessed ($M = 3.62$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.89$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean. The data also reveals that educators do not fill in the SNA 1 through the completion and implementation of the ISP ($M = 3.44$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.85$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Data also reveals that educators do not fill in the SNA 1 from secondary sources of information ($M = 3.40$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.87$). This statistical data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and the respondents also do not agree since the standard deviation is far from the mean. Lastly, educators do not include learners' opinions during the administration of SNA 1 ($M = 3.38$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.83$). This data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean. In the next table, data about internal support will be presented.

Table 6.12: Internal support

N=250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
F2	I write the nature of support that is suggested by learners who experience barriers.	3.55	4.00	1.89
F3	I write the nature of support that is suggested by the SBST.	3.91	4.00	1.92
F5	I write the nature of support that I feel would be most suitable to address the learning barriers in the learner.	3.96	4.00	1.96
F6	I include the learners' opinions during the drawing of the ISP.	3.59	4.00	1.91
F8	I include the input of the curriculum manager (HOD) during the drawing of the ISP.	3.85	4.00	1.98
F10	I have access to the LURITS system for planning lessons that accommodates diversity of learners.	2.90	3.00	1.86

Table 6.12 above shows data generated about internal support rendered to both educators and learners during the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. Data reveals that when they draw the Individual Support Plan for learners, educators do not write the nature of support that they feel would be most suitable to address the learning barriers identified in the learners ($M = 3.96$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.96$). This statistical data is negatively skewed since the mean is below the median and the respondents do not agree on this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Another revelation is that educators do not write the nature of support suggested by the DBST ($M = 3.91$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.92$). The mean is below the median, therefore data is negatively skewed and there is no agreement among the respondents about this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Data also shows that curriculum managers' inputs for support are not included during the drawing of the ISP by the educators ($M = 3.85$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.98$). The mean is below the median so data is negatively skewed and the respondents do not agree on this item since the standard deviation is far from the mean. The data also reveals that educators do not include the opinions of learners who need support when an ISP is drawn ($M = 3.59$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.91$). The mean is below the median showing a negatively skewed data and the standard deviation is far from the mean showing that there is no agreement about this item among the respondents. Data also shows that educators do not write the nature of support suggested by learners who experience barriers ($M = 3.55$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.89$). The mean is below the median showing a negatively skewed data and the standard deviation is far from the mean showing that the respondents do not agree on this item. Lastly, data shows that

educators do not have access to the LURITS system for planning lessons that accommodate diversity of learners ($M = 2.90$; $MD = 3.00$; $SD = 1.86$). The mean is below the median, showing a negatively skewed data and the standard deviation is far from the mean, showing a disagreement among the respondents about this item. In the next table data about the external support rendered will be presented.

Table 6.13: External support

N=250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
F1	I write the nature of support that is suggested by parents of learners who experience barriers.	3.72	4.00	1.90
F4	I write the nature of support that is suggested by the DBST.	3.81	4.00	1.95
F7	I include the opinions of the parents or caregivers during the drawing of the ISP.	3.76	4.00	1.92
F9	The DBST provides timeous support to referrals from my school.	3.69	4.00	1.96
D11	The Department of Social Development has developed me on all types of social grants and the associated conditions that should be met for the grants to be given to the learners.	2.97	3.00	1.91
D13	Community social workers have developed me on how to screen the social barriers in the learners I teach.	3.09	3.00	1.87
F13	My school has a plan of action for implementing recommendations from professional practitioners in the Form DBE 126 (Health Disability Assessment Form).	3.96	4.00	1.94

Data in Table 6.13 reveals that schools do not have a plan of action for implementing recommendations from professional practitioners in the Form DBE 126 ($M = 3.96$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.94$). The mean is below the median which shows a negatively skewed data and the standard deviation is far from the mean, showing that the respondents do not agree on this item. Data also shows that educators do not write the nature of support that is suggested by the DBST when they draw an ISP ($M = 3.81$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.95$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median. The standard deviation is far from the mean, showing that there is no agreement among the respondents on this item.

Data also reveals that educators do not include the opinions of the parents or caregivers during the drawing up of the ISP ($M = 3.76$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.92$). The mean is below the median, showing negatively skewed data and the standard deviation is far from the mean

which shows that the respondents do not agree on this item. Educators also do not include the suggestions of parents of learners who experience barriers ($M = 3.72$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.90$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and the respondents do not agree on this item because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Data also reveal that the DBST does not provide timeous support to referrals from schools ($M = 3.69$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.96$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and the standard deviation is far from the mean which shows that there is no agreement among the respondents on this item. Community social workers are portrayed by data on this table as not developing the educators on how to screen the social barriers in the learners they teach ($M = 3.09$; $MD = 3.00$; $SD = 1.87$). The mean is below the median, showing a negatively skewed data and the standard deviation is far from the mean which shows that the respondents do not agree on this item. Lastly, data reveals that the Department of Social Development has not developed educators on knowing all types of social grants and the associated conditions for the grants to be given to vulnerable learners ($M = 2.97$; $MD = 3.00$; $SD = 1.91$). The mean is below the median; this means data is negatively skewed and the standard deviation is far from the mean, showing that the respondents do not agree on this item.

Table 6.14a: Implementation of SIAS 2014 policy, educators**N=250**

Questionnaire items		Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
B1	My characteristics influence barriers in learners.	4.63	4.67	1.59	.55
B4	I have empathy for learners with learning disabilities.				
B5	I love teaching learners with learning difficulties.				
D12	My school outsources professional experts and practitioners to develop me on how to screen barriers in the learners I teach.	3.51	2.67	1.89	.79
D22	I can complete the Area of Need because I was taught how to do it in my teacher training programme.				
D24	The DBST has developed me to complete the Area of Need.				
D23	The SBST has developed me to complete the Area of Need.	3.64	4.00	1.89	.84
D25	I can complete the Area of Need because I have been developed through IQMS programs.				
B2	I am able to implement the SIAS 2014 policy effectively.	4.27	4.67	1.72	.72
B3	I can screen, identify, assess and support learners who experience barriers to learning.				
B6	I am able to keep CAPS pace in an inclusive teaching and learning environment.				
C1	I understand the policy rationale about learning barriers.	4.43	5.00	1.60	.91
C2	I understand that the policy is a shift from a clinical model to the one that emphasizes human rights.				
C3	I understand the differences about the learning barriers that are systemic, societal, pedagogical and/or intrinsic.				

From Table 6.14a, the Cronbach's alpha reveals that there is a low internal consistency of reliability ($\alpha = .55$) on items B1, B4 and B5 about the impact of educator characteristics. Data in this table reveals that the educators' having empathy for learners moderately influences the policy implementation ($M = 4.63$; $MD = 4.67$; $SD = 1.59$). Data is negatively skewed as the mean is below the median and the respondents agree on these items since the standard deviation is not far from the mean. The impact of external training of educators tested in questionnaire items D12, D22 and D24 reached an acceptable internal consistency of reliability ($\alpha = .79$). However, data reveals that external training and the development of educators do not contribute to the effective implementation of the policy ($M = 3.51$; $MD = 2.67$; $SD = 1.89$). The mean is above the median, showing a positively skewed data and the standard deviation is far from the mean, revealing that there is no agreement among the respondents about the external training and development of educators.

As regards internal training of educators, the items D23 and D25 reached a good internal consistency ($\alpha = .84$). Data reveals that no internal training or development for educators are done by the SBST and schools' development teams (though IQMS) ($M = 3.64$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.89$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median. Respondents do not agree on these items, hence the standard deviation is far from the mean. The Cronbach's alpha further reveals an acceptable internal consistency of reliability ($\alpha = .72$) on items B2, B3 and B6 educators' perceived ability to implement the policy. Data shows that educators are moderately able to keep CAPS pace in an inclusive environment ($M = 4.27$; $MD = 4.67$; $SD = 1.72$). Data is also negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among respondents about these items since the standard deviation is far from the mean. Data shows that the questionnaire items C1, C2 and C3 reached an excellent internal consistency. Educators moderately know and understand the policy ($M = 4.43$; $MD = 5.00$; $SD = 1.60$). Data is negatively skewed since the mean is below the median and the respondents agree on these items because the standard deviation is not far from the mean.

The next Table 6.14b provides data which measured school governance as a construct in the implementation of the SIAS2014 policy.

Table 6.14b: Implementation of SIAS 2014 policy, school governance

N= 250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
D3	My principal ensures functionality of the SBST.				
D10	My principal ensures functionality of the SGB sub-committee for support of learners with barriers.	5.02	5.50	1.64	.70

Statistical data from Table 6.14b above reveals that the questionnaire items D3 and D10 which were related to the role played by school governance in the SIAS policy implementation show an acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .70$) in Cronbach's alpha. Data reveals that in schools, the SBST and SGB sub-committees are functional in schools ($M = 5.02$; $MD = 5.50$; $SD = 1.64$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median. The standard deviation is not far from the mean and this shows that the respondents agree on this items. The following table provides data which measured learners as a construct in the implementation of the SIAS2014 policy.

Table 6.14c: Implementation of SIAS 2014 policy, Learners

N= 250

	Questionnaire items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
D1	I can establish vulnerability of learners in the subject(s) that I teach.				
F11	My HOD/supervisor develops me on how I should best support vulnerable learners in my class.	4.29	4.33	1.71	.73
F12	We discuss support to vulnerable learners as an item in staff meetings.				
D2	My supervisor controls and monitors all Learner Profiles of learners I have screened.				
D6	The information on each Learner Profile is sufficiently detailed for me to understand all learning barriers that exist in each learner's environment.	4.22	4.55	1.88	.63
D8	There should be a photograph of a learner on the Learner's Profile during the screening process.				
E5	I ensure that a learner has a Learner Profile before I fill in the SNA 1 for such a learner.				

Table 6.14c above shows that there is an acceptable internal consistency of reliability in the questionnaire items D1, F11 and F12 ($\alpha = .73$). Table 5.14c shows learner vulnerability as moderately addressed in schools ($M = 4.29$; $MD = 4.33$; $SD = 1.64$). Data is negatively skewed as the mean is below the median. There is agreement among respondents because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. Data about questionnaire items D2, D6, D8, and E5 shows that there is a low internal consistency of reliability ($\alpha = .63$). Data also reveals that control and monitoring of learner profiles are moderately done at schools ($M = 4.22$; $MD = 4.55$; $SD = 1.88$). Data is negatively skewed – the mean is lower than the median. The standard deviation is far from the mean which means that there is no agreement among respondents about the items.

Table 6.14d: Implementation of SIAS 2014 policy, screening process**N=250**

	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
D4	I use the School Self Evaluation (SSE) to screen barriers that influence learning of learners.				
D5	I use the Subject Improvement Plan (SIP) to screen barriers that influence learning of learners.	4.41	4.50	1.69	.75
D9	I screen all barriers in learners I teach regardless of whether I am their class register teacher.				
D7	My SBST consults with my HOD after I have made a referral about a learner who experiences learning barriers.				
D14	The SBST provides timeous support to my referrals of screened learners.				
E6	I use Form 124 (List of Accommodations and Exemptions) to identify, assess and track progress of the needs of learners I have screened.	3.74	3.75	1.79	.73
E7	I use Form 125 (Curriculum Differentiation Schedule) to identify, assess and track progress of the needs of learners I have screened.				
D15	I write one or two different years within the age of five when a learner receives a service and intervention on their area of need at the time.				
D16	I write anything when I deal with learners above the age of five.				
D17	I know where and how I should gather information about the area of need of the learner I screen.				
D18	I write the services and/or interventions that a learner received during their 6-10 year-old period and 11-15 year old period respectively.	3.58	4.00	1.82	.91
D19	On the MM/YY, I write the month and year in which the area of need was first discovered.				
D20	On the grade, I write the grade in which the learner was when the barrier was first discovered.				
D21	I am guided by the SIAS policy directives on how to identify a learner's area of need.				

Data in Table 6.14d reveals that there is an acceptable internal consistency of reliability in the questionnaire items D4, D5 and D9 ($\alpha = .75$). Data reveals that the screening resources SSE and SIP are moderately used to facilitate an effective policy implementation during the screening process ($M = 4.41$; $MD = 4.50$; $SD = 1.69$). Data is negatively skewed – the mean is below the median. There is agreement among respondents about the items because the standard deviation is not far from the mean. There is an acceptable internal consistency of reliability in the questionnaire items D7, D14, E6 and E7 ($\alpha = .73$). Data shows that educators do not screen the barriers in the learners for referral purposes ($M = 3.74$; $MD = 3.75$; $SD = 1.79$).

Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median. The respondents do not agree on these items because the standard deviation is far from the mean. Lastly, on the screening process, there is an excellent internal consistency of reliability in the questionnaire items D15, D16, D17, D18, D19, D20 and D21 ($\alpha = .91$). Data reveals that screening of barriers regarding early intervention services rendered to a learner is not done ($M = 3.58$; $MD = 4.00$; $SD = 1.82$). Data is negatively skewed – the mean is below the median. There is no agreement among the participants about these items because the standard deviation is far from the mean. The next variable to be discussed is the identification and assessment process.

Table 6.14e: Implementation of SIAS 2014 policy, identification and assessment Process N=250

	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
E1	I fill up the Support Needs Assessment (SNA) 1 from secondary sources of information.				
E2	I fill up the Support Needs Assessment (SNA) 1 through the completion and implementation of the Individual Support Plan (ISP).				
E3	I include the learner during the administration of SNA 1.	3.49	4.00	1.89	.93
E4	I include the parent or caregiver of the learner during the administration of SNA 1.				
F14	I implement recommendations from professional practitioners in the Form DBE 126 (Health and Disability Assessment Form) to support learners who have been assessed by professional experts.				

Statistical data in Table 6.14e above shows that the questionnaire items E1, E2, E3, E4, and F14 reached an excellent internal consistency of reliability ($\alpha = .93$). Data reveals that internal and external support needs assessment is not done in schools ($M = 3.49$; $MD = 4.00$;

$SD = 1.89$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among the respondents on these items because the standard deviation is far from the mean.

Table 6.14f: Implementation of SIAS 2014 policy, support

		N=250			
	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
F2	I write the nature of support that is suggested by the learners who experience learning barriers.				
F3	I write the nature of support that is suggested by the SBST.				
F5	I write the nature of support that I feel would be most suitable to address the learning barriers in the learner.	3.62	3.82	1.92	.94
F6	I include the learners' opinions during the drawing of the ISP.				
F8	I include the input of the curriculum manager (HOD) during the drawing of the ISP.				
F10	I have access to the LURITS system for planning lessons that accommodate diversity of learners.				
F1	I write the nature of support that is suggested by the parents of learners who experience learning barriers.				
F4	I write the nature of support that is suggested by the DBST.				
F7	I include the opinions of the parents or caregivers during the drawing of the ISP.				
F9	The DBST provides timeous support to referrals from my school.	3.57	3.71	1.92	.88
D11	My HOD/supervisor develops me on how I should best support vulnerable learners in my class.				
D13	Community social workers have developed me on how to screen the social barriers in the learners I teach.				
F13	My school has a plan of action about implementing recommendations from professional practitioners in the Form DBE 126 (Health Disability Assessment Form).				

Data in Table 6.14f above reveals that the Cronbach's alpha shows that the questionnaire items F2, F3, F5, F6, F8 and F10 have reached an excellent internal consistency of reliability ($\alpha = .94$). There is no internal support rendered to learners experiencing barriers to learning at schools ($M = 3.62$; $MD = 3.82$; $SD = 1.92$). Data is negatively skewed – the mean is below the median. The standard deviation is far from the mean which means that the respondents do not agree on the items. The external support questionnaire items F1, F4, F7, F9, D11, D13 and F13 reached a good internal consistency of reliability ($\alpha = .88$). Data also reveals that no external support is rendered to learners experiencing barriers ($M = 3.57$; $MD = 3.71$; $SD = 1.92$). Data is negatively skewed because the mean is below the median and there is no agreement among the respondents because the standard deviation is far from the mean. The next discussion will focus on the presentation and analysis of inferential statistics.

6.2.2 Presentation and analysis of inferential statistics data

The following section presents and analyses inferential statistical data. The section involves hypothesis testing and related analysis.

