INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT SCHOOLS IN THE MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPAL AREA IN THE FREE STATE

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DECLARATION

I, **MAPIET JUNIA ALBERTS**, solemnly declare that this work, **INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT SCHOOLS IN THE MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPAL AREA IN THE FREE STATE,** is my own work. It has never, on any previous occasion, been presented in part or whole to any institution or board for the awarding of any degree.

I further declare that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

…………………………………….   …………………………..

Signature   Date

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ABSTRACT

The research investigates the role of school management teams in the implementation of inclusive education at schools. Prior to 1994, South African education was characterised by separation and segregation. Learners were taught separately on the basis not only of race, but also of (dis)ability. A well-resourced separate special education system served the needs of mainly white learners. Black learners with disabilities either attended school with little support or not attend at all. One of the first tasks of the post-apartheid government was to ratify a new constitution, which was enacted in 1996, entrenching equality and human rights, including the right to education and freedom from discrimination.

In 1994, South Africa became a democracy and a new era dawned. New policies were developed to provide a framework for inclusive education. In 2001, South Africa introduced White Paper 6 (WP6), Special Needs and Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001). This policy requires that all education practices should be inclusive, including providing holistic and integrated support services through intersectoral collaboration to learners who experience barriers to learning.

According to the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001, (2015: 10), the Department of Basic Education suggests that, all children and youth have the right to learn and need to be supported, differences in children have to be acknowledged and respected no matter the health status, age, gender, language, class, disability or ethnicity of the child, education should identify and minimize barriers to learning and should maximise participation of learners in educational institutions and the needs of all children should be met by education structures and systems.

For the purpose of the research, a quantitative approach (questionnaires) was used. The population of this study comprised of all the principals, deputy principal(s), and heads of departments at selected schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area.

Research conducted into educator preparedness for Inclusive Education in South Africa and educators' perspectives concerning Inclusive Education indicate that the shift towards Inclusive Education has placed a strain on educators, because prior to 1994, educators in South Africa were trained for either mainstream education or specialised in a field. Likewise, mainstream education has not been designed for diversity or for responding to the needs and strengths of its individual learners, and therefore the task of ensuring that social justice and equity goals are met for every learner is a challenge for mainstream schools.

In South Africa, as elsewhere, the complexity of the implementation of inclusive education policies is an ongoing concern for both theorists and practitioners of education. Challenges to the realisation of inclusive basic education in South Africa are compounded further by the pertinent issues underlying the implementation of basic education in the country such as the question of equality in education, the financing of basic education, the nature of the state's duties pertaining to the provision of basic education, and the interpretation of the notion of basic education. The understanding of inclusive education in South Africa has also been impacted by historical factors, such as the apartheid exclusion of the masses from mainstream basic education, and the subsequent need to "include" everyone in post-apartheid education.

The role of educational leaders such as principals and school management teams (SMTs) is critical in leading and managing schools with a diversity of learners' needs. The leadership manifested and roles played by leaders will determine the tone and successful attainment of set objectives at schools. The leadership of a school is paramount for developing policies, aims and strategies for creating an inclusive

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school culture, for providing support, and for identifying external factors that may hinder the development of an inclusive school environment.

Visionary and dedicated school leaders with a strong devotion to inclusive and democratic values and principles are necessary for schools to move towards the implementation of a more successful inclusive and democratic system.

Successful inclusion depends on the attitudes and actions of principals, SMTs, and the investment of other school personnel as they create the school culture and have the ability to challenge or support inclusion. Effective and efficient leadership by the principal and the SMT is especially important if schools are to be truly inclusive and meet the educational needs of an increasingly diverse learner population.

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION, INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, states that no form of unfair discrimination, directly or indirectly, should be practised. Smit and Mpya (2011:25-26) point out that education systems in most countries, especially in developing ones such as South Africa, have to a great extent failed to address the diverse needs of learners and have not adhered to this constitutional right of many learners. This non-adherence to this constitutional right has resulted in a great number of dropouts and failures. Informed by these inadequacies to accommodate learners' needs, the Department of Education responded to the situation by introducing a policy on inclusive education.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

With the introduction of the policy on Inclusive Education, as published in The Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001, (2015: 6), the Department of Education made a commitment to ensure that all learners would have equal opportunities to be educated and welcomed in all schools. The Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001, (2015: 8), indicates that all learners should be supported to develop their full potential irrespective of their background, culture, abilities or disabilities, gender or race.

The introduction of the concept inclusive school was to show how ordinary schools can transform themselves into fully inclusive centres of care and support. Furthermore, the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education of 2001, (2015: 9) indicates that inclusive education goes hand in hand with all the values stated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. These values of the Constitution include, human dignity, the achievement of equality, and the promotion of human rights and freedoms non-racialism and non-sexism. This means that there may be no discrimination on the grounds of race or sex, the rule of

law and the Constitution as the supreme law. This means everything must be done according to the law, and the Constitution is the highest law. Smit and Mpya (2011:29) state that it requires that all learners should be given the fundamental right to basic education, consequently addressing the imbalances of the past by focusing on the key issues of access, equality, and redress.

Walton and Lloyd (2011:12 – 13), are of the view that the successful implementation of inclusive education relies largely on the teachers, including the principal and management team, since they engage directly with the learners on a daily basis. According to Muthukrishna and Sader in (Magare, Kitching & Roos (2010:53), the focus in the implementation of inclusive education should be on the development of enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies that meet the needs of all learners. The same authors further indicate that barriers to learning include learning difficulties in reading, writing, mathematics, speech, language and communication. They also refer to developmental delays and physical, neurological and sensory impairments. Attendant implications are socio-economic barriers, cultural prejudices, inaccessible and unsafe infrastructure, and lack of parental involvement.

Because the implementation of inclusive education is becoming a reality in South Africa, main-stream educators have to include learners with barriers to learning in their classes. Prior to 1994, educators were trained only for either mainstream education or specialised education to support learners with barriers to learning. Despite their limited training, many educators seem able to cope with the challenges posed by inclusive education. Gous (2009: 11) indicates that the leadership style in the school organisation probably has a significant impact on the educational process. The leadership and management approach employed by the School Management Team (SMT) will, to a large extent, determine the way in which a particular school would be effective in the implementation of an inclusive education programme.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education of 2001, (2015: 9), there is a need to protect and advance the rights of people so that all citizens, irrespective of race, class, gender, creed, disability or age, have the

opportunity to develop their capacities and potentials, enabling them to make a meaningful contribution to society. It is based on the aforementioned statement in the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education of 2001, which the researcher supports. Harmuth (2012: 2) states that South African schools are facing the problem and challenge of providing knowledge and leadership skills to educators, including the principals and the management teams, as leaders and managers who will effectively be managing the inclusive schools.

Dalton, Mckenzie, and Kahonde (2012:2) indicate that a lack of knowledge of inclusive education, as well as a lack of appropriate leadership and suitable skills in this regard, leaves principals and management teams uncertain on how they will lead and manage inclusive schools when these schools come into existence. They add that very little attention, if any, has been given to the principals and the management teams in terms of training and equipping them with knowledge and skills as far as inclusive education is concerned.

Nel, Müller, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011:74-83) agree with Dalton et al pointing out that research has made it clear that teachers, including principals, deputy principals and head of departments, lack skills and competence as they are expected to deal with large numbers of learners and insufficient resources. Harmuth (2012:3-4) indicates that many teachers have stated that they did not receive formal training and development regarding the accommodation of the diverse learning needs of learners, and that the in-service training which they received for inclusive education was too short. She goes on to say that this trainings often took place after school and a long day of work. This therefore creates a gap in the effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education at schools.

In view of the above statements by Nel *et al* and also Dalton et al, on the implementation of inclusive education, it is evident that much needs to be done with regard to the effective and efficient management of inclusive education. In addition management development, training, and the enhancement of effectiveness, particularly at school management level, remains a challenge and a great cause for concern.

It is from the aforementioned information that the objective of this study is formulated by the researcher, which includes a primary objective and secondary objectives.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this research is divided into a primary objective and secondary objectives.

1.4.1 Primary objective

The researcher concluded that the primary objective of this research should be to investigate the role of school management teams in the implementation of inclusive education in schools.

1.4.2 Secondary objectives

To address the primary objective, the following secondary objectives for this research will be formulated:

• to provide an overview of the concept of inclusive education and indicate how managing inclusive education can assist in the delivery of education, and
• to establish and analyse the factors that contribute to the gap between inclusive education and delivery of education.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Furthermore, from the problem statement, the following questions arise:

• What does the concept inclusive education mean and how can the effective and efficient management of inclusive education assist in the delivery of education?

• What are the factors that contribute to the gap between inclusive education and the delivery of education in schools?
• Are school management teams equipped with the skilled and training to manage inclusive education in schools?

1.6 KEY TERMINOLOGIES UNDERLYING THIS RESEARCH

For the purpose of this study, certain concepts are to be used, hence is it of importance that these concepts be defined in order to ensure clarity and the correct application thereof.

• **Inclusive education** - the inclusion of learners who experience barriers to learning in a regular educational environment regardless of their diverse personal or interpersonal needs, the contextual challenges and the adversities they have to deal with.

• **School Management Team** – a structure which includes the principal, deputy principal(s), and heads of departments.

• **Leadership** – an interpersonal process through which a leader directs the activities of individuals or groups towards the purposeful pursuance of given objectives within a particular situation by means of communication.

• **Management** – the function that coordinates the efforts of people to accomplish goals and objectives by using available resources efficiently and effectively. Management includes planning, organising, staffing and leading and controlling an organisation to accomplish the goals.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

De Coning (2009:83) states that research methodology refers to more than a simple set of methods; it covers the rationale and the philosophical assumptions underlying a particular study. Furthermore, the term research methodology, also referred to as research methods, usually encompasses the procedures used to analyse and interpret the gathered data. These often use a range of sophisticated statistical analyses of the data to identify correlations or statistical significance in the results.

The choice of the research method was guided by the researcher establishing on what kind of data was to be gathered in order to assist principals and the school managements with regard to the effective and efficient management of inclusive education. Data can either be quantitative, meaning in the form of numbers, or qualitative, meaning perceptions or opinions.

The main idea behind quantitative research is to be able to separate matters easily so that they can be counted and modelled statistically, and to remove factors that may distract from the intent of the research. A researcher generally has a very clear idea what is being measured before they start measuring it, and their study is set up with controls and a very clear blueprint. Tools used are intended to minimise any bias, so ideally machines would be used to collect information, and less ideally the researcher would make use of carefully randomised surveys. The result of quantitative research is a collection of numbers, which can be subjected to statistical analysis to reach results.

Both qualitative research and quantitative research are equally important in their respective fields. However, quantitative is more objective, numerical, and statistical while qualitative usually examines aspects such as social, psychological, and current affairs.

For the purposes of the main research, a quantitative approach (questionnaires) was used. However, for the pilot study, a qualitative approach (interviews) was used in order to assess the adequacy of the research instrument to be used for data collection of the main research.

More clarity on the meaning and nature of the quantitative research method will be discussed in the next section.

1.7.1 Quantitative research

McGuigan and Harris (2012) are of the view that qualitative and quantitative research are the two main schools of research and that quantitative research is probably the least contentious of the two schools, as it is more closely aligned with what is viewed as the classical scientific paradigm. Quantitative research involves gathering data that is absolute, such as numerical data, so that it can be examined in as unbiased a manner as possible. There are many principles that go along with quantitative research, which help promote its supposed neutrality.

Quantitative research generally comes later in a research project, once the scope of the project is well understood.

Leedy and Ormrod (2010:94) point out that the intention of quantitative research is to establish, confirm or validate relationships and to develop generalisations that contribute to existing theories. According to Maree and Pietersen (in Harmuth (2012:58), the three most important elements in quantitative research are objectivity, numerical data and generalizability.

Keeping the above in mind, this is the reason why the researcher opted for the quantitative research design (Chapter 3, refer to 3.3 and 3.4).

1.8 LITERATURE STUDY

A literature study is most often associated with science-orientated literature, such as a thesis. The literature study usually precedes a research proposal, methodology, and results section. The ultimate goal is to bring the reader up to date with current literature on a topic and forms the basis for another goal, such as the justification for future research in this area.

The following literature sources were consulted: textbooks ; journals ; magazines and newspapers ; internet sources ; the Department of Education's policy document and other documents published by the South African government such as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, to identify specific guidelines and prescriptions for general education.

The Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education and training manuals for educators were also used.

An example on research done before on inclusive education is Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde's study (2012: 2). They found that, following the implementation of United States (US) Public Law 94–142 (Education for All Handicapped Children Act 1975), learners were included increasingly in the general education system and were increasingly expected to achieve in similar ways (and to similar standards) as their general education peers, thus supporting learners with disabilities to be involved with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible.

After a while, however, this system came into question as being insufficiently inclusive. A movement to fully include students with disabilities in United States (US)

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general education classrooms was the result. With increasing access for learners with widely-varying needs, educational models were developed, going beyond mere accommodations and modifications toward addressing all learners' educational needs through innovative and pro-active instructional design of the general education curriculum. US schools are now responsible for providing effective instruction for all children, together, in inclusive educational settings.

1.9 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Interviews were conducted in order to assess the adequacy of the research instrument (a questionnaire) to be used for data collection of the main research before the final questionnaire could be distributed.

The empirical data was collected amongst school managers (the principal, deputy principal(s) and heads of departments) at selected schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area in the Free State.

All the selected schools were visited personally by the researcher and the researcher waited for the respondents to complete the questionnaires. The completed questionnaires were collected by the researcher immediately after completion.

The design and development of the final questionnaire was achieved in collaboration with the North West University's Statistical Consultation Services using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Basic descriptive statistics were employed to describe the quantitative data, in terms of deriving conclusions, standard deviations, mean and distributions of the questionnaire.

1.10 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

1.10.1 The population

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 262,266) the population refers to the entire group of people, events of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. Bless and Higson-Smith (2004) agree that a population is the complete set of events, people, or things to which research findings are to be applied. The population that interests the researcher is not the same as the everyday notion of the population of people in a certain country or city. A population is the sum of all the cases that meet the study's definition of the unit of analysis.

The population of this study comprised of all the principals, deputy principal(s), and heads of departments at selected schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area.

1.10.2 The sample

Sekaran and Bougie (2010:263) define a sample as a subgroup or subset of the population and comprises of members selected from it. Furthermore, a sample can be defined as a subset of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from the target population, (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport (2011:225). By studying the sample the researcher should be able to draw conclusions that will represent the population.

When doing research, it is often impractical to survey every member of a particular population because the sheer number of people is simply too large. In order to make inferences about characteristics of a population, researchers can make use of a random sample. The appropriate sample size is influenced by the researcher's purpose in conducting the research. If the sample size is too small, the researcher could miss important insights. If it's too large, the researcher could waste valuable time and resources, such as unnecessary expenses. Robson (in Xoyane 2012:68) states that the use of sampling allows for more adequate scientific work by making the time of scientific workers count. Instead of spending their time on analysing a large mass of material from one point of view, they can use that time to make a more

intensive analysis from many points of views. Furthermore, researchers also save time and money by employing scientific sampling techniques to gather data from the target population.

In quantitative research, it is important to select a sample that will best represent the characteristics of the population (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner, 2012:87).

For the purpose of this study, a stratified random sampling method was used according to the geographical area (township schools and former model C schools in the city) where this study was conducted.

The total sample comprised of 150 participants (SMT members), 70 participants (SMT members) in Bloemfontein, 40 participants (SMT members) in Thaba Nchu and - 40 participants (SMT members) in Botshabelo of the selected schools in the urban, semi-urban, and rural areas of the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area.

According to Market Intelli-Sense (2012: 11), it is essential to use the correct sample size to accurately represent the population. Choosing a sample size that is too small may not give an accurate representation of the population distribution. Too large a sample size is wasteful and sometimes impossible to complete.

1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Limitations could hamper the results of research. Therefore, limitations are important to keep in mind as they may have an effect on the research results. The limitations of this research have to be taken into consideration when the results and conclusions of this study are applied in a broad sense to the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality in the Free State. The limitations included the following:

The research only focused on a specific geographical area, namely, the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, which includes Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu. This is a limitation in the sense that the findings of the study cannot be taken as a general representation of the role of principals and SMTs in the implementation of inclusive education at schools in the Free State or South Africa as a whole.

There were also time and budgetary constraints. The researcher, as a school principal, had to limit the amount of time and money she spent on travelling to do the research due to her work schedule. There are more than 300 schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area, the researcher selected a manageable amount of schools in the municipal area to study (Department of Basic Education, 2013).

1.12   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is:

• To ensure that facilitative measures are put in place to enable those in school management and leadership positions (the principal, deputy principal, and heads of departments) at inclusive schools; to effectively and efficiently manage and lead the schools for better education delivery.

• All schools require good and strong leadership. Schools, especially those which practise inclusive education, where the development of a common vision and a sense of community are vitally important, require even more skilful and dedicated management and leadership than others.

1.13   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Struwig and Stead (2011:66-70) identify several ethical considerations that researchers have to observe, particularly when human participants are involved in a study, as is the case in this study. These include are:

- Participants should volunteer to take part in the study and should not be forced

- Researchers should anticipate possible risks to participants and should counteract them

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- Participants should be told that they are at liberty to withdraw from participating in the study, should they find it unpleasant. Hence it is the responsibility of the researcher and assistants to ensure that the aforementioned does not happen
- The researcher remains accountable for the ethical quality of the study and should therefore take great care and when in doubt, ask for advice
- For the purpose of this reserach, it is necessary to request permission from the Free State Department of Education and for consent letters to be sent to the selected schools
- Participants need to know that their privacy will be protected and what will happen with their information after the interview and completion of the questionnaire and
- Confidentiality and trustworthiness must prevail.