6.2.2.1 Hypothesis testing

The following paragraphs present the results of hypotheses.

i Hypotheses testing: gender and screening of learning barriers

An independent-samples t-test was used to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for male and female educators.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for male and female educators.

Table 6.15: Comparison of male and female educators on screening of barriers (n = 66 males, 184 females)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Screening of barriers			2.04	248	.04	.02
Male	105.02	29.13				
Female	96.79	28.43				

The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the screening value scores for male and female educators. There was a significant difference in the scores for males ($M = 105.02$, $SD = 27.13$) and females ($M = 96.79$, $SD = 28.43$; $t(248) = 2.04$, $p = .04$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 8.23, 95% CI : -2.86 to 16.17) was very small (eta squared = .02). A 95% confidence interval associated with the assumption of equal variances was (.286 to 16.17). Since the interval does not include zero, there is a statistically significant difference between the means of male and female screening scores. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted whilst the null hypothesis is rejected.

ii Hypotheses testing: type of school and screening of barriers

An independent-samples t-test was used to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.

Table 6.16: Comparison of type of school and screening of barriers (n = 89 primary schools, 161 secondary schools)

Variable	M	SD	t	df	p	d
Screening of barriers			3.72	248	.00	.02
Primary	27.52					
Secondary	27.61					

The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the screening value scores for educators at primary and secondary schools. There was a significant difference in the scores for primary school educators ($M = 107.67$, $SD = 27.52$) and secondary school educators ($M = 94.14$, $SD = 27.61$; $t(248) = 3.72$, $p = .00$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 13.53, 95% CI : -6.35 to 20.71) was very small (eta squared = .05). A 95% confidence interval associated with the assumption of equal variances was (6.36 to 20.71). Since the interval does not include zero, there is a statistically significant difference between the means of primary and secondary school screening scores. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted but the null hypothesis is rejected.

iii Hypotheses testing: teaching experience and screening of barriers

A one-way ANOVA between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

Table 6.17a: Means and standard deviations comparing teaching experience on screening of barriers (n = 72, 1-5 years; 98, 6-20 years & 80, 21+ years)

Teaching experience	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1-5 years	72	10.90	26.01
6-20 years	98	97.55	26.57
21+	80	98.94	32.23

Table 6.17b: One-way analysis of variance summary table comparing teaching experience on screening of barriers (n = 72, 1-5 years; 98, 6-20 years & 80, 21+ years)

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Eta squared</i>
Screening of Barriers						
Between groups	2	466.35	233.17	.29	.75	.002
Within groups	247	198617.25	804.12			
Total	249	199083.63				

The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

A one way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of teaching experience on levels of screening learning barriers. Data was divided into three groups according to respondents' teaching experience (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 1: 6 – 20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above). There was no statistically significant difference in the mean screening of learning barriers scores for educators in all groups. The effect size

calculated using eta squared was .002. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted while the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

iv Hypotheses testing: gender and identification and assessment of barriers

An independent-samples t-test was used to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of barriers scores for male and female educators.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of barriers scores for male and female educators.

Table 6.18: Comparison of male and female educators on identification and assessment of barriers (n = 66 males, 184 females)

Variable	M	SD	t	df	p	d
Identification and assessment of barriers			.96	248	.34	.00
Male	25.15	10.97				
Female	23.48	12.61				

The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the identification and assessment of barriers value scores for male and female educators. There was no significant difference in the scores for males educators ($M = 25.15$, $SD = 10.97$) and female educators ($M = 23.48$, $SD = 12.61$; $t(248) = .96$, $p = .34$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 1.67, 95% CI: -1.78 to 5.12) was very small (eta squared = .00). A 95% confidence interval associated with the assumption of equal variances was (-1.78 to 5.12). Since these intervals include zero, there is no statistically significant difference between the means of male and female identification and assessment scores. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected but the null hypothesis is accepted.

v Hypotheses testing: type of school and identification and assessment of barriers

An independent-samples t-test was used to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.

Table 6.19: Comparison of type of school and identification and assessment of barriers (n = 89 primary schools, 161 secondary schools)

Variable	M	SD	t	df	p	d
Identification and assessment of barriers			5.44	248	.00	.11
Primary school	29.27	11.35				
Secondary school	20.96	11.67				

The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the identification and assessment of learning barriers value scores for educators at primary and secondary schools. There was a significant difference in the scores for primary school educators ($M = 29.27$, $SD = 11.35$) and secondary school educators ($M = 20.96$, $SD = 11.67$; $t(248) = 5.44$, $p = .00$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 8.31, 95% CI : -5.30 to 11.31) was small (eta squared = .11). A 95% confidence interval associated with the assumption of equal variances was (5.30 to 11.31). Since these intervals do not include zero, there is a statistically significant difference between the means of primary and secondary school identification and assessment of learning barriers scores. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted but the null hypothesis is rejected.

vi Hypotheses testing: teaching experience and identification and assessment of barriers

A one-way ANOVA between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

Table 6.20a displays the results of a one way between-groups analysis of variance which was conducted to explore the impact of teaching experience on levels of identification and assessment of learning barriers. Data was divided into three groups according to respondents'

teaching experience (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 1: 6 – 20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above).

Data in Table 6.20b reveals that there was no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the mean identification and assessment of learning barriers scores for the three groups: $F(2, 247) = .8, p = .43$. As there was no statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was quite small. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .01. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean scores for Group 1 ($M = 25.03, SD = 11.72$), Group 2 ($M = 24.23, SD = 11.53$) and Group 3 ($M = 22.54, SD = 13.39$) did not differ significantly from each other. The null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

Table 6.20a: Means and standard deviations comparing teaching experience on identification and assessment of barriers (n = 72, 1- 5 years; 98, 6 -20 & 80, 21+ years)

Teaching experience	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1-5 years	72	25.03	11.72
6-20 years	98	24.23	11.53
21+	80	22.54	13.39

Table 6.20b: One-way analysis of variance summary table comparing teaching experience on identification and assessment of barriers (n = 72, 1-5 years; 98, 6-20 years & 80, 21+ years)

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Eta squared</i>
Identification and assessment of barriers						
Between groups	2	250.97	125.48	.8	.43	.01
Within groups	247	36815.43	149.05			
Total	249	37066.40				

vii Hypotheses testing: gender and support of learners

An independent-samples t-test was used to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners scores for male and female educators.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners scores for male and female educators.

Table 6.21 depicts data about an independent-samples t-test that was conducted to compare the support of learners' value scores for male and female educators. There was no significant difference in the scores for males ($M = 54.33$, $SD = 19.69$) and females ($M = 51.36$, $SD = 23.32$; $t(248) = .92$, $p = .36$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 2.97, 95% CI : -3.3 to 9.31) was very small (eta squared = .00). A 95% confidence interval associated with the assumption of equal variances was (-3.37 to 9.31). Since these intervals include zero, there is a statistically significant difference between the means of male and female support scores. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected but the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 6.21: Comparison of male and female educators on support of learners experiencing Barriers (n = 66 males, 184 females)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>d</i>
Support of learners			.92	248	.36	.00
Male	54.33	19.69				
Female	51.36	23.32				

viii Hypotheses testing: type of school and support of learners

An independent-samples t-test was used to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners scores for educators at primary and secondary schools.

Table 6.22: Comparison of type of school and support of learners (n = 89 primary schools, 161 secondary schools)

Variable		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Support of learners				4.08	248	.00	.06
	Primary school	59.70	20.39				
	Secondary school	47.98	22.46				

The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the support of learners' value scores for educators at primary and secondary schools. There was a significant difference in the scores for primary school educators ($M = 59.70$, $SD = 20.39$) and secondary school educators ($M = 47.98$, $SD = 22.46$; $t(248) = 4.08$, $p = .00$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 11.72, 95% CI : -6.06 to 17.38) was moderate (eta squared = .06). A 95% confidence interval associated with the assumption of equal variances was (6.06 to 17.38). Since these intervals do not include zero, there is a statistically significant difference between the means of primary and secondary schools support of learners scores. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted but the null hypothesis is rejected.

ix Hypotheses testing: teaching experience and support of learners

A one-way ANOVA between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

H_0 = There is no statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

H_1 = There is a statistically significant difference in the mean support of learners scores for educators whose teaching experience is five years and less, between 6 – 20 years and 21 years and over.

Table 6.23a: Means and standard deviations comparing teaching experience on support of learners (n = 72, 1- 5 years; 98, 6 -20 & 80, 21+ years)

Teaching experience	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1-5 years	72	55.29	21.83
6-20 years	98	51.77	20.66
21+	80	49.79	24.84

Table 6.23b: One-way analysis of variance summary table comparing teaching experience on support of learners (n = 72, 1-5 years; 98, 6-20 years & 80, 21+ years)

Source		<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Eta squared</i>
Identification and assessment of barriers							
	Between groups	2	1171.66	585.83	1.2	.43	.31
	Within groups	247	123977.87	501.94			
	Total	249	125149.52				

The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of teaching experience of educators on levels of support of learners who experience barriers to learning. Data was divided into three groups according to respondents' teaching experience (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 1: 6 – 20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above). There was no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the mean support of learners scores for the three groups: $F(2, 247) = 1.2$, $p = .31$. As there was no statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was quite small. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .01. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 ($M = 55.29$, $SD = 21.83$); Group 2 ($M = 51.77$, $SD = 20.66$) and Group 3 ($M = 49.79$, $SD = 24.84$) did not differ significantly from each other. The null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

6.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

From the presentation and analysis of both descriptive and inferential data, the following milestones can be acknowledged:

- There is modest implementation of SIAS 2014 policy in both primary and secondary schools in Lejweleputswa District.
- Primary schools' level of implementation is better than that of secondary schools.
- Educators do not like to teach learners who experience barriers to learning.

A qualitative research approach is therefore imperative to find out more about why the three above-mentioned milestones prevail. The next chapter will present and analyse the results of the qualitative data.

CHAPTER 7

QUALITATIVE DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter six quantitative data was presented and analysed. The descriptive and inferential data analysis in Chapter five pointed to the need for qualitative research to establish why there is modest implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in both primary and secondary schools in the Lejweleputswa District. Members of the DBST and school principals were interviewed to generate data about why there was modest implementation of the policy. In this chapter data collected from both groups will be presented and analysed. Before this qualitative presentation and analysis of data, it is important to discuss some aspects of the data collection instrument and procedure followed, the construction of the interview schedule, the credentials of the interview respondents as well as the data analysis techniques used.

7.1.1 Data collection instrument and procedure

Data was mechanically recorded using a cell phone recording mode during a face-to-face interview. Data collection by the researcher among the DBST members and school principals occurred over a three-week period. Interviews were conducted during the day but at the time and place which the respondents would find to be convenient to them.

7.1.2 Construction of the interview schedule

Two interview schedules were constructed, one for the DBST members and another one for the school principals. The details of the schedule were based on the outcomes of the descriptive and inferential quantitative data analysis. The outcome revealed that in both primary and secondary schools, screening, identification and assessment of barriers within learners as well as supporting such learners were modest at the sampled schools. There was modest implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy and it was necessary to find out from the SIAS 2014 policy steering personnel both at school and district levels why that was the case.

7.1.3 Credentials of interview participants

This section discusses the credentials of participants in this research. As has been stated (cf. 1.7.2.1), a non-probability sampling technique, namely the purposeful sampling technique, was used to select five DBST members and seven school principals in Lejweleputswa. As advocated by Nieuwenhuis (2016c), the emerging patterns and findings would aid the researcher's understanding of the perceptions and constructed reality of them. These participants were ideal for the research because they were the chief accounting officers each group in their sphere of sovereignty about the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The presentation is as follows:

7.1.3.1 DBST members – learning support advisors and social workers

These DBST members were interviewed because they understood the SIAS 2014 policy rationale and principles. They have majored in inclusive education courses at tertiary level and they all have over five years of experience of working in an inclusive education system as learning support advisors. They are responsible for the management of the SIAS process as a measure to establish a support system (DBE, 2014: 35).

7.1.3.2 Principals – primary and secondary schools

Three secondary school principals and four primary school principals were interviewed. The secondary school principals comprised two from former model C schools and one from a township school while the primary school principals comprised one from a former model C school and three from township schools. Out of the three secondary schools, the educators of the one from the township school had also participated in the quantitative data collection. On the other hand, educators of the one former model C primary school and one township primary school had also initially participated in the quantitative data collection process. All the principals were selected because they all have acquired school management experience of over five years which was considered adequate to explain why the SIAS 2014 policy implementation was a challenge in schools. Their responsibility in SIAS 2014 policy implementation includes establishing the SBST and ensuring that the team is functional and supported (DBE, 2014: 29).

7.1.4 Data analysis techniques

After the interviews, data collected was processed following the steps given below:

Step 1: Transcription of the orally recorded interviews into a manuscript

Transcription is the process of transforming qualitative data into written text. Transcription of interviews allows researchers to become familiar with data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Nieuwenhuis, 2016c). In this research, the responses of participants were also transcribed with the intention of familiarizing the researcher with it while having it organised.

Step 2: Assigning variables codes to the transcriptions

Coding is seen as the process of making sense of a qualitative text data by making segments of it with symbols, descriptive words or category. The coding procedure allows researchers a timeous recovery and gathering of all the text and other data that they have related with some thematic idea so that the sorted segments can be assessed together (Barbour, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Nieuwenhuis, 2016c). In this research, the transcribed data about why there was modest SIAS 2014 policy implementation in Lejweleputswa schools was segmented into variable codes.

Step 3: Analysing causes and effects of participants' inputs

Deciding whether to analyse qualitative data manually or using a software package is important and depends on the number of the interviews involved and the amount of time a researcher is willing to devote to learning the software package. Data analysis is the final step which involves interpreting the findings or results in a manner that allows a researcher to acquire knowledge and understanding about what is being researched (Barbour, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Hesse-Biber, 2017). Qualitative data was analysed manually because only twelve participants were involved and the researcher found it easy to do the analysis. It was also a means of gaining first-hand knowledge of the inputs of the interviewees about why the SIAS 2014 policy was poorly implemented in schools.

The next section is the presentation and analysis of qualitative data from the DBST and school principals.

7.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA FROM DISTRICT-BASED SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Interviews were conducted among the DBST members and school principals to establish why there was no implementation of the SIAS in schools. The following sections present data coded according to the six themes and sub-themes about the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. When analysing qualitative data, the researcher identified the following themes:

- Theme 1: The role of educators in the implementation of SIAS 2014 policy;
- Theme 2: The role of school governance in the implementation of SIAS 2014 policy;
- Theme 3: Absence of records for learners who experience barriers at schools;
- Theme 4: Educators' attitude to the barrier screening process of learners who experience barriers;
- Theme 5: Identification and assessment of learning barriers; and
- Theme 6: Insufficient support rendered to learners who experience barriers to learning.

The main enquiry of the research in this chapter is to establish whether any of the six themes mentioned above is attributed to poor implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa schools. The five members of the DBST are identified as T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5. T1 represents the first DBST member, T2 the second DBST member, T3 the third DBST member, T4 the fourth DBST member and T5 the fifth DBST. The seven school principals are identified as Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3, Principal 4, Principal 5, Principal 6 and Principal 7. The participants' inputs were later transcribed and classified according to the policy variables and constructs that are being investigated.

From the inputs of the members of the DBST and the principals, the researcher noted milestones that can be acknowledged as the general stance of the DBST and principals about why SIAS 2014 policy implementation is modest at schools. In the following sections, a presentation and analysis of the participants' inputs will be given in terms of each of the themes and sub-themes that were identified during data analysis. The first theme to be discussed is the role of educators in the implementation of SIAS 2014 policy.

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7.2.1 Theme 1: The role of educators in the implementation of SIAS 2014 policy

Educators were identified as one of the factors which contribute to the poor implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in schools. In an interview with the DBST members and school principals about why there was modest policy implementation in schools, a number of submissions were made by the two groups about how educators contributed to the ineffective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The following paragraphs present the inputs of the two groups in the form of sub-themes, starting with the discussion on character traits of educators and the influence of the education system.