Above all, the researcher should have personal integrity. The reader of a research report would be able to believe that what the researcher says happened, really happened, otherwise it is a senseless exercise. Falsifying data to make findings agree with the research question is unprofessional, unethical, and unforgivable, according to De Vos *et al.* (2011:115 -121).

1.14   SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter discussed the nature of the problem of this study, the significance of the study and its purpose. Primary and secondary objectives were set, and the research and the methods are to be used to reach the research objectives were examined.

In the next chapter, a detailed literature study will explore issues on the nature, extent and impact of the role of SMTs in the implementation of inclusive education.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the different aspects that provided an orientation to the study. In this chapter, a conceptual framework for the study will be offered. The focus then shifts to the role of SMTs and the implementation of inclusive education at schools. Inclusive education will be briefly described, followed by a description of the process of implementing inclusive education globally and locally, with specific reference to policy documents and literature that address the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

It is interesting to note that South Africa, as a developing country, has also introduced its own inclusive education system like developed countries such as Sweden and Spain (Nel *et al.,* 2011: 76). This system aims to improve the total education system by providing quality education for all learners, including disabled learners and those who experience barriers to learning due to reasons such as unsafe environments, non-involvement of parents, lack of healthcare facilities, and factors in the school such as overfull classrooms, untrained teachers, and an inappropriate language for learning and teaching. Every effort is being made to ensure that learners experiencing barriers to learning and development are given the same rights as any child or learner without a disability.

The Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education, released by the Department of Education in 2001, made a commitment that all learners would have equal opportunities to be educated and welcomed in all schools. Furthermore, the intention of the Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (2001) is to promote education for all and foster the development of inclusive and supportive centres of learning that would enable all learners to participate actively in the education process so that they could develop and reach their potential and participate as equal members of society.

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Mahlalela (2012: 19) supports the above-mentioned statements by pointing out that inclusive education should not be perceived as an option for education, but rather a strategy to enhance democracy and social justice in the community by involving all learners with disabilities and not merely making special arrangements for a selected few.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, which is the supreme law of the country and takes precedence over any other legislation, states that the principle of inclusiveness (no discrimination/no exclusion) is based on the Bill of Rights in the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996, Chapter Two). Inclusiveness is explained as the principle applied to accommodate/include all human beings, thus the full spectrum of diverse abilities, with one structure/system, in such a manner that all involved can be assured of successful equal and quality participation in real life experience, from birth to the grave.

The researcher is of the opinion that a dire need existed for restructuring the system to provide education for all. Thus, the implementation of an inclusive education system was one of the outcomes of the political changes that South Africa experienced post -1994.

The implementation of Education White Paper 6, Special Education Needs: Building an Inclusive Education System (2001) is now in its 15th year of the proposed 20 year implementation trajectory. According to Mahlalela (2012: 2), the strategies outlined in the document of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) have made provision for a longitudinal roll-out plan over a period of 20 years.

The Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001 (2015: 6-7) indicates that there are still persistent challenges that retard the progress that is being made in the development of an Inclusive Education and Training System. Some of the challenges are highlighted hereunder:

- Incoherent conception and understanding of the strategic intent and approach towards developing an Inclusive Education and Training System, as articulated in the Inclusive Education Policy, at all levels of the system;

- There are disparities across provinces in resourcing inclusive education and improving access to education and support for children with disabilities, including personnel provisioning and finance (some provinces have no or very few professional support staff appointed at district level and the building of new special schools happens without accompanying planning for staff provision);

- Limited access to specialist support services, particularly in public ordinary schools, resulting in too many learners referred out (pushed out) to special schools or remaining in mainstream schools without any appropriate support. Consequently, a large number of these learners drop out of the system before they complete their schooling;

- Improvement of learner performance requires that effective and ongoing support be given to schools on how to address barriers to learning through measures of early intervention, including remediation (a direct correlation between the availability of support services and results in districts);

- Special schools do not have adequate specialist professional support staff and non-teaching staff;

- There is no structured stakeholder engagement and partnerships to advance the course of inclusion, albeit changing attitudes towards disability or addressing the shortage of health professionals in the country;

- According to the General Household Survey of 2013, 25.9% of children with disabilities in the 5 to 15 year old group do not attend an education institution; and

- Lack of knowledge of inclusive education, as well as a lack of appropriate leadership and suitable skills in this regard, leaves principals and the management teams uncertain of how to lead and manage inclusive schools.

Despite the adoption of inclusive education by the Department of Education, there is disparity between the policy and what actually happens in schools (Gous, 2009: 6). This dilemma is clearly illustrated by the above-mentioned challenges that hinder the

progress that is being made in the development of an Inclusive Education and Training System.

According to the Du Toit (in Gous, 2009: 7), it is evident that although the practise of inclusive education occurs on a limited scale in schools in South Africa, what is not available it is a wide knowledge base on how it is being practised.

2.3 INVESTIGATING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

When new policies such as the Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001 have to be implemented in schools, many people forget about how the people who have to implement the policies (like the principal, SMT and educators) at the schools feel. The policymakers may think that the policy-implementers are sufficiently qualified and they will be able to do whatever is expected of them. This is not always true; especially if teachers are expected to do new methods that they have not been trained to do.

Nel *et al.* (2011: 77) indicate that many teachers in South Africa are ill-prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners, hence the development of a negative attitude towards inclusion. This is further exacerbated by the lack of strategies for teacher support and systematic training.

According to the Department of Education (2002: 13), when the inclusive education project was introduced into the pilot project schools, some teachers felt nervous as they did not understand what inclusive education was all about. Others were confused because they did not understand what they were supposed to do. Some were worried because they had not been trained to teach children who were not able to participate in learning activities like the other children in their classes. Other teachers felt that inclusive education was an extra burden because they did not understand that it was an important part of outcomes-based education (OBE). As a result of all these misunderstandings, many teachers were resistant to inclusive education at first.

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For the reason as in the previous page, one of the biggest challenges of preparing educators for inclusive education is to assist them to understand what it is, and how to put it into practice in their own classrooms and schools.

2.3.1 DEFINITION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

For the purpose of this study, the terms 'inclusion' and 'inclusive education' are used interchangeably, but they should not necessarily be regarded as synonymous. This is partly because of the number of sources referred to where 'inclusion' is often used to imply 'inclusive education'. It is, however, beyond the scope of this study to explore the nuances of these terms.

Engelbrecht, Nel, & Tlale (2015: 3) are of the view that although defining 'inclusive education' can be challenging, it is generally accepted that it is a complex and never-ending process. Several definitions have been proffered for the concept of inclusive education. Among them are those put forward by the Guidelines of Inclusion 2005, as cited by Unesco (2008). In the document, inclusive education is defined as "a process of responding to the diversity of all learners by increasing participation and reducing exclusion within and from education". The same aforementioned source gives the definition arising out of the 1994 Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action that states the following: "Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations."

Common to the definitions given here are the notions of diversity, increased participation, and reduced exclusion. These themes form the core of any programme of education that supports the notion of inclusion. Diversity suggests differences among people based on gender, language, race, nationality, socioeconomic background, disability, cultural origin and educational achievement (Mentz & Barrett, 2011: 41). So, by embracing the concept of diversity, inclusive education demands that we tolerate, respect, value, welcome and celebrate diversity, and seek to meet the needs of those who are different (Unesco, 2008). Inclusive education means that all children will be accommodated, included and supported in the education system, no matter what their race, gender, disability, or background.

According to Magare, Kitching & Roos,. (2010: 52), inclusive education is defined as the inclusion of learners who experience barriers to learning in a regular educational environment regardless of their diverse personal or interpersonal needs, the contextual challenges, and the adversities they have to deal with. The aforementioned authors indicate that barriers to learning include learning difficulties in reading, writing, mathematics, speech, language and communication. They also refer to developmental delays and physical, neurological and sensory impairments. Attendant implications are socioeconomic barriers, cultural prejudices, inaccessible and unsafe infrastructure, and lack of parental involvement. The aforementioned definitions on inclusive education resonate with Loreman, Deppler and Harvey's (2005: 42) definition, which emphasises the inclusion of these learners in all aspects of schooling. Inclusive education promotes the full personal, academic and optimal development of all learners (Department of Education, 2001; National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training; National Committee for Education Support Services, 1997).

The principles of inclusive education as identified by the above-mentioned authors serve as guidelines for defining the concept in the present study. Based on these principles, it is evident that inclusive education can be considered education that is dedicated to the development of a more democratic society. It strives for a more equitable, quality education system, and calls on ordinary schools to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners in mainstream education. Inclusive education is about inclusivity for an envisaged education system.

Thomazet (2009: 10) states that inclusive education depends on the capacity of the school, and therefore on the capacity of educators, to be innovative and to put differentiation into place. Learners with learning impairments and special needs should not be segregated from other learners, but should be supported in the mainstream in such a way that their needs are met. While inclusive education has been implemented successfully in a number of countries, some countries, including South Africa, are still seeking to achieve this goal (Nguyet & Ha, 2010: 112).

2.4 THE EMERGENCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

As history unfolded, a number of international declarations have asserted that education is a basic human right, not a privilege for a few. Magare *et al.* (2010: 53) indicate that the inclusive education approach received its first major input at the World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca, Spain in 1994. The Salamanca Conference aimed to promote the objectives of education as a fundamental human right that necessitated policy shifts to enable schools to serve all learners, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other conditions. Furthermore, the focus of the Conference was that "every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs and therefore, education systems and programmes should be designed and implemented, taking into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs". During the Conference, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education was adopted (Nel *et al.*, 2012: 6). According to this document, every child has the fundamental right to education that takes their special needs and characteristics into consideration and provides access to regular schools.

According to Mpya (2007: 2), for many years, the education authorities in South Africa implemented a policy of separated education. The institutionalisation of apartheid in every facet of South African life after the apartheid government came to power in 1948 had a significant impact on education. Separate education departments, governed by specific legislation and fragmented along racial lines, reinforced the divisions in the education system. The implementation of inclusive education in South Africa has not been promoted as simply one more option for education, but as an educational strategy that can contribute to a democratic society (Harmuth, 2012: 2). After the demise of apartheid, the new democratic government committed itself to the transformation of education and formulated policies and legislation stressing the principle of education as a basic human right as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Engelbrecht, Oswald, Swart and Eloff (in Harmuth, 2012: 3) state that since 1994, the demand to educate learners with special needs within mainstream classrooms in South Africa has continued to grow. The result is that an increasing number of learners with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, are being included in mainstream classes, bringing additional changes and demands upon the teachers.

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Major changes, both internationally and nationally, regarding disability have influenced the inclusive education approach in South Africa. After the end of the apartheid era, the new democratic government committed itself to the transformation of education and key policy documents and legislation. The philosophy and concept of inclusive education in South Africa acknowledges the democratic values of equality and human rights, and the recognition of diversity.

In response to the above-mentioned issues, the Department of Education introduced a new policy in July 2001 – the Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System. This policy offered guidelines for a new education system in South , which would mean that all learners would have equal opportunities to be educated. In addition, the policy was aimed at:

- making sure that all learners can understand and participate meaningfully with the teaching and learning processes in schools;
- addressing and correcting inequalities of the past in education;
- making sure that there is community involvement in changing the education system; and
- making sure that education is as affordable as possible for everyone.

Mahlalela (2012: 3) states that the intention of the process of implementing inclusive education has been to develop an education system in which all learners are provided the opportunity to develop their full potential, irrespective of the barriers to learning they experience.

2.5 THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Donohue and Bornman (2014: 1) indicate that the Education for All (EFA) initiative, first put forth in 1990 by the international community, marked a global movement towards providing quality basic education to all children, youth, and adults (Unesco, 1990). They further indicate that to accomplish this initiative, six specific goals were proposed, namely:

- the provision and expansion of early childhood education;

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- the provision of free and compulsory education for all children of school-going age;

- the provision of learning and life-skills programmes for adults;

- the improvement of the adult literacy rate by 50% by the year 2015;

- the elimination of gender inequality in education; and

- the improvement of all aspects of education in order to provide quality education for all.

In 2000, 189 countries renewed their commitment toward reaching these educational ideals through their adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (Unesco, 2008), of which South Africa is a signatory.

Geldenhuys and Wevers (2013: 1) are of the view that, despite efforts worldwide to ensure quality education for all learners through inclusive education, indications are that many learners, especially those that experience barriers to learning, are still excluded from full access to quality and equitable education opportunities in mainstream schools. In recent years, the practice of inclusive education has been widely embraced as an ideal model for education, both in South Africa and internationally (Maher, 2009). However, this acceptance of ideal practices does not necessarily translate into what actually occurs within the classroom. Successful inclusion depends on the attitudes and actions of principals and SMTs, and the investment of other school personnel as they create the school culture and have the ability to challenge or support inclusion.

The current state of education in South Africa can, in part, be attributed to the legacy of the education policies instituted under apartheid. Engelbrecht *et al* (2015: 2) states, "The central feature which distinguishes South Africa from other countries in terms of education provision is the extent to which racially entrenched attitudes and the institutionalisation of discriminatory practices led to extreme disparities in the delivery of education, a reflection of the fragmentation and inequality that characterised society as a whole". Donohue and Bornman (2014: 2) indicate that during apartheid, black South Africans received "Bantu Education", which provided limited instruction in mathematics and science, and was instituted to direct non-white

people into the unskilled workforce. Different ethnic groups were educated in separate facilities, where there were about twice as many learners per class in black schools as in white schools. Education for white pupils was compulsory, but not so for learners of other ethnicities. Schools were also segregated in terms of disability. Schools for white learners with disabilities were well-funded (Department of Education, 2001), whereas support services for learners with disabilities who attended black schools were uncommon (Department of Education, 2001).

Following the demise of apartheid, compulsory education was implemented for all South African children and segregated schooling practices were eliminated. The new Department of Education attempted to redress some of the educational inequities between ethnic groups by providing low-income schools with a higher proportion of government subsidy (Lam, Ardington & Leibbrandt, 2008: 12). Moreover, South Africa's new Constitution included an explicit section on the rights of people with disabilities. The subsequent Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001: 10) outlined the government's new policies for a single, undivided education system for all learners, including those with disabilities, in the hope that inclusive education would provide "…a cornerstone of an integrated and caring society". This White Paper was designed to transform the South African educational system by building an integrated system for all learners (i.e. no special and ordinary schools) using a curriculum that is more flexible and suitable to the needs and abilities of learners; developing district-based support teams to provide systemic support for any and all teachers who need it; and strengthening the skills of teachers to cope with more diverse classes.

In the section below, the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa will be discussed.

2.6 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Magare *et al.* (2010: 52) indicate that the implementation of an inclusive education system in South Africa was part of the educational reforms that occurred after 1994 and which were informed by the Salamanca Conference in 1992. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action endorses the rights discourse, with a strong focus on the development of inclusive schools, and states that schools should

accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic, or other conditions. In support of the Salamanca Statement, the Code of Professional Ethics of the South African Council of Educators (SACE) acknowledges "the uniqueness, individuality, and specific needs of each learner, guiding and encouraging each to realise his or her potentialities" (SACE, 2006). Furthermore, the Department of Education (2009: 24, 25, 27) emphasises that instruction in inclusive schools should, inter alia, be characterised by individualisation and multiple options for acquiring, storing and demonstrating learning, which points to the principle of differentiation.

Thomazet (2009: 5) is of the view that the underlying principle of inclusive education is to provide an education that is as standard as possible for all learners, adapting it to the needs of each learner. Dreyer (2011: 24) agrees with Thomazet by pointing out that by applying the principle of social justice, which is focused on providing equitable outcomes to marginalised individuals and groups due to barriers embedded in social, economic and political systems, inclusive education can improve the lives of all people. Inclusive education depends on the capacity of the school, and therefore on the capacity of educators, to be innovative and to put differentiation into place. Learners with learning impairments and special needs should not be segregated from other learners, but should be supported in the mainstream in such a way that their needs are met (Hugo, 2006: 12).

Since 1994, when democracy was established in South Africa, there has been a radical overhaul of government policy from an apartheid framework to providing services to all South Africans on an equitable basis. The provision of education for learners with disabilities has been part of that process and the development of an inclusive education system can be traced back to the nation's founding document, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa 1996). In Section 29 (the Bill of Rights) it is stated that everyone has the right to "a basic education, including basic adult education; and to further education, which the state through reasonable measures must make progressively available and accessible".

Mahlalela (2012: 3) is of the view that the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa started in 1996 with the appointment of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Services that investigated special needs education with the purpose of outlining guidelines for providing quality education for all in South Africa. These two above-mentioned teams conducted extensive research and presented a draft report to the Minister of Education in November 1997. The final report was published by the Department of Education in February 1998. The report told the Department of Education the following:

- Under the apartheid education system, education for learners who experienced learning difficulties and learners with disabilities was called 'special education'. These learners were called 'learners with special education needs'

- Special education and support services had been provided mainly for a small number of 'learners with special education needs' in 'special classes' in ordinary schools or in 'special schools'

- Special education and support services were provided on a racial basis, with the best resources going to the white learners

- Most learners with disabilities were either not in special schools, or had never been to a school. A few were in ordinary schools that could not properly meet their needs

- In general, the curriculum and the education system had failed to respond to the many different needs of learners. This caused large numbers of learners to drop out of school, be pushed out of school, or to fail and

- While some attention had been given to special needs and support in schools, the other levels of education (for example, Early Childhood Development) had been seriously neglected.

To initiate change in the school system, the White Paper on Education of 2001 outlined six strategic levers:

- Management, governing bodies and professional staff have to be introduced and oriented to the inclusive model. Learners who are experiencing barriers to learning must be identified early and targeted, and intervention strategies

should be followed. Systems and procedures should be put in place so that barriers to learning can be identified and addressed as early as in the Foundation Phase.