Subtheme 1.1: Influence of educators' character traits and education system on SIAS policy implementation

The general stance of the DBST about the educators' characteristics in relation to the ineffective SIAS 2014 policy implementation varies. For example, some members of the DBST state that failure to implement the policy effectively is caused by educators' lack of passion for teaching as a career. On the other hand, other members of the DBST claim that the ineffective implementation of the policy emanates from the education system, not the character traits of educators. The DBST members who subscribe to this latter view also stated that educators are demoralised by the very education system to implement the policy. The following verbal quotes illustrate the above:

Some of these educators are not passionate about their work hence you see them not helping these kids (T1).

Nothing will ever be okay about this policy as long as teachers are not willing to embrace teaching as a career that is meant to bring light to those in the darkness instead of being so full of complaints about these learners (T2).

Educators have empathy for learners but their morale is down because they feel the system is failing them by not responding at all or in time to their requests not knowing that actually the very system through DBST has serious challenges of resources. No educator likes to see a learner suffering, but educators end up deciding not to even try to be involved with such learners because they have experience of us always not responding well to their requests not by our choice but often as a result of the system failing us as well by not providing us with enough resources to assist schools (T5).

There are teachers who really seem to be willing to be inclusive but they are kind of hampered by our system that does not sometimes assist them to a point where our teachers just lose the interest to help their special learners (T3).

Interestingly, the school principals also acknowledged that it is not the character traits of educators that are causing the poor implementation, but the education system itself. The principals stated that an effective policy implementation of the policy demands educators to invest a great deal of time on administrative work for learners who experience barriers to learning, more than on the actual teaching of learners of whom the majority do not experience barriers to learning. Some secondary school principals further indicated that since educators are held responsible for the poor academic performance of learners by the education system, and charged for not reaching the set district academic performance targets, educators have a tendency of focusing on “saving” the majority of learners – who then are those that do not experience barriers to learning. This practice, according to the secondary school principals, is done in schools to avoid the punitive consequences of underperformance. For example, this is what they said:

Our teachers don't like the policy because it causes them a lot of paper work for only one or two learners while they neglect the rest of coping learners (Principal 3).

The educators don't really want to be involved with the implementation of this policy not because they do not love learners who are vulnerable, but the actual time and processes to be followed are too much for them (Principal 1).

Having discussed the influence of character traits of educators, the next sub-theme to be presented and analysed is the training and development of educators.

Subtheme 1.2: Training and development of educators as a contributory factor to poor implementation

Both the DBST and the school principals seemed to respond in agreement that the training and development of educators about the SIAS 2014 policy is inadequate, thereby hampering their effective implementation of the policy at schools. Similarly, the general stance of the two groups seemed to subscribe to a notion that there is not proper training of educators from institutions of higher learning. The following is an example of what they said:

The training that educators get about the SIAS policy from institutes of higher learning is not sufficient; hence there is poor performance of such educators (T1).

Educators ought to have been trained about inclusivity from institutions of higher learning even before they can be appointed as educators in schools but unfortunately this is not the case (T4).

Principals also had the following to say:

They are not well capacitated from college on how to implement the policy (Principal 3).

It is not possible for educators to implement the policy that they have not been well trained on from their training colleges (Principal 1).

The two groups further seem to agree that the poor implementation of SIAS in schools is linked to poor training and development of educators in terms of the number of years spent at tertiary institutions. For instance, this is what they said:

There is an influx of people who have teaching qualifications from one particular institute of higher learning but whose training has not been up to scratch. Such people have done education courses for only a year and then are said to be qualified educators (T1).

Principal 2 also confirmed that both novice and experienced educators in their school lack training and development on SIAS 2014 and further blamed both the institutions of teacher training as well as the DBST by saying:

Training from tertiary about SIAS is not enough and most teachers in my school do not even have adequate training for the subjects they teach. The DBST often trains principals more than educators and as a result educators get second-hand training from principals, which is often not as effective and detailed as the first-hand training (Principal 2).

The two groups also accounted for the perceived implementation ability of educators on the SIAS 2014 policy as discussed below.

Subtheme 1.3: Educators' ability or inability to keep curriculum pace in an inclusive environment

The DBST members disclosed that, unlike primary school educators, secondary school educators are not able to implement the policy because they are overloaded with curriculum demands which do not allow them to cope with the SIAS policy demands. For instance, they indicated that schools' timetables were too packed with curriculum focus to a point where it becomes almost impossible for educators in both primary and secondary schools to have time to implement the SIAS policy administratively. They also indicated that secondary schools are more focused on reaching the set targets by the Department of Basic Education, knowing that failure to reach the targets may cause them to face serious consequences of

accountability. As a result, secondary schools become compelled to spend more time on increasing the percentage pass rates for the majority of learners than focusing on a few learners who need inclusive support. On the same note, the school principals did concur with the DBST but rather added that as principals, they were also so overloaded with daily curriculum and management duties that they were unable to pursue SIAS implementation effectively. Some principals also confessed that they were still not able to implement the policy. For example, Principal 1 said that since they could not implement the policy at their school, they have employed a permanent School-Based psychometric assessor to assist the school.

I don't know much about how SIAS has to be implemented and my teachers also do not know much. We depend on our School-Based psychometric assessor to do all the necessary paperwork that has to be done (Principal 1).

The next discussion will focus on the qualitative analysis of the theme that has just been presented.

6.2.1.1 The role of educators in the implementation of SIAS 2014 policy

From the presentation of qualitative data about the role of educators in the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy, it can be noted that both members of the DBST and school principals

7.2.2 Theme 2: The role of school governance in the implementation of SIAS 2014 policy

School governance was also identified as one of the factors that cause the SIAS 2014 policy to be poorly implemented in schools. The outcome of the interview with both DBST members and school principals focuses on the functionality of the School-Based Support Team (SBST) in each school and the functionality of the SGB sub-committees. The first sub-theme to be discussed is the functionality of the School-Based SBST in each school.

Subtheme 2.1: Impact of dysfunctional SBSTs in the policy implementation

The DBST members seemed to believe that the SBSTs in schools were generally not functional. The reasons given included the fact that the SBST members did not get enough support from the rest of the school staff. For example, a member of the DBST stated that the duty of the SBST was exaggerated in schools. They agreed that it was the duty of the SBST to ensure that the implementation of SIAS happened but schools tended to regard their SBSTs

as if they were the only ones to implement the policy. Some members of the DBST said that the mind-set of the educators should be changed from believing that the SBST was a certain group of people in a school to an understanding that everybody in a school was an SBST member. The DBST disclosed another reason as being that a lot of schools had an SBST operating as a “one-man show”. The DBST members also said most schools whose SBSTs were said to be non-functional were those that had their SBSTs ran by one SBST member only. The adverse result of this is that no administrative effective records of SIAS implementation are kept; so progress reports of learners being supported are sometimes not found in SBST files or are not captured on the South African-School Administrative Management System (SA-SAMS). An additional reason for dysfunctional SBSTs in schools was tabled as being caused by school principals who handled cases of learners alone in their offices without either involving the SBST or having the cases captured on SA-SAMS. For example, the participants had the following to say:

The SIAS policy will never be effectively implemented in our schools for as long as teachers see their SBSTs as a group of people who have to deal with learning barriers in schools while the rest wait and watch the SBST deal with the problem. It is as if teachers don't know that the issue of intervention on learning barriers is everyone's business (T1).

SBSTs are often not supported in school communities because they are left to deal with almost everything that requires support of learners while their colleagues do nothing except to watch and complain (T3).

In secondary schools cases that are reported to schools principals end there and they are not cascaded to the SBST for recording and capturing by the administration clerks, so the principal affects the functionality of the SBSTs (T4).

The DBST also attested that SBSTs' functional freedom was limited in schools. For example, they complained that even if policy implementation were taking place schools, the capturing of cases on SA-SAMS was still a serious problem because it was done by administrative clerks only. The DBST did not seem happy about this practice because they said the clerks were already overloaded with work and could not afford the time to capture the cases effectively. The DBST further stated that the SBST and the entire teaching staff did not have a role to play in ensuring that all cases of vulnerable learners were indeed captured on the system. A suggestion was rather made by the DBST that SBSTs should have the SIAS software which was found on SA-SAMS loaded on their computers for them to access and

upload the information about learners. While the general stance of the DBST was that the functionality of SBSTs had an influence on the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy, an interview with school principals about the functionality of SBSTs in schools revealed varying outcomes from that of the DBST.

The following paragraphs present the results of the interviews with school principals about the functionality of SBSTs in relation to the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The results come from two types of school principals: those who regarded their SBSTs as functional and those who regarded their SBSTs as dysfunctional.

Subtheme 2.2: Contributory factors to functional SBSTs in the policy implementation

The school principals who claimed that their SBSTs were functional gave different reasons for their stance. Firstly, Principal 4 said that in their school they have merged the SBST with the academic committee to avoid fragmentation that ends up causing a great deal of work for everyone. Principal 4 had the following to say:

I think there is no need to say there is an SBST committee and academic committee when we know we are talking about same people with exception of one or two members. It's causing too much work for these people unnecessarily (Principal 4).

Secondly, some principals said their SBSTs meet every month and have briefing sessions with the rest of the committees and staff about cases experienced during that month. Principal 6 confirmed this in the following manner:

I can't say our SBST is perfect but at least they try to meet monthly to discuss with some committees what they are doing and if they need our assistance where there are problems (Principal 6).

Lastly, two other principals said their SBSTs were functional because their remedial educator assists the SBST with tasks that are too much for the SBST. For example, Principal 7 acknowledged as follows:

Our remedial teacher is always hands-on. She tries to help with whatever that has to be done by our SBST though sometimes I think the work becomes too much for her also (Principal 7).

The researcher has, however, noted that even though it may be true that there is functionality in these SBSTs, the principals of such schools did not relate the functionality of the SBST to

the effective implementation of the policy. For example, none of the principals said there was effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in their schools; instead they all acknowledged that the policy implementation was still a problem. Therefore, the researcher regards the SBSTs of such schools as dysfunctional because they do not assist in the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy.

Subtheme 2.3: Too much workload as a contributory factor to dysfunctional SBSTs

As opposed to the positive factors discussed above, some principals said the policy is not effectively implemented owing to the SBSTs' being overloaded with curriculum work. Overloading of teaching time was unanimously pointed out as the key cause of dysfunctional SBSTs. For example, Principal 1 said:

Our SBST is overloaded because they are also educators so they can't perform all the duties that is why I advised the SGB to hire a School-Based SBST coordinator who is also a psychometric assessor to help (Principal 1).

Subtheme 2.4: Influence of dysfunctional SGB sub-committees on effective policy implementation

The two groups further admitted that functionality of SGB sub-committees has an influence on the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The DBST reported that SBST exists along with too many other committees in schools in which educators mostly and SMT all serve. The result of this is unproductive and inefficient educators and principals who cannot monitor the functionality of all such committees. The DBST also indicated that the SIAS 2014 policy implementation is also hindered by lack of coordinated rationale of both SBST and a disciplinary committee. They admonished that for as long as there is no clear line of demarcation between the role of SBST and that of a disciplinary committee in schools, the SIAS 2014 policy will continue to be poorly implemented. For example, T4 made the following revelation and suggestion:

Disciplinary and SBST committees do not talk to each other because the disciplinary committee advocates punitive measures while the SBST uses care and support. Schools should abolish disciplinary committees and have only SBST in schools (T4).

Similarly, principals also acknowledged that the SGB sub-committees may have an impact on the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. Even though not all principals touched on this issue, those who responded admitted that the presence of many committees in their

schools was subjecting them to too much pressure of having to ensure each committee's functionality. They pointed out that most of the committees' establishments were a directive from the Department of Basic Education; therefore, as school principals, they were unable to abolish them even when they regard them as redundant or dysfunctional. Principal 4 even said their school has made efforts to merge some committees even though the Department of Basic Education does not seem to be in support of this move.

We are aiming at combining committees like SDT and SBST to avoid fragmentation that ends up causing a lot of work for everyone (Principal 4).

The next section discusses a theme on the absence of records for learners who experience barriers at schools.

7.2.3 Theme 3: Absence of records for learners who experience barriers at schools

The DBST and principals also pointed out that the poor implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in schools is caused by lack of Learner Profiles, especially those of vulnerable learners in schools. Both groups admitted that record-keeping and profiles of vulnerable learners have an essential role to play for the policy to be effectively implemented. For example, T5 had the following admonition to make:

Records of OVCs are not only important to schools but even to officials when they come so that they can have an idea of the type of learners a school has in terms of support needs. If schools don't have the lists of those learners and support programmes for them, we don't take them as being well inclusive (T5).

On the same note, Principal 6 rather had the following contradictory comment to make:

Such records are always important and should be our priority as a school, but sometimes we fail because of the workloads that we have. The DBST sometimes think that I am not doing anything to ensure that the lists of struggling learners are there, but they forget that our schools do not have enough manpower to do all these things (Principal 6).

On the other hand, the principals of schools which regarded themselves as moderately implementing the policy disclosed that in their schools they ensure that records of vulnerable learners are well-kept from the first grade to the last by setting timelines for all educators and administrative clerks to record and capture lists of vulnerable learners on SA-SAMS. These principals said that all cases of vulnerable learners were reported to SBSTs and this was followed by educators being developed on how to support the vulnerable learners. The principals pointed out that the capturing of vulnerable learners was made possible by the fact

that their schools were well-resourced and have many administrative clerks paid by the SGB to capture lists of vulnerable learners on SA-SAMS. For example, Principal 7 said:

The profiles of learners are always a priority to us. We try to keep records of every learner because if we don't, sometimes we are not going to know who is who about where they come from and how they live (Principal 7).

On the other hand, principals of schools which could be said to be poorly implementing the policy stated the reason for that ineffective implementation. They said there was a serious problem of overloading of the administrative clerks because they are the only ones who capture the profiles of vulnerable learners. Principal 3 said:

I don't know why we fear to allow educators to capture learners on SA-SAMS in Lejweleputswa like it is done in other districts (Principal 3).

While the notion of overloaded clerks was unanimously shared by the principals of schools whose implementation of the policy was not effective, the suggestion of Principal 3 of allowing educators to capture the vulnerable learners on SA-SAMS was objected to by Principal 6:

Capturing of vulnerable learners on SA-SAMS is not happening because the admin clerks are overloaded with work and we cannot financially afford to employ other admin clerks. At the same time educators cannot be used because their work is to teach and if they have to assist in capturing then they have to be blocked on the time-table which is also not possible (Principal 6).

The next theme to be discussed is on the screening process.

7.2.4 Theme 4: Educators' attitudes to the barrier screening process of learners who experience barriers

The process of poorly screening the barriers that may be existent in learners was noted as one of the factors that could be causing the ineffective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in schools. The interaction of the researcher with the participants about the screening process was mainly confined to three aspects, namely the screening resources, the learner referral from the school level up to the level of the DBST, and the early intervention screening services rendered. The following paragraphs expatiate on these three sub-themes of screening and the inputs of the two groups of participants about them.

Subtheme 4.1: Ineffective use of screening resources

The screening resources that should ideally be used in schools are the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) tool and the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The two screening resources are not

confined to the inclusive education policy implementation, but they are comprehensive guidelines by means of which schools can also evaluate their level of functionality in terms of accommodating learners who experience barriers to learning. They also allow the schools to draw up plans and set targets for intervention strategies on the systemic barriers identified. The researcher has noted that none of the DBST members made an input about these screening resources. However, the principals made an input.

The views of principals on screening resources were not the same. Some principals said educators in their schools did not use any of the resources to effectively screen the barriers in the learners because such educators complain that the process takes a great deal of their teaching time. Principal 2 revealed the following:

Our teachers don't want to do anything that needs them to write. Even when they have to refer to their very SIP, they don't want that but complain that it's too much. I can't do much about it because they will say we always want them to make learners pass but on the other hand we don't give them time to teach (Principal 2).

Contrary to this input were the views of other principals who said the screening process was not a problem at their schools. For example, Principal 7 said:

We don't have a problem of screening because once the learner profiles have been filled and submitted to SMT, we then sit together to discuss whether there are cases that are urgent and need our intervention (Principal 7).

From the views of the principals who claimed that the screening process went smoothly in their schools, the researcher has noted with concern that none of these principals seemed to be aware that a learner profile was only a tool confined to the use of screening barriers in the individual learners. The principals responded as if displaying their understanding that screening starts and ends with a Learner Profile. These principals did not make any mention of which screening resources they usually use in their schools to screen and counteract the impact of the systemic barriers in their schools, or whether any of such screening resources were effective. This one-sided input of principals about screening tempted the researcher to believe that as much as the absence of the individually-located barriers screening process in schools render the policy implementation ineffective, one of the reasons for poor implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in schools is that schools do not use the within-the-school screening resources such as the SSE and SIP to screen the barriers within their schools and therefore facilitate intervention on systemic barriers.

The researcher was also surprised by Principal 1 who disclosed that as opposed to the SIAS 2014 policy directive that charges register educators with the responsibility of doing the screening process; the psychometric assessor in their school is the one who screens the barriers in the learners. This is what Principal 1 had to say:

Our psychometric assessor screens our learners and if he finds that there is something that has to be told to teachers about a learner, he does that and also fills all the necessary forms that have to be filled. He has really been good to our school and we can depend on him for anything (Principal 1).

The implication of the professional and efficient psychometric assessor being the only one doing the screening was regarded by the researcher as a bold endeavour by the school to avoid implementing the SIAS 2014 policy. While the psychometric assessor may be helpful in ensuring that barriers are counteracted, it is doubtful whether educators in that school will ever be developed on how to screen learners on their own and what may happen to the school in the event where the contract of the psychometric assessor is terminated. The discussion of the second screening sub-theme which is the learner referral follows.

Subtheme 4.2: Impact of poor learner referrals on the policy implementation

Both the DBST and the principals seemed to share the same viewpoint that the policy does not enjoy effective implementation because, in the educators' viewpoint, it needs too much paperwork for further referral in order to ensure a more intensified screening process. As a result, educators neglect it. Principal 3 boldly said:

Teachers hate this policy because it has too many papers that have to be filled and nobody can even tell how exactly they have to be filled (Principal 3).

From the DBST side, T2 confirmed this by saying:

Teachers don't want to refer learners using the appropriate procedure. Some of them only want to tell me over the phone about the learners that need help but when I tell them to give me evidence of that, they don't have it and claim that it takes too much time. I cannot help teachers when they also don't do what is required (T2).

The researcher deduced from the participants' inputs that validity and reliability of referrals emanating from the screening process by educators to their SBSTs were not verified because the implementers who in this case may be the SBST or the SMT feel it takes too much time.

The last of the screening sub-theme discussed with the participants was the early intervention services.

Subtheme 4.3: Ineffective use of information about early intervention services

As part of the screening process the Learner Profile enquires whether learners had experienced barriers that needed intervention. The DBST and secondary school principals seemed to agree that the policy is poorly implemented in schools because primary schools do not screen the barriers at early age so that by the time learners get to secondary schools the support can be continued. The DBST and school principals also mentioned that parents of learners at both primary and secondary schools did not cooperate with schools on the recommendations for special schools for their children after the early screening intervention is done. T3 made the following revelation:

Parents of such learners are often resistant unnecessarily. They refuse to follow the recommendations when you tell them that their children need to be in a special school (T3).

Principal 1 further expressed their plight as follows:

I always wonder why these parents are so difficult in doing what is good for their children not the school. They think they are doing it for me when they force to keep their children here yet their children are not coping (Principal 1).

It was reported by the participants that there are learners in the mainstream schools who have been screened for barriers and recommended for special schools but whose parents refused to adhere to the recommendation. The participants expressed their concern that the presence of such learners in the mainstreams poses a challenge to educators who are unable to assist those learners academically and yet they remain part of the clientele of a mainstream school community that has to enjoy the benefits of an effective SIAS 2014 policy implementation. For example, Principal 1 said:

We still have a problem with learners who come to our school from primary with barriers that have been assessed. Sometimes the intervention to barriers has not happened because parents do not want their children to go to special schools even when they have been told that the child is not going to make it in main stream (Principal 1).

At this stage, it is noted that both the DBST and the school principals seem to acknowledge that the screening process in both primary and secondary schools is still faced with challenges that render the SIAS 2014 policy to be poorly implemented. The next section presents and

analyses the viewpoints of the two groups on the influence of the identification and assessment process on the policy implementation.

7.2.5 Theme 5: Identification and assessment of learning barriers

Identification and assessment of barriers include internal and external efforts that should be made to understand the barriers within or around a learner as soon as the screening process has been completed. The internal assessment is a phase that requires educators to fill in a Support Needs Assessment (SNA) 1 and 2 forms in order to track administratively the strengths and weaknesses of learners who have been identified as experiencing barriers. The Individual Support Plan (ISP) is another phase in the internal assessment phase whereby a plan of intervention regarding the barriers is then drawn up by educators. The external phase includes any form of identification and assessment of barriers by professionals such as social workers and psychologists.

An interview with the DBST and the school principals about the influence of the identification and assessment of barriers revealed the following details in the following paragraphs.

Subtheme 5.1: Influence of poor internal identification and assessment of barriers

The DBST and the school principals seemed to agree that another cause of poor implementation of the policy in schools was that there was poor internal identification and assessment of barriers in schools. Educators were reported as not being eager to identify and assess barriers administratively, but they seemed to prefer to do so orally. The DBST expressed their concern about this tendency because they said that it does not only hamper the effective implementation of the policy in schools but it breaks the record of identification and assessment of barriers done internally which could have also been useful in future. Both groups acknowledged that educators seem to want to render intervention on the barriers that learners experience but their main weakness lies in not documenting their identification and assessment of barriers on the SNA 1 and ISP. The fact that educators do not use the SNA and ISP was seen by the participants as a cause for poor external assessment for intervention in schools. This has been alluded to by the DBST member T5 who said:

Teachers also fail the system and the policy because when they skip one step, the next step cannot be achieved. They don't want to fill in the necessary forms but they expect me to come and assist in their cases and I can't do that because there should be evidence of what an educator has done before external help from us can be given (T5).

This view was supported by Principal 6 who had the following to say:

It's very unfortunate that our teachers also shoot themselves in the foot about even the basic things that they have to do for them to get assistance from the DBST but which they don't. They only want to report these cases orally but they don't want to do any administrative part, they complain non-stop (Principal 6).

Apart from the flaunting of the requirements of internal assessment, the DBST also stated that ineffective policy implementation was also caused by the fact that the DBST was seriously under-staffed. The members of the DBST acknowledged that there are cases of schools which identify and assess barriers in schools accordingly until they have exhausted all their means to the point where they request the DBST for external assessment. They said they are often unable to assist many schools because there is also a shortage of staff on their part. T4 even complained and said:

DBST does not have enough manpower because one person is allocated four circuits where for instance one circuit may have five secondary schools and twelve primary schools. Is it doable for one member of the DBST? (T4).

Subtheme 5.2: Controversy over educators being subject specialists or barrier specialists

The school principals, on the other hand, appeared to have strong feelings about the role that the policy demands that the schools should play in the internal identification and assessment of barriers. Both primary and secondary school principals expressed a feeling of discomfort about the demands of the policy for identifying and assessing the barriers. They unanimously pointed out that while the policy was aimed at assisting and serving the rights of learners with disabilities and barriers, it was also oppressing the freedom of educators by expecting them to play the role of specialists regarding those learners who experience barriers. They complained that while educators have been trained to teach subject content, they are now forced to perform the duties of specialist before the DBST could assist. For instance, Principal 5 said the SIAS 2014 policy was not assisting the challenges that they face in schools every day but it was rather adding to the challenges:

With this policy, when you report that a learner can't read or write or that a learner's behaviour is uncontrollable, those people at the inclusive education demand you to fill up those SNA 1 forms and others. But when you look at those forms you find that they are useless because they ask many questions about the learner which you can't answer. You are not an IQ specialist or behaviour specialist for the answers needed (Principal 5).

Subtheme 5.3: Perception of educators about the SIAS adding load rather than load relief

The principals also indicated that what is worse about the policy is that the SNA1 form does not relieve the burden of having to teach learners with learning barriers in their classes along with those that seem to be coping. They said the problem with the identification and assessment process as prescribed by the SIAS 2014 policy is that, instead of providing a platform for educators to only report the challenges they experience so that they can be assisted by the DBST, it rather creates a more stressful workload because it is a plan of action that an educator draws up and is compelled to follow. They even confessed that educators have sought to ignore the SNA 1 and ISP because it was the only way in which they tried to avoid the stressful workload. For example, Principal 2 felt strongly about the following:

Schools are already overloaded with so many tasks to do but when there should be a policy that removes the burden on us about these unruly children, here now comes something from nowhere that adds salt to our open wounds...it is paper after paper which does not help us nix (Principal 2).

Principal 5 then added:

This SIAS thing is not working for teachers. It only enslaves them to no end and what is even painful is that the department is doing nothing but keeps pushing and pushing (Principal 5).

However, Principal 1 did not seem to have despaired because he indicated that the main reason why their school ended up employing a School-Based psychometric assessor was to reduce the plight of educators who were faced with the SIAS 2014 policy implementation. According to them, it could not be implementable if it were to be left solely in the hands of the educators. This is what Principal 1 had to say:

When I came here some few years back I just realised that the load on the teachers was just too much plus the demands of inclusive education. Fortunately the SGB heard me when I told them that unless we have a fulltime person doing this inclusive education for us, we will never cope (Principal 1).

Similarly, the DBST did not seem to be totally averse to the idea of schools having School-Based personnel who will ensure that inclusive education policies such as SIAS 2014 are effectively implemented in schools. A detailed discussion about inputs of such nature is

presented in the following paragraphs about support for learners who experience barriers to learning.

7.2.6 Theme 6: Insufficient support rendered to learners who experience barriers to learning

Internal and external support of learners who experience barriers to learning as part of the SIAS 2014 policy implementation was also discovered to be poorly done in schools. Internal support entails intervention services at school level while external support entails intervention services from the DBST or anywhere outside the school. When asked for the cause of this, the DBST and the school principals had the following submissions to make:

Subtheme 6.1: Heavy educators' workloads

Both groups seemed to agree that learners who experience barriers to learning were not adequately supported internally because educators implement the SIAS 2014 policy under very difficult circumstances at schools. They said support was not easy at schools because of the overly heavy workload of educators. The DBST added that support of learners with pedagogical barriers should be done by support or remedial educators through trap-and-go processes. However, that is not happening because of lack of financial resources from the Department of Education. The DBST revealed that educators do not understand that when they are required by the policy to differentiate the curriculum activities for learners as a support process so that they meet the curriculum needs of the learner, it means that they should give learners the same activities but with a different approach. The DBST said the problem faced by educators, especially in secondary schools, was that there was not enough time to accommodate different learners with different barriers during a lesson of about forty-five minutes, given the work schedule that has to be covered within a term with the set performance targets. They reasoned why secondary school educators end up not supporting learners with barriers. The main cause for this is that they do not want to account for poor performance caused by spending more time with those learners who have barriers by trying to bring them on board while at the same time not completing the syllabus. They also indicated that this eventually causes poor performance of potential learners who could have achieved if they had been taught the whole syllabus. The primary school principals added that in their experience, the more educators apply the Curriculum Differentiation strategy, the more the

learners who have the potential to pass suffer, and so most educators do not bother to implement the SIAS policy. For example, Principal 5 boldly said:

The moment our teachers try to do the so-called justice on this SIAS and give it all the attention shall be when all of us in this school shall loose our jobs. That policy,... you can't do it. It belongs to full time people or special schools who have nothing to do except to focus on it. It's too much and complicated (Principal 5).

In support of the above-mentioned input of principals, the DBST further emphasised that support of learners who experience learning barriers is still faced with serious challenges, especially at secondary schools. T5 commented as follows:

Primary schools that are said to be better implementing the SIAS are those that implement the Curriculum Differentiation strategy especially at foundation phase because they are class teachers who spend the whole day with their learners so they can easily allocate their time to suit their support needs. Unfortunately, secondary schools do not have time for curriculum differentiation. Truly speaking, secondary schools will not be able to support learners as good as primary schools because of too much overloading and pressure put on them about performance targets by the department (T5).

Subtheme 6.2: Severe shortage of resources for DBST

Even though the DBST seemed to be sympathetic and understanding towards the circumstances which they said prevent educators from effectively supporting learners, they also mentioned factors that prevented them in their capacity as the DBST from rendering external support to schools. They said their main challenge was that they lacked human resources. For instance, T5 raised some concerns in this regard:

We are working under stressful workloads because you can imagine if I have four circuits allocated to me and I have more than fifteen schools in one circuit and address all their support needs and still serve my duties of reporting on each one of them back at the office (T5).

Subtheme 6.3: Misconception of schools about the role of DBST

The DBST argued that even on occasions when DBST members may be able to render a service to a school, they are not able to support schools because most schools neither have the necessary forms filled in such as the SNA 1 and ISP nor have the vulnerable learners been captured on the SA-SAMS. They also revealed that schools do not seem to understand the role played by the DBST in SIAS implementation and the prevailing misconception leads to support not being rendered. The following comment is an example of the frustration experienced by members of the DBST as expressed by T2:

Schools do not understand that the policy requires them to support learners fully except where a learner has to be moved to a special school. Our role is to support educators by advising them on how else they can support learners if their strategies do not seem to work; not necessarily jump straight to a learner and try to do what teachers ought to do (T2).

The researcher noted that between the DBST and the school principals, the question of whose responsibility it was to support learners who experience barriers to learning seemed to be controversial. For example, the principals also seemed to exonerate their schools from this duty by pointing out that educators are only trained to teach learners but not to be school social workers or psychologists. This is what Principal 2 had to say:

The DBST does nothing to support these learners. They only want our educators to do the spade work while they themselves only come to cruise claiming that some papers have not been filled. These many papers should be filled by the DBST not these poor educators who are overloaded (Principal 2).

As indicated earlier that the two groups seemed to blame lack of internal support on the curriculum overloading incurred by educators, the principals also explained that besides the DBST not assisting schools enough, external support was also not effectively rendered in schools because of parents. They said most of the parents whose children experience barriers are not playing their part. This is reinforced by the following statements by Principal 7:

Parents of learners with barriers do not support their children by following the advices and recommendations of the school and DBST. They expect the school to do everything and that is too much for educators (Principal 7).

From the inputs of the two groups about the causes of poor support of learners who experience barriers to learning, a major disparity between the views of the DBST and those of school principals has been noted. The DBST acknowledged that support in many schools is not and may never ever be possible as long as their (DBST) workloads and those of educators remain high. On the other hand, the principals do not seem convinced that the DBST is as overloaded as the school staff, hence the poor support in schools. The principals seemed to view their schools as victims of the DBST's policy demands while, on the other hand, the DBST seemed to view schools together with themselves (DBST) as victims of the education system that demands both of them to implement the SIAS 2014 policy against all odds. Judging from the various inputs of the two groups, the researcher sensed a feeling of their wanting the policy to be effectively implemented in schools. This has also been proven by the numerous recommendations for effective implementation suggested by both groups as presented in the next chapter.

7.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter a presentation and analysis of the views of the DBST and school principals about why there was modest SIAS 2014 policy implementation in schools have been made. The next chapter provides summarised findings and implications. The recommendations and conclusion will also be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARISED FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapters six and seven, the researcher embarked on establishing the extent to which differences among biographical variables such as gender, type of school, teaching experience of educators and educators' responses relate to their implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. In this chapter, the aim is to present the following: summarised findings and implications of the literature review from chapters two and three; summarised findings and implications of the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy; and summarised findings and implications of descriptive and inferential statistics on the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The next section is a discussion that summarises the findings and implications of the literature review.

8.2 SUMMARISED FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS OF LITERATURE REVIEW

In this research, literature about SIAS 2014 policy was reviewed in chapters two and three respectively. In chapter two, the aim was to present a theoretical framework of the SIAS 2014 policy and conduct a contextual analysis of the same policy. In chapter three the aim was to analyse the content of the SIAS 2014 policy by closely examining the policy directives on how screening, identification, and assessment of barriers as well as how the support of learners experiencing barriers to learning should be conducted in the South African public schools. This section presents a summary of the findings and implications of the two chapters starting with the findings and implications of chapter two which answered the research question: what is the nature of the SIAS 2014 policy?