- Disabled and vulnerable children and youths who are currently out of the school system have to be mobilised. They have to be able to access the education system

- Five hundred primary schools have to be converted into full-service schools over 20 years, and have to be provided with full support. These schools have to serve as models of inclusive practice

- To provide an integrated, community-based support service, district-based support teams have to be established

- To understand the new approach and programmes, there has to be engagement in the development and support of all educators and stakeholders. All educators and stakeholders should be trained and oriented to manage diversity through the development of the inclusive learning programmes and

- Special schools have to be improved and strengthened to become integrated into district-based support teams and resource centres that support neighbouring schools.

Furthermore, the White Paper on Education of 2001 provided important guidelines related to inclusive education when it stated that every school is expected to develop an ethos of accepting differences. It stated that schools should:

- encourage empowerment and self-representation of disabled learners
- ensure that all children are included in physical education
- ensure transport to and from school for disabled learners, fit in with the school day, and allow attendance of after school activities
- ensure that no child is excluded from a trip or visit because their access or other needs are not met
- have an increasing inclusion ethos in the school development plan
- include outside specialist support
- increase the employment of disabled staff – equal employment policy;

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- organise a programme of continued professional development for educators support staff and governors to help them move towards inclusion and disability equality
- ensure that all staff is part of and understand inclusion
- ensure that people with disabilities and others who experience barriers are positively portrayed through images that show respect for diversity
- be critical of sexist, racist and homophobic language use and
- examine the language used to describe learners, in teaching and by learners.

Dalton *et al.* (2012: 1) are of the view that South Africa has adopted an inclusive education policy in order to address barriers to learning in the education system. This policy also gave guidelines for the new education system it was going to create in South Africa so that all learners would have equal opportunities to be educated. Furthermore, in this policy, the Department of Education committed itself to:

Promote education for all and foster the development of inclusive and supportive centres of learning that would enable all learners to participate actively in the education process so that they could develop and extend their potential and participate as equal members of society according to the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001 (2015: 5).

The guiding principles for the new education and training system focus on:
- Protecting the rights of all people and making sure that all learners are treated fairly
- Making sure that all learners can participate fully and equally in education and society
- Making sure that all learners have equal access to a single, inclusive education system
- Making sure that all learners can understand and participate meaningfully with the teaching and learning processes in schools
- Addressing and correcting inequalities of the past in education
- Making sure that there is community involvement in changing the education system and
- Making sure that education is as affordable as possible for everyone.

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According to the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001 (2015: 10), the goal for the new education system is to build an inclusive education and training system that provides good quality education for all learners.

The section below explores the progress of education from special needs towards inclusive education as it progressed through the eras of transformation in South Africa, namely the transformation stage (1994 to 2001) and the current dispensation/post-apartheid era (2002 to present). The system of education during the apartheid era was based on racial discrimination and emphasised special needs education, but the democratic dispensation since 1994 brought a number of changes, including inclusive education instead of special needs education. Therefore, this means that education is always strongly influenced by the politics taking place at any particular stage or era. Since the dawn of democracy, the South African System of education is in the process of transformation, the school management teams have major role in managing challenges and problems brought by transformation

2.6.1 Inclusive education in South Africa post 1994

Walton and Lloyd (2011: 20) indicate that prior to 1994, South African education was characterised by separation and segregation. Learners were taught separately on the basis not only of race, but also (dis)ability. They further indicate that a well-resourced separate special education system served the needs of mainly white learners. Black learners with disabilities either attended school with little support or did not attend school at all. One of the first tasks of the post-apartheid government was to ratify a new constitution, which was enacted in 1996, entrenching equality and human rights, including the right to education and freedom from discrimination.

Since 1994, South Africa has undergone major political and economic changes, and education is no exception. It was in 1994, just after the first democratic elections, that inclusive education became a possibility and when the Bill of Rights provided expectations for it Walton and Lloyd (2011: 24). The elections in South Africa coincided with the Salamanca Statement and the guiding principles of this document, produced under the auspices of Unesco in 1994, spoke to the prevailing philosophy in South Africa; that schools should accommodate all children despite their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other circumstances.

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According to the Department of Education (Department of Education, 2001: 41), the adoption of a new Constitution for South Africa, together with the introduction of new education legislation and policy, are important in providing a framework for recognising diversity, and providing quality education for all learners, including those learners excluded by the previous system.

In 1994, South Africa became a democracy and a new era dawned. New policies were developed to provide a framework for inclusive education. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, stipulated that all South Africans have the right to basic education (Olivier & Williams, 2008: 41). The aim of the South African government was to improve the lives of all South African citizens by the implementation of the new policies (Steyn & Wolhuter, 2008: 78). In 2001, South Africa introduced the White Paper 6 (WP6), Special Needs and Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001). This policy requires that all education practices should be inclusive; providing holistic and integrated support services through intersectoral collaboration to learners who experience barriers to learning.

According to the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001, (2015: 10), the Department of Basic Education suggests that:

- All children and youth have the right to learn and need to be supported
- Differences in children have to be acknowledged and respected no matter the health status, age, gender, language, class, disability, or ethnicity of the child.
- Education should identify and minimise barriers to learning and should maximise participation of learners in educational institutions.
- The needs of all children should be met by education structures and systems.
- Learning can take place within formal, informal, and non-formal settings and structures.

2.7 POLICY PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

It is crucial that the principles of inclusive education be clearly outlined. This is probably due to these principles, in one way or the other, guiding the education policy in its preparation for an envisaged education system. Lazarus, Daniels and Engelbrecht (in Harmuth, 2012: 23) assert that inclusive education calls for schools

to transform themselves to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners. Transformation requires a radical shift from one set of assumptions, beliefs, values, norms, relationships, behaviours and practices to another (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2015: 5).

Geldenhuys and Wevers (2013: 3) indicate that one of the most influential Inclusive education policies developed by the Department of Education in recent years was the Education White Paper 6 in 2001. It aims to address the diverse needs of all learners in one undivided education system. The Education White Paper 6 also provides guiding principles for the new education system it envisages for South Africa. It includes the following: protecting the rights of all people and making sure that all learners are treated fairly; ensuring that all learners can participate fully and equally in education and society; providing equal access for all learners to a single, IE system; and making sure that all learners can understand and participate meaningfully in the teaching and learning process in schools.

According to the Education White Paper 6 (2001: 6), the principles of inclusive education are conceptualised in the following imperatives:

- Acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support
- Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners
- Acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, or HIV and other infectious diseases
- Broader than formal schooling and acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures
- Changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environment to meet the needs of all learners and
- Maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning.

Stofile (2008: 43) writes that training programmes that educate teachers how to accommodate and teach learners with disabilities are generally a week or two long, but teachers report that although these brief training programmes are helpful, they are insufficient. The programmes also tend to focus on developing a few skills, whereas teachers often need far more comprehensive training programmes.

Research conducted into educator preparedness for inclusive education in South Africa (Magare, Kitching & Roos, 2010: 7) and educators' perspectives concerning inclusive education (Mayaba, 2008: 89) indicate that the shift towards inclusive education has placed a strain on educators, because "prior to 1994, educators in South Africa were trained only for either mainstream education or specialised" in a field. Likewise, mainstream education has not been designed for diversity or for responding to the needs and strengths of its individual learners, and therefore the task of ensuring that social justice and equity goals are met for every learner is a challenge for mainstream schools.

2.8 BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND TEACHING OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

In South Africa, as elsewhere, the complexity of the implementation of inclusive education policies is an ongoing concern for both theorists and practitioners of education (Romm *et al.,* 2013: 1). Challenges to the realisation of inclusive basic education in South Africa are compounded further by pertinent issues underlying the implementation of basic education in South Africa, such as the question of equality in education, the financing of basic education, the nature of the state's duties pertaining to the provision of basic education, and the interpretation of the notion of basic education (Murungi, 2015: 2). The understanding of inclusive education in South Africa has also been impacted by historical factors, such as the apartheid exclusion of the masses from mainstream basic education, and the subsequent need to 'include' everyone in post-apartheid education.

According to the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001, (2015: 7), there are persistent challenges that retard the progress that is being made in the development of an Inclusive Education and Training System, and some are highlighted hereunder:

- Incoherent conception and understanding of the strategic intent and approach towards developing an Inclusive Education and Training System, as articulated in the Inclusive Education Policy, at all levels of the system

- There are disparities across provinces in resourcing inclusive education and improving access to education and support for children with disabilities, including personnel provisioning and finance (some provinces have no or very few professional support staff appointed at district level and the building of new special schools happens without accompanying planning for staff provision)

- Limited access to specialist support services particularly in public ordinary schools resulting in too many learners referred out (pushed out) to special schools or remaining in mainstream schools without any appropriate support. Consequently, a large number of these learners drop out of the system before they complete schooling

- Improvement of learner performance requires that effective and ongoing support be given to schools on how to address barriers to learning through measures of early intervention including remediation (direct correlation between availability of support services and results in districts)

- Special schools do not have adequate specialist professional support staff and non-teaching staff

- There is no structured stakeholder engagement and partnerships to advance the course of inclusion albeit changing attitudes towards disability or addressing the shortage of health professionals in the country and within Department of Basic Education

- The lack of understanding of inclusive education – lack of training. (Despite the fact that educators are knowledgeable and do have insight)

- Problems with the inflexible curriculum which does not accommodate all learners – this could lead to a classroom culture of neglect of learners with barriers to learning

- A lack of learning materials, for example, not enough desks and computers

- The time allocated to the departmental workshops is insufficient – too short and not presented frequently enough

- Big classes which create problems – such as making it impossible to spend enough time with learners experiencing barriers to learning

- Lack of finances – taking classes on excursions is problematic

- Unsuitable buildings – no facilities for disabled learners

- Lack training in specific areas – training in arts and crafts

- No class assistants – large classes unmanageable

- Few special schools in the area – lack of support from special schools as resource centres and

- Minimum parental involvement – parents uneducated; limited awareness of need for involvement.

2.9 WHAT IS THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM (SMT)?

The School Management Team (SMT) is the structure in the school which is responsible for the proper running of the school. A SMT is made up of the principal, deputy principal(s), and heads of departments. They are responsible for planning, organising, leading, and supervising the school activities. The SMT manages school resources in such a way that the schools function efficiently and effectively. The team is responsible for the day-to-day smooth running of the activities of the school and for ensuring that teaching and learning takes place.

SMTs serve as school leaders. School leaders have a professional responsibility to develop a positive culture that helps to enhance the quality of education. SMTs have a supporting role to play in creating, maintaining, and facilitating quality education in schools. Leadership is concerned with the implementation of those policies and decisions which assist in directing the activities of an organisation towards its specific goals. Thus, leadership is the process of influencing the activities and the behaviour of an individual or a group in an effort towards goal achievement in a given situation. Clarke (2012: 1) states that a leader recognises followers and influences them to attain desired goals. SMTs therefore have a critical role to play in enhancing the process of service delivery to both people and the organisation. SMTs aim at creating an organisational climate that is a learning climate which supports continuous improvement and provides each teacher and pupil an opportunity to become a partner in creating success.

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Leadership is considered "the exercise of authority and the making of decisions." It is thus clear that principals, deputy principal(s), and heads of departments (who all for part of the SMT) who have formal and legitimate authority, by virtue of their positions, are leaders. SMTs, in their role of facilitating quality education in schools, need to manage and lead learners and educators, so that schools achieve their main purpose, namely to be viable to institutions of learning.

The South African Schools Act (SASA), Act No.84 of 1996 requires that SMTs run schools by involving all the stakeholders. School leaders are accountable to the community and the educational department for the facilitation of quality education for all learners. School leaders are required by law (SASA) to explain their decisions and actions to the school community and Department of Education. SMTs have a responsibility to run schools according to the principles of democracy and human rights, and to be accountable for doing so.

Kgothule (2004: 17) is of the view that, although a thin line of distinction can be drawn between the concepts of 'leadership' and 'management', these two concepts are crucial in the educational process. He further states that in the differences between the two terms or concepts, managers ask how and leaders ask why. He also explains that the why and how questions are, of course, both essential and complementary, and underline the need for teamwork which brings balance and synergy to the contributions of the individuals.

Managers have to take responsibility for making sure that people are going to work together to achieve a common goal. Staude *et al.* (2009:8) furthermore indicate that managers are the individuals who decide on the most appropriate strategies and tactics to implement, in order to achieve the goals that have been set to satisfy various stakeholders, and who guide, direct, or oversee the work and performance of other individuals. As such, a manager is a person who plans, organises, directs, and controls the allocation of human, material, financial, and information resources in pursuit of the organisation's goals. If systems, are not effective, it is the manager's responsibility to ensure that corrective actions are taken to restore balance.

Management operates from a problem-solving perspective, with little attention being given to questioning the appropriateness of the established norms.

Based on the above-mentioned brief discussion on leadership and management, it is evident that these two concepts are often seen as inseparable concepts, and it is true that effective managers have to lead as well as have the operational responsibility for ensuring that objectives and targets are met and tasks are completed.

Below follows the description of the four activities of management. With this discussion, the researcher intends to shed light on the importance of these activities namely, planning, organising, leading, and controlling, and how these activities relate to organisational success/school success.

2.9.1 Planning

Staude *et al.* (2009:11) indicate that the first of the managerial activities is planning. In general, planning involves defining organisational goals and proposing ways to reach them. Managers plan for three reasons:

- To establish an overall direction for the organisation's future, such as increased profit, expanded market share, and social responsibility
- To identify and commit the organisation's resources to achieving its goals
- To decide which tasks must be done to reach those goals.

As in the case of a school, the principal and the SMT will develop a timetable for all the grades in the school. For example, for Grade 9, the first period on a Monday will be Life Sciences, and for Grade 10 it will be Mathematics. This will assist with class attendance and the general smooth running of the school.

2.9.2 Organising

Staude et al. (2009:11) also indicate that the second of the managerial activities is organising. After managers have prepared their plans, they must translate those relatively abstract ideas into reality. Sound organisation is essential to this effort. Rane (2007: 23) states that management should organise all its resources in order to

implement the course of action it determined in the planning process. Through the process of getting organised, management will determine the internal organisational structure, establish and maintain relationships, and allocate the necessary resources. The principal and the SMT will then ensure that classes are allocated accordingly for both learners and educators to adhere to the schedule on the timetable.

2.9.3 Leading

According to Staude *et al.* (2009:11), a third of the managerial activities is leading. After management has made plans, created a structure, and hired the right personnel, someone must lead the organisation. Leading involves communicating with and motivating others to perform the tasks necessary to achieve the organisation's goals within the context of a supporting organisational culture. Leading is not done only after planning and organising have ended; it is a crucial element of these activities.

The principal and the SMT will then make sure that the timetable for class attendance is communicated to the educators and learners in order to ensure that classes are attended as per the timetable in order for effective teaching and learning to take place.

Rane (2007: 29) states that controlling is the last of the four functions of management. It involves establishing performance standards based on the company's objectives, as well as evaluating and reporting actual job performance. Once management has done both of these tasks, it should compare the two to determine any necessary corrective or preventive action. The same author further indicates that the control process, as with the other three, is an ongoing process. Through controlling, management is able to identify any potential problems and take the necessary preventative measures. Management is also able to identify any developing problems that need to be addressed through corrective action.

For example, the principal and SMT will ensure that the timetable is followed accordingly by the educators and learners and, if there are corrective measures that

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need to be taken, or the timetable should be revisited, it will be attended to as such in time.

Rane (2007: 89) concludes that, in order for management to be considered successful, it must attain the goals and objectives of the organisation. This requires creative problem solving in each of the four functions of management.

In view of the above, it is evident that the management functions of planning, organising, leading, and controlling are widely considered to be the best means of describing the manager's job, as well as the best way to classify accumulated knowledge about management. Although there have been tremendous changes in the environment faced by managers and the tools used by managers to perform their roles, as in the case of municipalities that have merged, managers should still perform these essential management functions of planning, organising, leading, and controlling. School management teams, in their role of facilitating quality education in schools, need to manage and lead students and educators, so that schools achieve their main purpose, namely to be viable to institutions of learning.

2.10 ASSISTING SMTs TO DEAL WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The role of the educational leaders such as the SMT is critical in leading and managing schools with a diversity of learners' needs. The leadership manifested and roles played by leaders determine the tone and successful attainment of set objectives of the school. Gous (2009: 53) indicate that there is convincing evidence to prove that school success is determined by a strong and motivated leader. Leaders are people who shape goals, motivations, and actions of others. The aforementioned authors further indicate that one of the elements that result in inclusive education being adopted is a shared vision of preferred conditions for the future. This shared vision is usually driven by the principal. Strategic leadership is essential in the implementation of inclusive education in a school. Therefore, principals are important in managing the paradigm shift that is necessary to transform schools into being inclusive.

Gous (2009: 56) further believes that the leadership of a school is paramount for developing policies, aims, and strategies for creating an inclusive school culture, for

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providing support, and for identifying external factors that may hinder the development of an inclusive school. Mentz and Barrett (2011: 43) state that school leadership and management are critical in creating the needed changes towards inclusive education. They further view that principals, as school leaders, are therefore at the heart of any change process as they are charged with initiating change and helping others to deal with change. However, for schools to be successful in making far-reaching changes, it is important to have exceptional leaders with a new paradigm of management and leadership.

Principals should be dynamic leaders with a vision that can transform a school so as to reach the best possible outcomes for all learners. Furthermore, principals need to ensure that their schools are fully inclusive and take a leading role in modelling inclusive attitudes and behaviours. Engelbrecht *et al* (2015: 7) note that it is only if the school principal is prepared to embrace a democratic leadership style and share power with all the other role-players in the school community that the ideals of inclusion stand a chance of being realised. The aforementioned authors also state that establishing democratic leadership, policies, and practices is a difficult challenge for schools. According to Mentz and Barrett (2011: 43), visionary and dedicated school leaders with strong devotion to inclusive and democratic values and principles are necessary for schools to move towards the implementation of a more successful inclusive and democratic system.