8.2.1 Summary and implications of theoretical framework and contextual analysis of the SIAS 2014 policy

It can be noted that a learner becomes a focal point only during the support process while the rest of the preceding processes focus on the barriers. This theoretical approach is the fundamental difference between the traditional inclusive education theoretical approach and

the contemporary inclusive education theoretical approach. The traditional theoretical approach was centred on identifying learners whom were said to be having something ‘wrong’ with them so that such learners could be ‘fixed’ clinically by specialists. As a result, this approach used to be regarded as a clinical model. On the other hand, the SIAS 2014 policy approach is centred on identifying and profiling the barriers that affect a learner so that appropriate support of the learner may be rendered to counteract the effect of the barriers. This approach discourages labelling and discrimination of learners who experience barriers to learning; hence it is regarded a support model. The new fundamental approach of inclusive education through SIAS 2014 policy spells out some implications for educators in the Lejweleputswa District which are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, unlike with the previous clinical model where educators would simply identify a learner who they thought was ‘different’ or acting ‘differently’ and then refer such a learner to a specialist who would diagnose that which is wrong and fix it, the SIAS 2014 policy approach is different. The policy calls for educators to identify that which causes a learner to academically underperform, assess the level of support needed for counteracting the effect of the barrier(s) and then draw up an action plan of support for such a learner. Therefore, it does not only become imperative for all educators to be familiar with all the barriers in all systems of a learner’s life that may have an influence on the learning, but also to have an idea how each barrier may be counteracted with appropriate support for the affected learner. The systems from which barriers and support intervention may be located are presented in Figure 8.1 below in a form of nests that represent their interconnectedness in Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological theory.

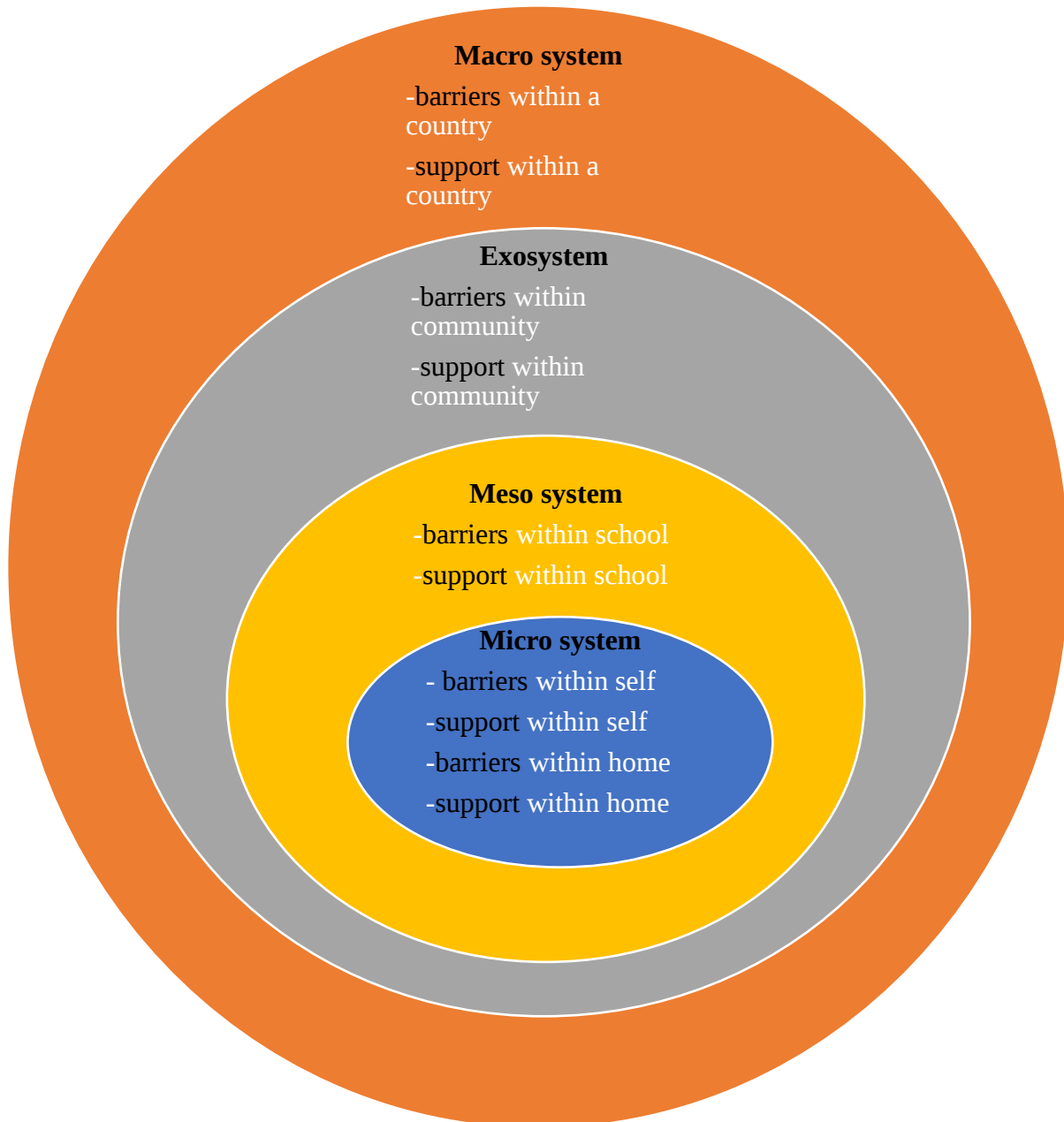


Figure 8.1: Nested structures summarising environmental or social contexts of learners (Source: Bronfenbrenner in Swart & Pettipher, 2017: 13).

Figure 8.1 above shows a relationship that exists within an ecosystem. In each system, there may not only be barriers which influence learning of learners but also support factors that can counteract the barriers. The implication portrayed in Figure 8.1 above for implementers of the SIAS 2014 policy is that educators must explore both barriers and support factors within a learner's operational system thoroughly before they can refer to other systems for assistance. For example, educators in a school need to screen and identify the barriers which affect the

learning of learners then assess the level and nature of support structures available within the school, and finally, render support before a referral for assistance from another system (nest) can be sought. It is only when all the support modes within the school have been exhausted that referral for support can be made from another system (which still has its own barriers and support factors).

From Figure 8.1, it can further be noted that the barriers to learning may not be emanating from an individual learner only but they may be caused by other systems such as home, school or community. A learner is portrayed as one of the areas in which barriers may be located, hence the adamant rationale of the SIAS 2014 policy of shifting the focus from the learner to the barriers which then influence the learner. The barriers from any of the systems may influence the lives of learners and so impact on their learning ability (cf. 2.2). The theoretical stance of the researcher about the implications of the bioecological theory summarised in Figure 8.1 above on the SIAS 2014 policy is summarised as follows:

8.2.1.1 Implications for implementation of SIAS 2014 policy at micro-level

Educators need to have a clear understanding of the barriers and support elements that may exist within a learner or the home of a learner. Both the barriers and support elements have an impact on the teaching and learning of learners. Therefore, it is essential for educators as implementers of the SIAS 2014 policy to be conversant with such barriers and support elements of the micro system level. Educators need to plan and present their lessons in a manner that does not aggravate the intensity of the barriers but rather accommodates the support elements. Educators also need to acknowledge the fact that the barriers that prevail within the micro system level first have to be counteracted by the available support structures from the same micro system level. For example, educators in Lejweleputswa should understand that for any barrier that they identify as preventing a learner from learning effectively, they first need to explore the support elements available within the territory of a learner. An example, educators need identify the same learner's strong points or interests, to try and support the learner to rise above the barrier. It is only when the support elements have been assessed and found to be insufficient that extra support may be sought from the next level to intensify the available support. The next paragraph discusses the implications for implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy outside the micro level, which is the meso level.

8.2.1.2 Implications for implementation of SIAS 2014 policy at meso level

As has been stated in the previous paragraph, the meso level is the next level after the micro level. In the context of the SIAS 2014 policy implementation, the meso level is another sphere of existence in the life of a learner which has its own barriers and support elements. At its best functionality, the meso level can be regarded as a more profound structure than the micro level in its ability to understand the existing barriers and support elements. The entire Department of Basic Education forms part of the meso level which impacts on the teaching and learning. Unlike the micro level, the meso level comprises professionals such as educators, psychologists, learning support advisors, subject advisors as well as educational social workers. All of them are responsible for ensuring that learning support strategies prevail over the learning barriers.

The researcher's stance about the implication of the meso level for the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy is that all educators in the Lejweleputswa District need to be thoroughly trained about the policy implications and implementation while still at teacher training institutions and then be further developed and mentored during their professional career. A further implication for educators in the Lejweleputswa includes the idea that educators' character traits and resource facilities at schools, as elements of a meso system, should be noted as factors that may impact on learning barriers. For example, an educator who portrays a caring and loving character trait towards learners is likely to impact more positively on the learners who experience barriers to learning than an educator who portrays an indifferent and impatient character trait. Similarly, lack or shortage of resources such as learning support advisors and educational social workers can have a negative impact and leave educators at schools without assistance or development on how to render support and intervention effectively on the barriers experienced by learners. This means their negative impact may act as barriers to learning while their positive impact may counteract the effect of barriers. Stakeholders within a school community need to ensure that elements of the meso system are effectively utilised to counteract the effect of barriers from the micro system.

The next level of existence to be discussed is the exosystem level which also may impact on the learning of learners.

8.2.1.3 Implications for implementation of SIAS 2014 policy at exosystem level

It is essential for educators to note that outside a home and school, community life has a profound influence on the learning of learners. Community in this instance is not only confined to a geographical community, but it also encompasses the social communities such as a religious community. Implementers of the SIAS 2014 policy such as educators need to note barriers and support elements within the community of their learners. Being familiar with the barriers and support elements within the community is an advantage for educators to understand their learners better. For example, educators may better understand why some behaviourally challenged learners may be acting the way they do. Moreover, the knowledge of the support structures within the same community may also assist educators in deciding on the best support approach to counteract the identified barriers. The last of the levels of existence to be discussed next is the macro level.

8.2.1.4 Implications for implementation of SIAS 2014 policy at macro level

The macro level denotes barriers and support elements at national, regional and international levels. Through national policies, any government confirms its sovereignty as an ultimate system level that has prescriptive powers over the rest of the levels. A national education policy such as the SIAS 2014 presides over the exosystem, meso and micro system levels from the macro level. The implication for the implementers, who in this case are the Lejweleputswa educators, is that the policy has to be implemented as prescribed, not as may be thought best. Educators in Lejweleputswa need to understand that in as much as the government is responsible for promulgating a SIAS 2014 policy that is feasible; there will always be barriers at this macro level working against the well-intended policy implementation such as the availability of enough fiscal resources. Similarly, there may also be support elements within the state that may counter the barriers. The researcher holds a strong viewpoint at this juncture that in order for effective SIAS 2014 policy implementation to be registered at this macro level, there should be continuous evaluation and communication among the systems about the barriers and support established during the implementation of the policy. It is essential for all evaluative reports to reach the macro level as it is the only level that can make pronouncements about changes in the policy implementation. The government also has an essential role to play in influencing the world view to the global

community, especially with regard to policies such as the SIAS 2014 which owe their conception to the international proclamation of human rights. Having discussed the macro level which is the last of all the four levels, the next paragraph is a presentation of the concluding remarks about the bioecological model of Bronfenbrenner in relation to the SIAS 2014 policy.

8.2.1.5 Conclusion about the implications for bioecological model

From the micro level up to macro level there has been evidence of the existence of barriers and support structures in each level. This means the SIAS 2014 policy implementers should surely focus on overcoming the barriers at any level of learner existence. Since the prevalence of barriers and support elements is evident in each level of existence, educators should therefore migrate from an old school of thought which used to think that barriers can be located in only one sphere of being, or support can only be imported from one particular body of solutions. Instead, the SIAS 2014 policy implementers should subscribe to the contemporary view that barriers exist within every level of existence and in each level of existence there are also support elements that should be explored and utilised to work on the barriers within the same system. Further support may also be sought from another level of existence in the event of the available support from within being insufficient or non-existent. The imported support is only meant to strengthen the existing support, not to replace it. The next paragraph discusses the implications of the content analysis of the SIAS 2014 policy.

8.2.2 Summary and implications of content analysis of the SIAS 2014 policy

The content analysis of the SIAS 2014 policy bears some implications for implementation. This section gives a summary of the implications of the content analysis of the policy based on the six administrative forms discussed in Chapter Three which are the following:

- Learner Profile
- Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1)
- Support Needs Assessment 2 (SNA 2)
- Individual Support Plan (ISP)
- Form DBE 120 – Request for support by SBST to DBST
- Support Needs Assessment 3 (SNA 3)

8.2.2.1 The learner profile

An analysis of the content of the learner profile was conducted in Chapter Three (cf. 3.2.2). In this section, a summary and the implications of the learner profile for effective SIAS 2014 policy implementation in the Lejweleputswa District focus on disability, type of social grant, indication of problems regarding medical aspects, early intervention services rendered, and areas needing ongoing support.

i Disability

As discussed in Chapters two and three of the literature review, it has been stipulated that Lejweleputswa educators need to know that a disability is a type of intrinsic barrier and they need to be able to differentiate between the physical, sensory, neurological and intellectual disabilities as well as being capable of deducing that a learner could be having a disability given other indicators such as the academic record of a learner (cf. 2.3.2.4 & 3.2.2.1). Therefore, educators need to be equipped with knowledge about disabilities because it will assist them in deciding on the nature and level of support needed for such learners. The need for educators to be equipped with knowledge about disabilities is also supported by the proponents of inclusive education who advocate that it is imperative for educators to understand that there are different types of visible and hidden difficulties so that they can modify their lessons appropriately. When educators are equipped with knowledge about disabilities they are able to determine important factors such as what is to be taught to a learner with a disability, how the content is to be taught, adaptations to the instructional environment, and the use of instructional assistive devices (Karten, 2005; Taylor, Smiley & Richards, 2015).

ii Type of social grant

Educators in Lejweleputswa should have knowledge of all types of social grants and the conditions that should prevail for each of the grants to be received by a learner. Knowing the name or type of grant may not only assist educators to deduce the learner's degree of vulnerability but it also assists educators to be able to place the needs of a learner in an appropriate category of barriers in his or her academic life so that an appropriate type and level of support may be decided on and rendered (cf. 3.2.2.2).

iii Indication of problems regarding medical aspects

Educators need to understand the significance of problems of child growth progress, prenatal/postnatal information, immunization record (birth to five years), visual/hearing/height/ weight/speech/physical/locomotor screening results, hospital admissions, and any chronic conditions impacting the learning development of learners which are listed in the Learner Profile. Familiarity with these listed problems may ensure that the support needs of learners are planned for well ahead of time and the necessary support is given on time (cf. 3.2.2.3).

iv Early intervention services rendered

This section of the learner profile does not seem completely different from the indication of problems regarding medical aspects. The former section is meant to equip a screening educator with medical information about the learner so as to better understand the support needs of such a learner. The latter is meant to report on what progress has been registered in addressing the barriers to learning until the age of five. The researcher assumes that the notion of reporting on age of up to five years may limit the extent to which educators have to know about their learners. For example, a secondary school educator who teaches a fifteen-year-old behaviourally challenged learner may not know from the Learner Profile about any intervention services rendered for the learner at the age of ten. Therefore, the researcher further assumes that educators of learners who experienced barriers after the age of five are not catered for in this part of the Learner Profile (cf. 3.2.2.4).

v Areas needing ongoing support

Lejweleputswa educators need to establish a strong transfer of information from one educator to another regarding the support needs of learners so as to be able to complete this section accurately. Educators should maintain a continuous track system of barriers that are experienced by learners as well as the progress on intervention. Educators may not know the areas in learners' lives that need ongoing support unless there is a clear systemic flow of information about those areas (cf. 3.2.2.5).

8.2.2.2 The Support Needs Assessment 1

From the literature review, there are implications of the administration of the Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1) for the Lejweleputswa educators. The first implication is that as the policy stands, educators who teach one learner different subjects need to decide on their own how to collaborate with each other about better ways of undertaking the SNA 1 without exposing a learner to the torment of having all educators embarking on his or her support needs analysis 1 (cf. 3.3). The second implication is that educators will have to improvise ways of writing everything in the small spaces provided for them when describing all the concerns they have about the learner.

8.2.2.3 Support Needs Assessment 2

The Support Needs Assessment 2 is commonly known as SNA 2. It is a form that a school-based support team (SBST) fills in to request support from the district-based support team (DBST). The implication of the SNA 2 for educators who are members of the SBST has been found to have an impact on the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy (cf. 3.4). It has been established in Chapter Three that SBSTs find themselves faced with a situation of uncertainty as to what should inform their support process at school level before they can request assistance from the DBST (cf. 3.4.2). The SNA 2 further creates a hiccup by providing for the SBST to nullify or confirm the need for external support to be requested from the DBST after all the efforts have been exhausted by an equally uncertain educator. As the policy provision stands regarding the SNA 2, this research is tempted to subscribe to the idea that the support process of a vulnerable learner may be that of trial-and-error because all these exercises of the SBST about the SNA 2 are unfortunately carried out without any checklist to which to refer for the purpose of consistency and standardisation of procedures. Another administrative form that has implications for implementation is the individual support plan discussed below.

8.2.2.4 Individual Support Plan

This research has revealed that the individual support plan (ISP) has some serious consequences for implementation because the policy seems to provide an illogical role-playing by educators during the screening and support planning processes (cf. 3.5 & Figure 3.1). This means along with the register educator, the SNA 1 can also be filled in by any concerned educator who may not have participated in the screening of barriers process. However, eventually only the register educator will enjoy the assistance of the SBST by participating in drawing up the ISP with the assistance of the SBST (cf. 3.5 & Figure 3.1).

8.2.2.5 Form DBE 120 – request for support by SBST to DBST

In Chapter Three, it has been established that the form DBE 120 is a clear and straightforward administrative form filled by the SBST to request support from the DBST. The provisions of this administrative form were surprising to the researcher in that they did not provide space for the subscription of an older learner for whom an intervention is sought (cf. 3.6). Trivial as it might appear, the researcher is convinced that the act of overlooking learners' commitment by omitting their signatures may be a breeding ground for the old clinical patient deficit model to take over from the aspired support model. The researcher rather deems it fair to include subscriptions of all stakeholders who have a role to play in the support processes so that the prevailing barriers can be overcome. The next administrative form to discuss is the Support Needs Assessment 3.

8.2.2.6 Support Needs Assessment 3

This is a form used by the DBST to ascertain the eligibility of the support processes rendered to a learner who experiences barriers at school level by the SBST. It has been noted by this research that firstly, the timeframe for DBST feedback to SBSTs' requests will be prolonged due to the revelation made by the DBST members about their shortage of resources (cf. 7.2.6 subtheme 6.2). Secondly, educators along with their SBSTs can further anticipate a non-responsive DBST towards their requests which, according to the DBST members, may be found unjustifiable. The qualitative results revealed that the DBST members regard the requests from SBSTs as unjustifiable as soon as one or more steps of the SIAS 2014 policy implementation procedures have been omitted at school level because one step leads to another (cf. 7.2.4 subtheme 4.2 & 7.2.5 subtheme 5.1).

Lastly, is the review of interventions of the SBST by the DBST. This forms one of the most profound controversies uncovered by this research because, as has been discussed in Chapter Six, there seems to be disparity between the schools and the DBST as to who is the key role player in supporting learners who experience barriers. This research has noted that both parties exonerate themselves from the responsibility of entirely supporting the learners who experience barriers: the schools on the grounds that they have been trained as curriculum content specialists, not barrier specialist (cf. 7.2.5 subtheme 5.2), while the DBST, on the other hand, attest that their role in the SIAS 2014 policy does not commit them beyond an

advisory role (cf. 7.2.6 subtheme 6.3). The next section will discuss the summarised findings and implications of the SIAS 2014 policy.

8.3 SUMMARISED FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT 2014 POLICY

In this section a summary of the findings and implications of the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in the Lejweleputswa District is given. This will be presented in the form of sub-headings with the major quantitative and qualitative findings in each sub-heading. The first one to be presented is the screening process.

8.3.1 Findings and implications of the implementation of the screening process

The quantitative results of screening process were reported in detail in Chapter six. The major signposts of the quantitative results about the screening resources, learner referral from school level up to the level of the DBST, and the early intervention screening services rendered reveal that educators in Lejweleputswa primary and secondary schools do not screen the barriers experienced by the learners (cf. Table 6.14d). A further finding established about the screening process was noted in the qualitative report in Chapter six. The participants of an interview relating to the reason for lack of screening process in schools were the DBST members and school principals. The general stance of these two groups about why the screening process was not happening in schools was that, from the educators' viewpoint, the process needs too much paperwork and as a result, educators neglect it since they do not have enough time because of their daily workloads (cf. 7.2.4).

There is an implication of this poor implementation of the screening process. Since the screening process is the initial step of the policy implementation, failure to execute directives about screening may lead to a collapse of all implementation efforts that may follow. The schools and the DBST also need to play their part in identifying and assessing the screened barriers. The identification and assessment of barriers are discussed in the next paragraph.

8.3.2 Findings and implications of the implementation of the identification and assessment process

Implementation of the process of identification and assessment of barriers was also found by this research to be ineffective in the Lejweleputswa primary and secondary schools. Quantitative data results revealed that educators do not fill in the Support Needs Assessment (SNA) 1 form and for those who administer the SNA 1, they neither include learners nor their parents for whom the SNA 1 is administered (cf. Table 6.14f) Another finding was that educators do not implement recommendations from professional practitioners about barriers which may have been identified and assessed to be affecting learners through the use of Form DBE 126 which is a Health and Disability Assessment Form (cf. Table 6.14f). The qualitative results of the enquiry on why there was no identification and assessment of barriers later revealed the cause for the ineffective implementation. The DBST and school principals acknowledged that educators seem to want to render interventions on the barriers that learners experience but their main weakness is not documenting their identification and assessment of barriers on the SNA 1 and ISP (cf. 7.2.5 subtheme 5.1). The act of educators not using the SNA and ISP was seen by both groups as a cause of poor external assessment for intervention in schools. According to the DBST and school principals, educators shoot themselves in the foot by not identifying and assessing the barriers in the learners. In addition, that is also failing the policy because when they skip one step, the next step cannot be achieved. Another reason for the poor implementation of the identification and assessment of barriers was disclosed by the DBST as emanating from a shortage of DBST staff to assist those schools which are still identifying and assessing the barriers but whose referral cases are not attended to in time owing to a shortage of staff (cf. 6.2.5 subtheme 5.1).

The poor implementation of the policy on identifying and assessing barriers has implications. One of the grievous implications has surfaced during the interview with the school principals who seemed to be rejecting the SIAS 2014 policy for what they termed an additional burden rather than a relief to the challenges which schools face about learners who experience barriers to learning. Speaking in favour of educators who are the implementers of the policy, the principals view the SIAS 2014 policy as subjecting educators to assume the role of barrier specialists instead of their legitimate role of being subject specialists (cf. 7.2.5 subtheme 5.2). According to principals, the policy does not allow the school educators to identify the barriers and report them to the DBST. Moreover, the implication of the policy expects the educators

to overcome the barriers fully then report their progress to the DBST which may or may not advise on further intervention regarding the barriers (cf. 7.2.5 subtheme 5.3). This issue of controversy between the role of educators in implementing the SIAS 2014 policy as subject specialists or barrier specialists has extended a debate to the findings and implications of the implementation of the support process which is discussed hereafter.

8.3.3 Findings and implications of the implementation of the support process

Support of learners who experience barriers has been noted in this research as the most controversial among the SIAS 2014 policy stakeholders. The major findings of the quantitative research reveal that there is no internal support rendered to learners experiencing barriers to learning at schools even though the primary schools appeared to be better in terms of implementation than secondary schools (cf. Table 6.14f). The DBST further confirmed this disparity between the primary schools and secondary schools. Furthermore, they gave a stern indication that not all of the primary school educators implement the SIAS 2014 policy actively, and that it is only in the foundation phase where the implementation may be better than in the rest of the phases (cf. 7.2.6 subtheme 6.1). They further revealed that the foundation phase educators seem to be better at implementing the SIAS 2014 policy only because they have access to the same group of learners the whole day and every day which gives them an opportunity to try any support strategy more easily than the rest of the educators in other phases. They also have to race against time whenever they try to support learners who experience barriers to learning. Educators who responded to the questionnaire revealed that when they complete the ISP about the nature of support that is to be rendered to a learner, they do not involve learners (even those at secondary schools) who experience learning barriers, their SBSTs, the curriculum manager (HOD), parents or caregivers (cf. table 6.14f). This practice may be deemed to have less of an impact at primary schools than at secondary schools since learners at primary schools are mostly minors. However, secondary school learners' non-opinion involvement may count for the ineffectiveness of the SIAS 2014 policy. Educators only write the nature of support that they feel would be most suitable to address the learning barriers in the learner without accessing the LURITS system for planning lessons that would accommodate diversity of learners.

Educators seem not to know the source of information that should inform their ISP (cf. Table 6.14f). This bears a serious implication because it compromises the uniformity of the implementation of the policy. Educators need to have a clear direction from the policy directive about their support role boundaries and those of the DBST. At present, it seems educators complete the ISP according to how they individually feel. In addition, the SBST also advises on what would be appropriate support. Ultimately the case is referred to the DBST which may nullify the whole support processes at school and recommend another way of support which still may not be guaranteed to yield positive results that will overcome the barriers. The most unfortunate part of the support process of learners who experience barriers to learning is that between the schools and DBST, no one seems to own the responsibility of the process. In an interaction with the school principals, they unanimously claim that it is the DBST that should support the learners once such learners have been referred to the DBST (cf. 7.2.6 subtheme 6.3). On the other hand, the DBST claim that theirs is an advisory role to the educators, not actually to take over from where educators have left off (cf. 7.2.6 subtheme 6.3). While there may be recognition of the stance of both stakeholders, it is also noted that at the apex of the educators' training is the development on curriculum delivery and mastery of the content. Support of learners who experience ALL sorts of learning barriers does not seem to be as equally at the centre of educator training as the curriculum content and delivery. The next section is a presentation of the summarised findings and implications of inferential statistics.

8.4 SUMMARISED FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS OF INFERENTIAL STATISTICS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT 2014 POLICY

As the previous section has discussed the findings and implications of the descriptive statistics, this section presents the findings and implications of the inferential statistics. There were nine hypotheses which were tested and analysed. The first one to be discussed is the gender of educators versus the screening of barriers.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the screening value scores for male and female educators. There is a statistically significant difference between the means of male and female screening scores even though the effect size shows that the magnitude of the

differences in the means is very small. The male educators are found in this research to be implementing the screening process more than the female educators (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.15). The reason for this difference has been discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 8.3.1). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted whilst the null hypothesis is rejected.

The second one to be discussed is the type of school versus the screening of barriers. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the screening value scores for educators at primary and secondary schools. There is a significant difference in the screening scores for primary school educators and secondary school educators even though the effect size shows that the magnitude of the differences in the means is very small. The primary school educators are found in this research to be implementing the screening process more than the secondary school educators (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.16). The reason for this difference has been discussed in this chapter (cf. 8.3.1). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted but the null hypothesis is rejected. The third hypothesis result to be discussed is the teaching experience of educators versus the screening of barriers experienced by learners.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of teaching experience on levels of screening learners. Data was divided into three groups according to respondents' teaching experience (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 2: 6 – 20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above). There is no statistically significant difference in the mean screening scores of learners by educators in all groups. These results mean the screening of barriers in learners is not happening in all groups; no group can be said to be implementing the screening process in any better way than the other (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.17). The reason for this ineffective policy implementation practice has been discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 8.3.1). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted while the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The next hypothesis result to be discussed is gender versus the identification and assessment of barriers experienced by learners.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the identification and assessment of barriers value scores for male and female educators. There is no statistically significant difference in the scores for male educators and female educators and this is also supported by the effect size which shows that the magnitude of the differences in the means is very small. Both male and female educators are found in this research not to be implementing the identification and assessment of barriers policy process (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.18). The reason

for this ineffective policy implementation practice has then been discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 8.3.2). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected but the null hypothesis is accepted. The next hypothesis result to be discussed is the type of school versus identification and assessment of barriers experienced by learners.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the identification and assessment value scores for educators at primary and secondary schools. There is a statistically significant difference in the scores for primary school educators and secondary school educators even though the effect size shows that the magnitude of the differences in the means was small. The primary school educators are found in this research to be implementing the identification and assessment of barriers policy processes more than the secondary school educators (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.19). The reason for this difference has been discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 8.3.2). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted but the null hypothesis is rejected. The next hypothesis result to be discussed is the teaching experience versus identification and assessment of barriers experienced by learners.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of teaching experience on levels of identification and assessment of barriers. Data was divided into three groups according to respondents' teaching experience (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 2: 6 – 20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above). There was no statistically significant difference in the mean identification and assessment of barriers scores for the three groups and the effect sizes did not differ significantly from each other. These results mean the identification and assessment of barriers in learners is not happening in all groups; no group can be said to be implementing the identification and assessment of barriers process in any better way than the other (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.20). The reason for this ineffective policy implementation practice has been discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 8.3.2). The null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The next hypothesis result to be discussed is gender versus the support of learners.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the support of learners for male and female educators' scores. There is no statistically significant difference in the scores for males and females and this is also supported by the effect size which shows that the magnitude of the differences in the means is very small. These results mean that neither

gender supports learners who experience barriers to learning; neither female nor male educators can be said to be implementing the support of learners who experience barriers to learning in any better way than the other one (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.21). The reason for this ineffective policy implementation practice has been discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 8.3.3). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected whilst the null hypothesis is accepted. The next hypothesis result to be discussed is the type of school versus support.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the support of learners by educators at primary and secondary schools. There is a statistically significant difference in the scores for primary school educators and secondary school educators although the effect size shows that the magnitude of the differences in the mean is moderate.

The primary school educators are found in this research to be implementing the support policy process more than the secondary school educators (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.22). The reason for this difference has been discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 8.3.3). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted whilst the null hypothesis is rejected. The next last hypothesis result to be discussed is the teaching experience versus support.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of teaching experience of educators on the levels of support of learners who experience barriers to learning. Data was divided into three groups according to respondents' teaching experience (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 2: 6 – 20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above).

There was no statistically significant difference in the mean support scores for the three groups. This is also reinforced by the effect size which shows that the actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was quite small. These results mean that the support of learners who experience barriers is not happening in all groups; no group can be said to be supporting learners who experience barriers in any better way than the other (cf. 6.2.2.1 & Table 6.23). The reason for this ineffective policy implementation practice has been discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 8.3.3). The null hypothesis is accepted whilst the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

8.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, a presentation of the findings and their implications about the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy was done. The next chapter will focus on a conclusion and recommendations of this research.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter eight has presented a summary of the findings and implications of the literature review; the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy; as well as the implications of descriptive and inferential statistics on the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The purpose of this chapter is to present conclusions for each objective of the research. The researcher will further provide recommendations for a more effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy and also share the challenges experienced during the research process. Before a concluding word, the researcher will outline the areas revealed during this research which could be explored for future research.

9.2 SUMMARY OF THESIS

This empirical research study has endeavoured to answer the descriptive and evaluative problem-questions. The first attempt at answering the research questions was achieved by the literature review in which chapter two examined the nature of the SIAS 2014 policy while chapter three explored how the introduction of the SIAS 2014 policy leads to all-inclusive and more effective teaching and learning processes. The second attempt at answering the research questions was achieved through the use of mixed-methods of enquiry (cf. 4.4.1) about how educators in the research site screen, identify and assess the barriers that learners experience as well as how they then support such learners.

9.3 CONCLUSIONS

This section presents a conclusion for each objective of the research. The first one to be discussed is the nature of the SIAS 2014 policy.