The principal and members of the SMT play a vital role in the implementation of inclusive education as they take a lead in changing the attitudes of all stakeholders:
- Inclusive schools are first and foremost mainstream institutions that are welcoming and provide quality education to all
- They establish a school-based support team which coordinates support to all learners in the school by meeting regularly, giving guidance to teachers and tracking support
- They encourage active parental participation in the school and learners' education and

- They form networks with existing community resources such as SGBs, caregivers, families, disability organisations, health and social services, NGOs, and Higher Education Institutions.

Mentz and Barrett (2011: 36; 37) indicate that the role of the principal and the SMT is very important in determining whether a school truly adopts an inclusive approach. They indicate that the responsibilities of the principal and the SMT can be divided into two categories, namely leadership and management. The responsibilities of the principal and the SMT are:

- The principal and the SMT should have an unwavering belief in the value of inclusive schooling and considerable knowledge and skills for moving the concept to practice

- The principal is a visible and vocal advocate of inclusive practices. The principal, together with the management team at the level of the institution, should communicate unambiguously to staff members the expectation to establish the school as an inclusive centre of learning, care, and support

- The principal must ensure that all efforts to address policies, practices, programmes, and the ethos of the school to establish it as an inclusive centre of learning, care, and support, are aligned with school-improvement efforts

- The principal creates a safe, friendly, and welcoming school climate for learners and parents/families as well as staff – a climate based on collaboration and inclusiveness

- The principal and the management team must promote the view that special needs education is a service, not a place.

- The principal, with the management team, must take the lead to ensure that there are additional support programmes for teaching and learning, especially to reach difficult-to-teach learners

- The principal must find strategies to celebrate the varied accomplishments of all learners

- The principal ensures that the school maintains a register of additional support needs for learners. This record must be analysed to identify trends, intensity of incidents, impact of support programmes, and inform future planning for support

- The principal and the management team must constantly search for strategies to ensure educators provide equal access for all learners.

- The principal uses a collaborative approach in creating school schedules that support inclusive practices including: Provision of common planning time; time allocation for educators to engage in care and support programmes and institution-level support team activities; effective use of all staff; placement of learners within general education environments; provision of learner supports and services; and allocation of resources where needed

- The principal ensures that staff members working with learners with disabilities are respectfully invited to offer input on successes, dilemmas, and suggestions for changes

- The principal ensures, via school support teams, that learners' individual support plans provide the information necessary for designing services and supports

- The principal honours and fosters the practice that explores all options that are practically possible to support a learner at the school before recognising and sanctioning any referral for assistance or individual assessment outside the school

- The principal is proactive and constructive in facilitating the relationships and support networks between the school, non-governmental organisations, civil-based organisations, other government departments, staff members, and parents/families with the goal of addressing barriers to learning and teaching. The principal is aware of and accesses a wide array of resources to support educators and other staff in creating and sustaining inclusive schooling. The principal facilitates a constructive resolution when disagreements among staff members or staff members and parents/families arise and

- The principal ensures inclusive schooling efforts are assessed by using multiple instruments and approaches, and the assessment addresses academic outcomes, social/emotional/behavioural outcomes, and stakeholder perceptions.

Mpya (2007: 16) indicates that for the successful management of inclusive education, educators need to be supported in the development of new skills and

effective practices for their classrooms and schools. Furthermore, principals and the members of the SMT play a critical role in setting the priorities for learning in the school. Through values, commitment, knowledge, and skill, the principal and the SMT make the difference. Effective leadership by the principal and the SMT is especially important if schools are to be truly inclusive and meet the educational needs of an increasingly diverse learner population.

Dreyer (2011: 12) is of the view that, although research specifically indicates great concerns around the gap between policy and implementation of the inclusive education in South Africa and internationally, it is not clear whether the mentioned gap between policy and implementation contributes to a rejection of policy or a superficial implementation of policy (Chapter 5, refer to 5.6).

2.11 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter presented a description of inclusion and inclusive education as intertwined concepts for elaboration and clarity in the research discussion. The literature review has helped to outline the historical development of inclusive education as it progressed through various stages nationally and internationally, as well as to reveal the successes and failures of special needs education, inclusion, and inclusive education in different eras. The importance of politics in South Africa may not be overlooked when trying to understand inclusive education since it forms the basis for current implementation strategies at all levels of the community. The next chapter presents research methodology, techniques, and procedures that have been followed in collecting data for the topic under study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research design of the empirical research regarding the investigation into the role of SMTs in the implementation of inclusive education In the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal Area in the Free State (where the research will be conducted). The overall purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive explanation of the following: the choice of research design; the research methodology; the research design for this study; rhe reliability of the data collection instrument; the validity of the data collection instrument; the population and sample; the data analysis; the pilot study; and the ethical considerations.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research design of the empirical research regarding the investigation on the role of school management teams in the implementation of inclusive education In the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal Area in the Free State (where the research will be conducted). The overall purpose of this chapter is to give a comprehensive explanation of the following:

Choice of research design

The research methodology

Research design for this research

The reliability of the data collection instrument

The validity of the data collection instrument

The population and sample

The data analysis

The pilot study; and

Ethical considerations.

3.2 CHOICE OF RESEARCH DESIGN

Cooper (2011: 34) is of the view that research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. It aids the scientist in allocation of his or her limited resources by posing crucial choices: Is the blueprint to include experiments, interviews, observations, analysis of records, or simulation, or some combination of these? Is the method of data collection and research situation to be highly structured? Is an intensive study of a small sample more effective than a less intensive study of a large sample? Should the analysis be primarily qualitative or quantitative?

Furthermore, research design is a roadmap for researchers; it is a step-by-step approach. Research design is prepared by keeping in mind some basic questions, such as, "What would the scope of my study be?" or "What data do I need to collect?" or "What methods will I use to collect the data and how will I justify them?".

Petzer (2010: 49) defines research design as an approach to address a research question or problem. Wagner *et al.* (2012: 21), on the other hand, are of the view that research design is an architectural blueprint for the construction of a building, which specifies the layout and the material required for the project.

Based on the aforementioned definitions of research design, the researcher concludes that research design can be defined as the plan and structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions (De Coning, 2009: 87). This research is a survey.

The following section focuses on the research methodology.

3.3 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research provides a framework of data that can be utilised to deliver useful information. It also provides the knowledge of how to find workable solutions to the problems in an organisation. Coldwell and Herbst (in Leibrandt, 2013: 98), on the other hand, define research as a practical activity, with the purpose to find out things

in a systematic manner. They (*ibid.*) go further by describing research as a process of designing, gathering, analysing, and reporting information to uncover opportunities and reduce the risks of decision-making.

To respond to the question of the choice of research methodology, the researcher established what kind of data had to be gathered to assess in order to assist principals and the school management with regard to the effective and efficient management of inclusive education. Data can either be quantitative, meaning in the form of numbers, or qualitative, meaning perceptions or opinions.

McGuigan and Harris (2012: 3) are of the view that qualitative and quantitative research are the two main schools of research, and although they are often used in tandem, the advantages and disadvantages of each are hotly debated. Particularly in the social sciences, the merits of both qualitative and quantitative research are fought over, with intense views held on both sides of the argument. It is generally agreed upon, however, that there are some phases of research where one is clearly more useful than the other is, and so few people completely dismiss either. Kgothule (2004: 112) adds that the two main paradigms or research methodologies that have been prominent in educational research for a number of years are quantitative and qualitative..

Both qualitative and quantitative are equally important in their respective fields. However, quantitative is more objective, numerical and statistical, while qualitative covers topics that are social or psychological in nature, and current affairs.

For the purpose of this research, quantitative research was used. More clarity on the meaning and nature of the quantitative research method will be discussed in the next section.

3.3.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research is probably the less contentious of the two schools, as it is more closely aligned with what is viewed as the classical scientific paradigm.

Quantitative research involves gathering data that is absolute, such as numerical data, so that it can be examined in as unbiased a manner as possible.

Payne and Williams (2011: 36) define quantitative research as a method concerned with numbers and anything that is quantifiable. Such method modules would include a graphical, mathematical and econometric representation of ideas and analysis, the manipulation, treatment and interpretation of statistical data, statistics, numeracy and quantitative skills, including data analysis, interpretation and extrapolation, survey design and analysis, experimental design, and mathematics. Furthermore, quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things, while qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things.

Babbie (2010: 22) states that quantitative research deals in numbers, logic and the objective, focusing on logic, numbers, and unchanging static data and detailed, convergent reasoning rather than divergent reasoning. Babbie (*ibid.*) further indicates that in quantitative research, your goal is to determine the relationship between one thing (an independent variable) and another (a dependent or outcome variable) in a population. Quantitative research designs are either descriptive (subjects usually measured once) or experimental (subjects measured before and after a treatment). A descriptive study establishes only associations between variables.