9.3.1 Objective 1: To establish the nature of the SIAS 2014 policy

Based on the discussion presented in the previous chapters, this research concludes that the SIAS 2014 policy draws its theoretical framework from the rationale of the bioecological theory which calls for a shift from locating barriers to learning within a learner only. The

policy rather conforms to the Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory by focusing on barriers, not on the learner any more. From the prescripts of this theory, the barriers to learning that learners may experience may emanate from within the learner, the home, the school or from the community (cf. 2.2). It is against this background that the SIAS 2014 policy now profoundly advocates a shift from the following approaches:

- Screening of barriers instead of screening of learners;
- Identification of barriers instead of identification of learners;
- Assessment of the level of support needed to counteract the barriers instead of assessment of learners; and
- Support of learners who experience barriers to learning in their own home space instead of removing learners from their own home space because of the barriers they experience, not because of the level of support they may need in order for them to be supported.

9.3.2 Objective 2: To examine how the introduction of the SIAS 2014 policy leads to an all-inclusive and more effective teaching and learning process

This section gives a conclusion about how the introduction of the SIAS 2014 policy leads to an all-inclusive and more effective teaching and learning process based on the six administrative forms discussed previously in Chapter eight. The first one to be discussed is the Learner Profile.

9.3.2.1 The learner profile

An analysis of the content of the learner profile was conducted in Chapter Three (cf. 3.2.2). In this section, a conclusion and recommendation about the use of a learner profile for effective SIAS 2014 policy implementation in the Lejweleputswa District focus on disability, type of social grant, indication of problems regarding medical aspects, early intervention services rendered, and areas needing ongoing support.

i Disability

Lejweleputswa educators need to know that a disability is a type of intrinsic barrier and they need to be able to differentiate between different forms of disabilities. Therefore, educators need to be equipped with knowledge about forms of so that disabilities.

ii Type of social grant

Educators in Lejweleputswa should know all types of social grants and the conditions that should prevail for each of the grants to be received by a learner

iii Indication of problems regarding medical aspects

Educators should be familiar with problems related to child growth progress impacting the learning development of learners which are listed in the Learner Profile.

iv Early intervention services rendered

This section is meant to report on what progress has been registered in addressing the barriers to learning until the age of five only. Secondary school educators not know from the Learner Profile about any intervention services rendered for learners beyond five years.

v Areas needing ongoing support

Lejweleputswa educators need to establish an effective transfer of information from one educator to another regarding the support needs of learners. Educators may not know the areas in learners' lives that need ongoing support unless there is a clear systemic flow of information about those areas.

9.3.2.2 The Support Needs Assessment 1

When filling-in a Support Needs Assessment 1 collaboration is essential among educators who teach a learner different subjects (cf. 3.3).

9.3.2.3 Support Needs Assessment 2

There is uncertainty about what should inform SBSTs' support processes at school level before they can request assistance from the DBST.

9.3.2.4 Individual Support Plan

This research has revealed that The Individual Support Plan (ISP) has some serious consequences for implementation because the policy seems to provide an illogical role-playing by educators during the screening and support planning processes.

9.3.2.5 Form DBE 120 – request for support by SBST to DBST

The form DBE 120 is a clear and straight-forward administrative form filled by the SBST to request support from the DBST. The provisions of this administrative form do not provide space for the consent of an older learner for whom an intervention is sought.

9.3.2.6 Support Needs Assessment 3

The prolonged timeframe for DBST feedback to SBSTs' requests may render the policy implementation ineffective. There seems to be disparity between the schools and the DBST as to who is the key role player in supporting learners who experience learning barriers. Both parties exonerate themselves from the responsibility of entirely supporting the learners who experience barriers.

9.3.3 Objective 3: To determine how educators screen, identify and assess barriers to learning and then support learners with learning barriers

In this section a conclusion about how educators in Lejweleputswa screen, identify and assess barriers to learning and support learners who experience learning barriers will be given. The first one to be presented is the screening process.

9.3.3.1 Screening process

Educators in Lejweleputswa both primary and secondary schools do not screen the barriers experienced by the learners. The process needs too much paperwork therefore educators neglect it since they do not have enough time because of their daily workloads.

9.3.3.2 Identification and assessment process

Implementation of the process of identification and assessment of barriers is ineffective in Lejweleputswa schools. The DBST acknowledged that the ineffective implementation process of the identification and assessment of barriers emanates from a shortage of DBST staff to assist those schools which are still identifying and assessing the barriers but whose referral cases are not attended to in time. School principals seemed to reject the SIAS 2014 policy for what they termed an additional burden rather than a relief to the challenges which schools face about learners who experience barriers. They view the SIAS 2014 policy as subjecting educators to assume the role of barrier specialists instead of their legitimate role of being subject specialists by not allowing the school educators to identify the barriers and report them to the DBST.

9.3.3.3 Support process

There is no internal support rendered to learners experiencing barriers to learning at schools even though the primary schools appeared to be better in terms of implementation than secondary schools. Not all of the primary school educators implement the SIAS 2014 policy

actively, but implementation is better in the foundation phase than in the rest of the phases because educators in this phase have access to the same group of learners the whole day and every day which gives them an opportunity to try any support strategy more easily than the rest of the educators in other phases. Educators seem not to know the source of information that should inform their ISP. Between the schools and DBST, no one seems to own the responsibility of the support process of learners who experience barriers to learning. Support of learners who experience ALL sorts of learning barriers does not seem to be as equally at the centre of educator training as the curriculum content and delivery.

9.3.4 Objective 4: To determine the extent to which there are differences between biographical variables (gender, type of school and teaching experience) and educators' responses related to their implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy

The following section presents conclusions about the extent to which there are differences between gender, type of school and teaching experience of educators in relation to their implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The first one to be presented is the screening process.

9.3.4.1 Screening process

The male educators are found in this research to be implementing the screening process more than the female educators. The primary school educators are found in this research to be implementing the screening process more than the secondary school educators. Screening of barriers in learners is not happening in all three groups of educators' teaching experience (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 2: 6 – 20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above); no group can be said to be implementing the screening process in any better way than the other.

9.3.4.2 Identification and assessment process

Both male and female educators are found in this research not to be implementing the identification and assessment of barriers policy process. The primary school educators are found in this research to be implementing the identification and assessment of barriers policy processes more than the secondary school educators. The identification and assessment of barriers in learners is not happening in all groups (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 2: 6 –

20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above); no group can be said to be implementing the identification and assessment of barriers process in any better way than the other.

9.3.4.3 Support process

Neither female nor male educators can be said to be implementing the support of learners who experience barriers to learning in any better way than the other one. The primary school educators are found in this research to be implementing the support policy process more than the secondary school educators. The support of learners who experience barriers is not happening in all groups (Group 1: 1 – 5 years or less; Group 2: 6 – 20 years; Group 3: 21 years and above); no group can be said to be supporting learners who experience barriers in any better way than the other.

In conclusion, the previous discussions have presented the major results of the quantitative and qualitative data. The general trend of the results has indicated that the SIAS 2014 policy is not effectively implemented in Lejweleputswa primary and secondary schools. For this reason, the researcher holds a strong view that the SIAS 2014 policy will never be implemented effectively in Lejweleputswa schools as long as the following recommendations are not considered. The next section is a presentation of the recommendations based on the previous deliberations in Chapter One (orientation to the study), Chapters Two, Three and Four (the literature review), Chapter Six (the presentation of quantitative data), Chapter Seven (the presentation of qualitative data), and Chapter Eight (findings and implications).

9.3.5 Objective 5: To suggest a model for the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy

The findings and implications discussed in chapter seven, as well as the conclusions presented at the beginning of this chapter have necessitated recommendations about the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The recommendations involve educators, school governance, learners, the screening process, the identification and assessment of barriers, and lastly, the support of learners who experience barriers to learning. Some of the recommendations have been adopted in this research as suggested and discussed with the participants of this research. The first recommendation that focuses on educators is discussed in the next paragraph.

9.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has established that there is no effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa primary and secondary schools. In order to ensure that effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy takes place, this research presents recommendations about the six variables established in this research which are: educators, school governance, learners, screening of barriers, identification and assessment of barriers, and support of learners experiencing barriers to learning. The first recommendation regards educators.

9.4.1 Educators

This section presents recommendations that relate to the external and internal training and development of educators as well as the educators' perceived policy implementation ability and knowledge.

External training and development of educators should be intensified. The training institutions should capacitate aspiring educators about inclusive education policies such as the SIAS 2014 policy rationale, principles, and how the policy is to be effectively implemented in schools. Apart from the external training of educators, the DBST should also be capacitated in terms of increasing competent staff members who can reinforce the training and development of educators at schools to implement the SIAS 2014 policy effectively.

A further internal induction and mentoring of educators are still essential. Educators at schools should be well inducted to adopt a positive mind-set to be passionate about inclusivity and the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. This research further subscribes to the notion of having a School-Based psychometric assessor who can conduct the internal training of educators on the rationale about inclusivity which in this case is the SIAS 2014 policy implementation and coordinate the SBST on a full-time basis. Along with the establishment of the School-Based psychometric assessor, this research finds it imperative for the Department of Basic Education to give SA-SAMS training on the SIAS 2014 policy to educators to ensure that cases of learners experiencing barriers are captured on the system. The Department of Basic Education through the DBST should train principals and educators equally instead of training one group more than the other. The next recommendation regards school governance.

9.4.2 School governance

The SBSTs may be intensified by dissolving other committees such as the academic committee and Staff Development Team (SDT) which cause the SBST to appear redundant. An SBST should be coordinated by a passionate member as a full-time job. SBSTs should meet frequently and have monthly briefing sessions with the rest of the staff about cases experienced during that month. SGBs should be financially supportive to employ a School-Based psychometric assessor to assist the SBST where necessary. Lastly, principals should cascade cases brought to them about learners to the SBST for support, monitoring and capturing on systems records. The next paragraph discusses recommendations about school learners.

9.4.3 Learners

Learner profiles must be captured and updated on the SA-SAMS from time to time by allocated full-time personnel whose duty shall only be the administration of the SIAS 2014 policy which will include capturing the profiles of vulnerable learners to avoid overloading the administration clerks. The SIAS software on the SA-SAMS should be accessible to SBST and educators for recording daily classroom incidents. Schools should keep records of vulnerable learners from Grade 8 to Grade 12. The School-Based SBST coordinator should ensure the capturing of vulnerable learners on SA-SAMS. The SBST coordinator should report cases of vulnerable learners to SBST and advice educators on how to support vulnerable learners. Deadlines should be given to all educators and administration clerks to record and capture lists of vulnerable learners on the SA-SAMS. Educators should also be trained to capture the vulnerable learners on the SA-SAMS. The next paragraph discusses recommendations about the screening process.

9.4.4 Screening process

The Learner Profile, School Self Evaluation (SSE) and Subject Improvement Plan (SIP) need to be the daily tools by means of which the barriers within and outside a learner's learning environment are monitored. All the role players in this process must ensure that they do what they are supposed to do in order to overcome the screened barriers. Learners and parents or caregivers need to play their part by assisting schools with information that may be needed during the screening process. The schools and the DBST also need to play their part in identifying and assessing the screened barriers.

Since the learner profile prescribes that there should be a photograph attached to the Learner Profile, this research could not determine the rationale behind this instruction from the participants. Therefore, this research recommends that the Department of Basic Education rather indicate this on the Learner Profile or simply repeal this instruction. Every educator of the learner whom they have concerns about should compile a profile for screening the barriers experienced by an individual learner.

This research further established that the policy prescribes that the screening educators should write the nature of disability a learner has and indicate the type of social grant received by a learner, if any. This was found to pose some challenges in chapter three (cf. 3.2.3.2) and so the following recommendations can be made: The Learner Profile should rather list forms of disabilities that can act as barriers to learning as well as types of social grants for which learners may be eligible in order to allow the educators to tick the most appropriate one. It cannot be assumed that learners and educators know the types of disabilities and grants for inclusion in the Learner Profile. The significance of this includes easy transfer of information from one member of the personnel to another as well as fostering easy access to information for future reference.

A further recommendation regarding the Learner Profile as a screening tool relates to the screening educators who have to record early intervention services rendered to a learner in an effort to overcome the barriers. The researcher noted in Chapter three that the focus on the first five years of a learner's life may be limiting intervention opportunities especially for learners who are in the adolescent stage and need support. This research rather recommends that this exploration be all-encompassing of a learner's schooling years in order to give a clear track of subsidence or escalation of barriers in the learning life of a learner. For example, instead of the table heading reading "Early Intervention Services Rendered," it should read as "Intervention Services Rendered." Then the table should be arranged as follows: The first column should be 0 - 5 years; 6-10 years; 11-15 years; and lastly, 16-20 years. The second and third columns should remain unchanged but the screening educator should ensure that for any entry in the year phases, the corresponding rows should have corresponding details. The table will then read as follows:

Years	Area of need	Services and intervention received
0 – 5 year		
6 – 10 year		
11 – 15 year		
16 – 20 year		

An ambiguity was noted about the “Areas Needing On-going Support” table in the Learner Profile in Chapter three (cf. 3.2.2.5). The table in the Learner Profile looks like this:

MM/YY	Gr	Area of need	Nature of support	Review date

The MM/YY indicates month and year but this research never established which month and year were to be indicated by educators. Also, it was not clear whether educators were to write the month and year in which the area of need was first discovered or whether they should write the current month and year in which the screening process on the Learner Profile was being conducted. Regarding the ‘Gr’, it was also clear that this represented ‘grade’. However, it was not clear to the researcher whether educators should write the grade in which the learner was when the barrier was first discovered, or whether they should write the current grade in which the learner was at the time of screening. Concerning the cell about ‘Area of Need’, it was still not clear how educators should know the Area of Need. It is unclear whether there was a specific source of information that educators should use to determine the Area of Need. Furthermore, it was not clear what educators should write in the column about the ‘Nature of Support’. This research never established whether educators write the nature of support previously rendered or the support that would be rendered at the time when the barrier was being noted.

For all the above-mentioned ambiguities, the researcher recommends that the DBE, through the DBST, clarify all the ambiguities to avoid confusion and ensure an effective SIAS 2014

policy implementation. The following paragraph presents the recommendations made by the participants of this research about the screening process.

The subject curriculum time should be adjusted to allow time for a progressive screening process. Internal and external training should be intensified to capacitate educators to screen learners. There should be a psychometric assessor in each school who ensures that screening is conducted accordingly and who provides assistance where there is a need. The SBST coordinator should convene all SMT members to discuss the screening results from Learner Profiles and the implications of the screening results for the subject curriculum. Subject educators should report their screening processes to the SBST coordinator administratively. The psychometric assessor, through the school principal, should contact the parents of screened vulnerable learners to request permission for further and specialised assessment of barriers in the learners. Primary feeder schools should screen the barriers in the learners at early stage without fail. Curriculum demands should be streamlined in a way that enables educators to fulfil the SIAS 2014 process demands. The next paragraph discusses recommendations about the process of identifying and assessing barriers.

9.4.5 The identification and assessment of barriers

The previous paragraphs have presented recommendations about the screening process. The next discussion will focus on recommendations for the process of identifying and assessing barriers using the second and third administrative forms called the Support Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1) and Individual Support Plan (ISP) respectively.

An outcry from school principals was noted in Chapter six about the SNA 1 and ISP not being facilitative tools for the alleviation of barriers but rather pose an added burden for the educators (cf. 7.2.5). This research therefore recommends that the process of identifying and assessing barriers through the use of SNA 1 and ISP forms be limited to a full-time School-Based SBST coordinator who will have been professionally trained to identify and assess barriers that learners experience. The act of relieving the educators from the duty of trying to identify and assess barriers of which they have no in-depth understanding will also redress the feeling of injustice perceived by educators. According to them, the SIAS 2014 policy compels them to dispense with the services of barrier specialists when in actual fact they are

subject content specialists. There appears to be a great deal of logic in the argument levelled by the educators against the SIAS 2014 policy: for every professional duty to be performed, the aspirants of such a profession have to undergo intense training that is accredited. Similarly, for educators to be approved as professional educators, they were also trained for a particular type of school and a type of subject or phase. Therefore, it should be imperative for the identification and assessment of barriers to be professionally executed. Internal and external training of educators should be intensified to capacitate educators to identify and assess barriers professionally. The School-Based psychometric assessor may further identify and assess the nature of barriers in learners and then give a direction to educators and parents on how such learners must be supported. The psychometric assessor's identification and assessment reports should not prevent parents or the DBST from reassessing the barriers in a learner if deemed necessary. Where subject educators have to identify and assess the barriers in the learners, the process should be conducted administratively, not orally or informally. Lastly, the subject curriculum time should be adjusted to allow time for a progressive identifying and assessment process. The next paragraph presents a discussion about the implementation of the support process of learners who experience barriers to learning.

9.4.6 Support of learners who experience barriers to learning

Educators need to have a clear direction from the policy directive about their support role boundaries and those of the DBST. This research recommends that the policy be more specific on the nature or types of barriers that will be addressed at school level and those that will be addressed at DBST level to avoid a back-and-forth mode of operation between the DBST and the schools. Moreover, it is necessary to recommend that the support of learners who experience barriers to learning be administered in a specialised way. Support should be professionally specialised as is the case with health institutions where there are specialists such as psychiatrists, cardiologists, and gynaecologists. It is not only the medical profession that embraces the need for specialised support; the law enforcement agencies follow suit; hence there are specialists such as divorce lawyers, property lawyers, and sports lawyer. All these specialities were established to allow the professionals to provide their full expertise. Within human sciences, another example can be drawn from the field of psychology where there are a number of specialist support personnel such as marriage psychologists, child psychologists, and trauma psychologists.

What seems common about the above-mentioned specialist support approaches is the fact that there is an endeavour to maximise quality that could have been compromised by only one professional educator who may end up providing multiple support services that are rather superficial. This research further concurs with the recommendations made by the DBST and the school principals for a more effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The following paragraph summarises their inputs:

The Department of Basic Education should turn all schools into resource centres by deploying full-time specialists in schools. There should be a School-Based therapist, learning support advisor, social worker, psychologist, and a nurse in each school. The subject curriculum time should be adjusted to allow time for the support of learners with barriers. This will enhance their support by having a balance between the curriculum work that educators do and the support processes that educators should do to ensure that learning barriers are minimised. Both the internal and external training of educators should be intensified to capacitate educators on how to support learners with barriers. There should be a tracking system by the Department of Basic Education about further life-long support for learners with barriers when they move from primary to secondary schools. Secondary schools should be classified according to the support needs they cater for, such as a school for skills development. The Department of Basic Education should enforce intensive accountability measures on schools for failure to implement the SIAS 2014 policy. Learners who experience barriers should be supported by a full-time SBST coordinator for a month while their educators are also being supported on how to teach them in class during the same month. Every grade should have an educator who ensures that support is being rendered to learners who experience barriers. Schools which have a remedial educator should ensure that the educator assists the SBST to support learners with barriers.

Furthermore, there should be a reasonable amount of paperwork that has to be done by educators when they support learners with barriers at classroom level. The number of progressed learners should not be too high to allow educators to give them the individual support that they may need. The role played by the DBST should be balanced with the role played by educators at schools for supporting learners. Parents should show enough involvement in their children's education so as to enhance effective policy implementation. Parents of learners who experience barriers should support their children by following the

support advice and recommendations of the school and DBST. They should adhere to recommendations that suggest that their children should go to special schools when they experience barriers that may not be addressed in mainstream schools. Parental and learner involvement in the case of secondary school learners is also the cornerstone for the effective support of learners who experience barriers to learning. The following two figures summarise the standpoint of this research by illustrating the current practical implementation of support at schools and the recommended approach of support at schools. There is a representation of an all-knowing educator-centred support approach and another one showing a specialist support approach that is being advocated by this research.



Figure 9.2: An all-knowing educator-centred support approach currently in practice at Lejweleputswa schools

From Figure 9.2 above it can be observed that currently educators in Lejweleputswa find themselves being compelled to dispense multiple services at schools which include the following:

- Providing curriculum content teaching services at schools effectively which includes reaching the set academic performance targets lest they face punitive measures;
- Screening, identifying and assessing the barriers that learners experience according to the provisions of the SIAS 2014 policy despite not being trained by their training institutions; and
- Supporting learners who experience barriers to learning even though they are seriously hampered by time constraints and lack of expertise to do so.

Figure 9.2 above has depicted the current situation that is opposed by this research and perhaps by the original intention of the policy. This research has determined that educators are not well capacitated to implement the SIAS 2014 policy as well as being too overloaded to try to effectively implement it. This research believes that the current implementation practice shown in Figure 9.2 above is against the original intent of the SIAS 2014 policy. According to paragraphs 20, 21 and 22 of the SIAS 2014 policy provisions, the health systems, social services, as well as the care and support for the teaching and learning (CSTL) programme are all supposed to be visibly aligned to the SIAS 2014 policy implementation (DBE, 2014).

In contrast, Figure 9.3 below depicts the ideal implementation practice supported by this research and the paragraphs 20, 21 and 22 of the SIAS 2014 policy. In Figure 9.3 a presentation of the specialised approach to the support of learners who experience barriers to learning is given. This approach emphasises the importance of maximising support by every individual who plays an active role in a school life of a learner. The approach strives to realise the aim of the SIAS 2014 policy of shifting focus from the individual learner deficit to the support programme. For the support programme to be achieved, this research strongly recommends that there should be a full-time school-based psychometric assessor who will coordinate the care and support of learners who experience barriers to learning. The coordination role of the psychometric assessor should include liaising with the following specialists: social workers for social support needs of learners; health care practitioners for clinical health support needs of learners, as well as the DBST for learning support needs of learners. Apart from the role of liaising with different stakeholders, the psychometric assessor

should be responsible for developing and capacitating educators on how to support learners daily in their classrooms.

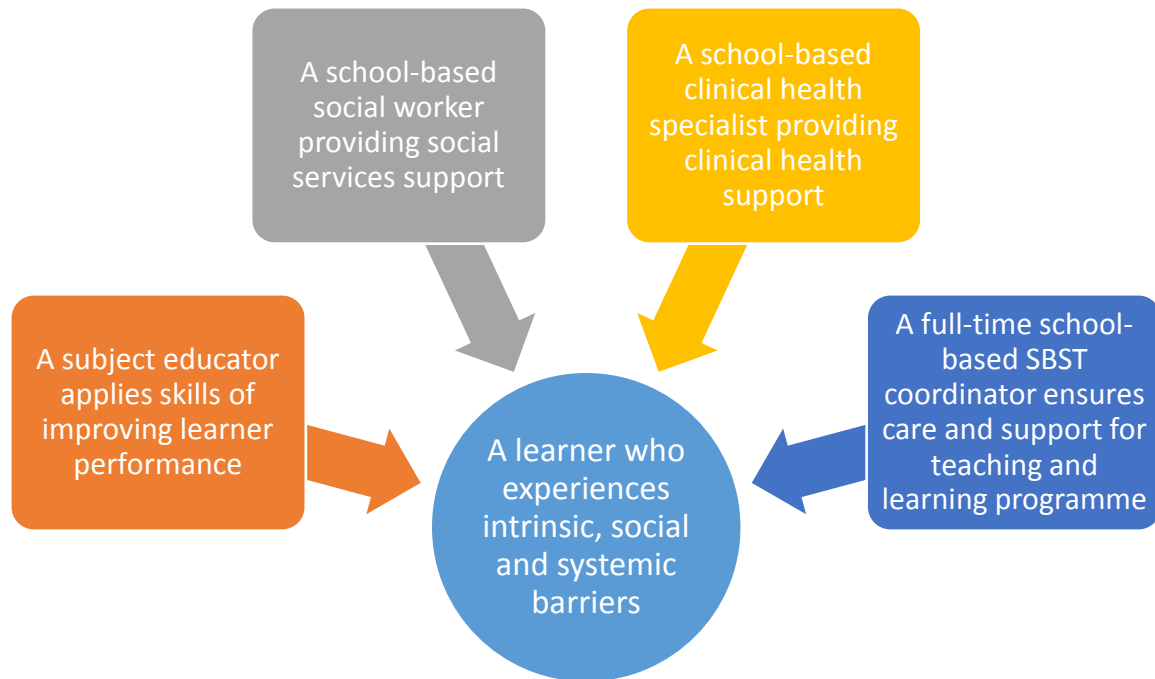


Figure 9.3: A specialist support approach advocated by this research for effective implementation of SIAS 2014 policy

Therefore Figure 9.3 above depicts individual professionals directly rendering support for the learner who is seen to be experiencing barriers to learning. A number of recommendations have been presented and discussed. Figure 9.4 below gives a basic summary of the recommendations (cf. 9.4.1, 9.4.2, 9.4.3, 9.4.4, 9.4.5 & 9.4.6) that have been made by this research in a form of a SIAS 2014 Specialist Support Model. The model still maintains the nested systems that were discussed previously as a Bronfenbrenner bioecological theory for the SIAS 2014 policy (cf. Figure 9.1).

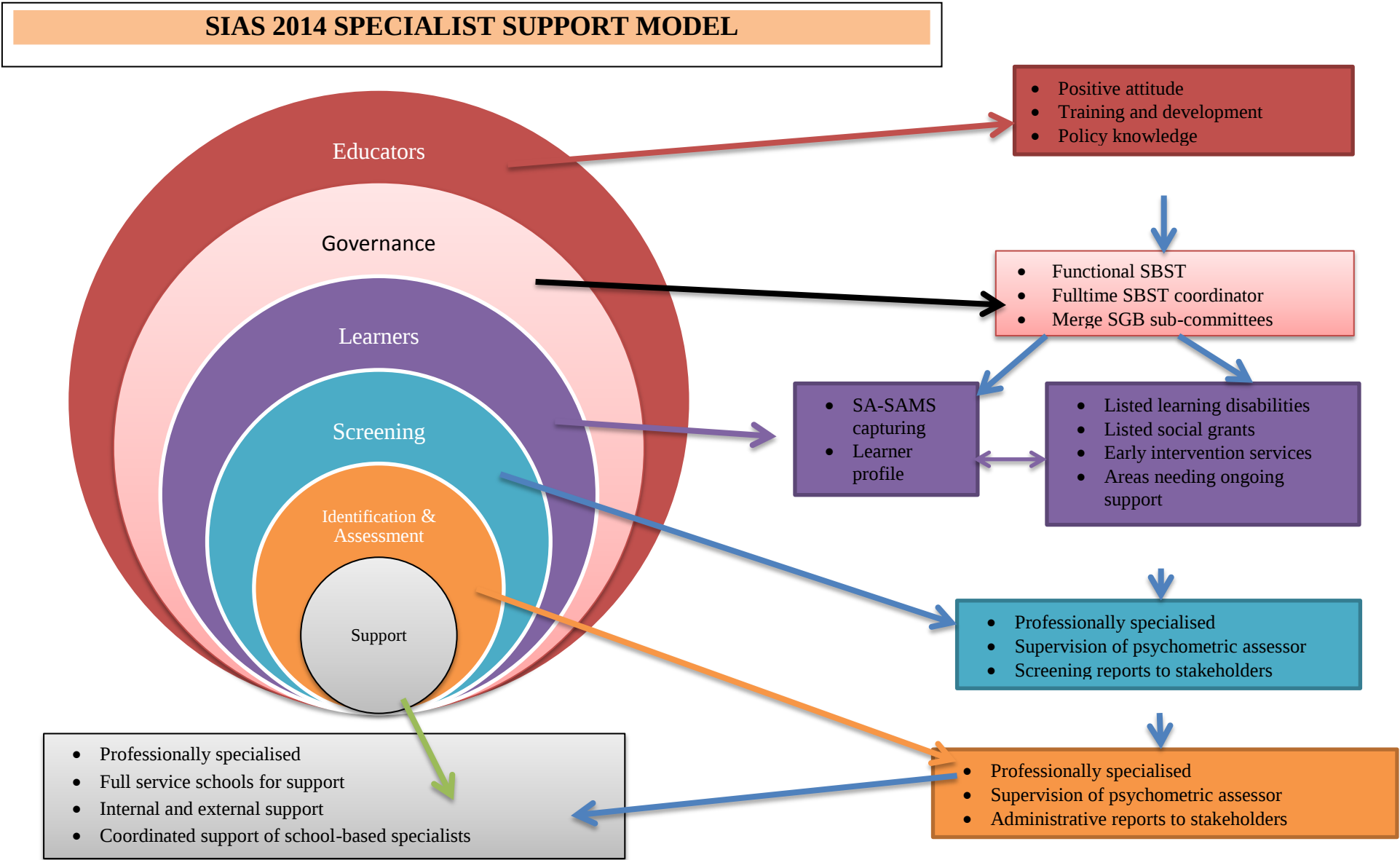


Figure 9.4: A model for the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy

The following is a summary of the model in Figure 9.4 from the far right moving downwards. The model advocates that educators should adopt a positive attitude towards inclusivity including the SIAS 2014 policy. There should be an effective training and development of educators and they should have a thorough knowledge of the SIAS 2014 policy. Effective school governance should comprise a functional SBST; establishment of a fulltime SBST coordinator; and all SGB sub-committees should be merged into an intensified SBST. Records of learners experiencing learning barriers should be efficiently captured on SA-SAMS and the Learner Profile should be more explicit by listing learning disabilities and social grants for educators who shall be screening the barriers using a learner profile. The two slots on the learner profile about early intervention services and areas needing ongoing support should be clarified and amended if need be to avoid ambiguous interpretation.

The screening of barriers, identification and assessment of barriers should be professionally conducted by a specialist or be conducted under a professional supervision of a psychometric assessor. All screening, identification and assessment reports should be presented to stakeholders. Similarly, the support of learners who experience barriers to learning should be professionally specialised within full-service schools. Internal and external support of learners should be coordinated by school-based specialists. Apart from the discussion about support of learners who experience barriers to learning, this research has noted that there are some other areas that may need to be researched further. These are discussed as follows.

9.7 FUTURE RESEARCH

Whilst this research has covered a vast amount of detail about the implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy in Lejweleputswa, there still is much to be accomplished about the effective implementation of the SIAS 2014 policy. The following sections deal with aspects of the policy that may still need to be explored. The first of such is the classification of barriers to learning, discussed in the next paragraph.

In this research, an effort was made to present the types of barriers to learning that may need to be screened, identified and assessed so that effective support can be rendered for learners experiencing those barriers. However, what remains unsaid by this research are the following:

- The list of barriers that may be addressed by School-Based specialists at school level and those that may be addressed by specialists of the DBST as an external support.
- How the notional teaching time should be apportioned in order to accommodate time for support of learners who experience barriers.

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APPENDIX A
ETHICAL CLEARANCE



CUT clearance

APPENDIX B
APPROVAL LETTERS



Primary and
secondary schools

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS



Educator
Questionnaire.docx

APPENDIX D
LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS FOR INTERVIEW



Interview schedule

APPENDIX E
PLAGIARISM TEST RESULTS



Test results

APPENDIX F
2014 SIAS POLICY DOCUMENT



2014 SIAS POLICY
DOCUMENT

APPENDIX G

TABLE 6.14

SUMMATIVE QUANTITATIVE DESCRIPTIVE DATA RESULTS



2014 SIAS
implementation

APPENDIX H: QUESTIONNAIRE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OUTPUT

Educator variable constructs  Traits, training, implementation perce	 Functionality of SBST & SGB sub-committee
Learners  learner vulnerability & profiles	Screening process  Resources, learner referral & early identi
Identification & assessment process  internal & external assessment	Support process  Internal & external support

APPENDIX I: INFERENTIAL STATISTICS OUTPUT

I1 T-test outputs	
Comparison of male & female educators in screening process  T-test gender vs screening	Comparison of type of school in screening process  T-test type of school vs screening
Comparison of male & female educators in identification and assessment process  T-test gender vs identification & asses	Comparison of type of school in identification & assessment process  T-test type of school vs identification & ass
Comparison of male & female	Comparison of type of school in

educators in support process  T-tes gender vs support	support process  T-tes type of school vs support
I2 ANOVA outputs	
Comparison of educator teaching experience in screening process  ANOVA teaching experience vs screen	
Comparison of educator teaching experience in identification & assessment  ANOVA teaching experience vs identifi	
Comparison of educator teaching experience in support process  ANOVA teaching experience vs suppor	