Based on the above-mentioned definitions of quantitative research by Payne and Williams, and Babbie, the researcher deduces that quantitative research is concerned with numbers, statistics, and the relationships between events or numbers.

According to Babbie (2010: 23), the characteristics of quantitative research are as follows:

The data is usually gathered using more structured research instruments. The results are based on larger sample sizes that are representative of the population. The research study can usually be replicated or repeated, given its high reliability.

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The researcher has a clearly defined research question to which objective answers are sought. All aspects of the study are carefully designed before data is collected. Data are in the form of numbers and statistics. The project can be used to generalise concepts more widely, predict future results, or investigate causal relationships; and the researcher uses tools, such as questionnaires or equipment, to collect numerical data.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

After careful consideration of the various research approaches, the researcher decided to utilise quantitative research, which is exploratory in nature, as the primary data collection method for the purpose of this research. The literature study (refer to Chapter two) forms the secondary research and studied relevant literature, such as articles, legislation and books on inclusive education and school management. In order to reach the desired outcome for this study, structured questionnaires were used for data collection, which is discussed in the next section.

3.4.1 Structured questionnaire

Babbie (2007: 246) defines a structured questionnaire as a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis. Structured questionnaires are used primarily in survey research but also in experiments, field research, and other modes of observation. These questionnaires are often used to make data collection more efficient and standardised. A structured questionnaire is simply a 'tool' for collecting and recording information about a particular issue of interest. It is made up mainly of a list of questions, but should also include clear instructions and space for answers or administrative details.

Structured questionnaires have a number of advantages and disadvantages when compared with other evaluation tools. The key strengths and weaknesses of questionnaires are summarised below as the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires. In general, questionnaires are an effective mechanism for the efficient collection of certain kinds of information. They are not, however, a

comprehensive means of evaluation and should be used to support and supplement other procedures.

Wagner *et al.* (2012: 103) are of the view that the structure of the questionnaire is pivotal and it should meet the following requirements:

- should be neat in appearance
- should have a proper introduction that clearly conveys the purpose of the survey
- should have a statement of purpose of the questionnaire
- should have brief and clear instructions
- should not be too long
- should provide adequate information
- should be interesting
- should be structured in a meaningful way so that it is simple to complete
- the statements on the questionnaire and the pages should be arranged numerically
- should be designed to maintain interest
- should start with questions that are easy to answer
- should proceed from general to specific questions
- should ask personal or sensitive questions last
- should avoid subject-related or technical jargon
- should employ the respondent's vocabulary
- should minimise the number of questions to avoid respondent fatigue and
- should express gratitude in anticipation.

3.4.1.1 Advantages of structured questionnaires

Leibrandt (2013:105-106) enumerates the advantages of questionnaires as follows: Questionnaires permit a wide range of responses at a minimum expense of time and money. They reach people who are difficult to contact. They lend themselves well to the collection of data that can be obtained in no other way. They are useful when it is impossible to interview individuals personally

The wider coverage obtained by means of questionnaires increases the validity in the results by promoting the selection of a larger and more representative sample. Due to the impersonal nature of questionnaires, they may elicit more candid and objective replies and, therefore, more responses. Questionnaires permit well-considered and more thoughtful answers. They enhance progress in many areas of educational research, and bring to light much information that would otherwise be lost. They obviate the influence that the interviewer might have on the respondent. A well-compiled questionnaire can be assessed without much loss of time and they allow for uniformity and ensure that answers are comparable.

Based on the above-mentioned advantages of questionnaires, is it clear that a questionnaire is a suitable method of investigation for testing the opinions of the respondents who partake in the research.

3.4.1.2 Disadvantages of structured questionnaires

Leibrandt (2013: 105-106) further indicates that the use of a structured questionnaire as a research technique has several disadvantages which cannot be ignored, such as:

It may be difficult to obtain a good response rate. Often there is no strong motivation for respondents to respond. They are complex instruments and, if badly designed, can be misleading. They are an unsuitable method of evaluation if probing is required – there is usually no real possibility for follow-up on answers. The quality of data is probably not as high as with alternative methods of data collection, such as personal interviewing. They can be misused – a mistake is to try to read too much into questionnaire results. It is difficult to determine who really completed the questionnaire. Questionnaires that do not probe deeply enough do not reveal a true

picture of opinions and feelings. Participants may feel that their personal opinions are left out. The length of the questionnaire may lead to careless or inaccurate responses and may result in low return rates.

The researcher has endeavoured to combat the disadvantages of questionnaires. Furthermore, the above-mentioned disadvantages do not disqualify a questionnaire as a reliable tool for data collection, and questionnaires remain one of the most widely used data collection instruments in research (Mogonediwa, 2008: 60).

The structured questionnaire was drafted from the concepts pertaining to inclusive education and school management (as discussed in Chapter two). The purpose of the questionnaire was to establish SMT's ability and role with regard to the effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education at school. Participants are willing to be honest as long as their anonymity is assured (Salkind, 2007: 138). The questionnaire posed the questions (statements) on a five-point Likert Scale with a fifth "Don't Know" option. The participants had to consider the following options when responding to each statement:

- "Strongly Agree" (1);
- "Somewhat Agree" (2);
- "Somewhat Disagree" (3);
- "Strongly Disagree" (4); and
- "Don't Know" (5).

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3.5 TYPES OF QUESTIONS USED FOR THE STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRES

Babbie (2007: 248) indicates that the advantages of closed-ended questions represent the disadvantages of open-ended questions, and vice versa. He recommends that the researcher must use both close-ended and open-ended questions to intercept shortcomings. For the purpose of this research, both closed-ended and open-ended questions will be used.

3.5.1 Closed-ended questions

White (2003: 93) is of the opinion that this kind of question permits only certain responses. Quantification and analysis of results may be carried out easily and effectively. Closed-ended questions should be used where the answer categories are discrete, distinct, and relatively few in number.

Advantages of closed-ended questions
• The answers are standard, and can be compared from person to person;
• The answers are much easier to code and analyse;
• The respondent/participant is often clearer about the meaning of the question;
• The chances for irrelevant answers are limited to a minimum because appropriate answer categories are provided; and
• It is easier for a respondent to answer, because he only has to choose a category.

Disadvantages of closed-ended questions
• It is easy for a respondent who does not know the answer to choose the "Don't Know" category or even to answer randomly.
• The respondent may feel frustrated because the appropriate category for his answer is not provided.
• There are greater changes for errors as the respondent may circle 3 when he meant to circle 2.

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3.5.2 Open-ended questions

The respondent makes any response he wishes in his own words. Example: "How do you like your job?" Such a question allows the respondent to express feelings and to expand on ideas (White, 2003: 93).

Open-ended questions are used for complex questions that cannot be answered in a few simple categories but require more detail and discussion.

Advantages of open-ended questions

• They can be used when the researcher would like to see what the respondent views as appropriate answer categories.

• They allow the respondent to answer adequately, in all the detail he/she likes, and to qualify and clarify his/her answer.

• They are preferable for complex issues that cannot be condensed into a few small categories.

• They allow more opportunity for creativity or self-expression by the respondent.

Disadvantages of open-ended questions

• It may lead to the collection of worthless and irrelevant information.

• Data is not standardised from person to person, making comparison or statistical analysis difficult.

• Open-ended questions require good writing skills, a better ability to express one's feelings verbally, and generally a higher educational level than closed-ended questions.

• Open-ended questions generally require much more of a respondent's time.

• It requires more paper and therefore gives the impression that the questionnaire is longer, possibly discouraging respondents who do not wish to answer a lengthy questionnaire.

White (2003: 93) indicates that a questionnaire should contain both open and closed questions, but closed questions should predominate. The ideal is a section of the questionnaire consisting of closed questions suitable for statistical processing by computer and a section with open questions that will have to be processed manually.

3.6 THE RELIABILITY OF THE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Wagner *et al.* (2012: 80) define 'reliability' as "the extent to which the test scores are accurate, consistent, and stable, over different forms of the same instrument or occasions of data collecting". Struwig and Stead (2011: 130) support the aforementioned definition by Wagner *et al.* by indicating that a test score's validity is dependent on the score's reliability since if the reliability is inadequate, the validity will also be poor. It is therefore important to determine the score's reliability before you examine its validity. In common terms, the reliability of a test is the extent to which subsequent administrations would give similar results.

You cannot have a valid instrument if it is not reliable. However, you can have a reliable instrument that is not valid. Think of shooting arrows at a target. Reliability is getting the arrows to land in about the same place each time you shoot. You can do this without hitting the bull's-eye. Validity is getting the arrow to land in the bull's-eye. Many arrows landing in the bull's-eye means you have both reliability and validity.

Cherry (2012: 1) states that there might be errors in a set of collected data; therefore reliability is utilised with the aim of achieving a more precise reflection of the truth. For this research, clear and relevant questions were formulated for the questionnaire and interviews with the purpose of attaining reliable data that was free from measurement mistakes, which leads to the process of population and sampling.

According to Struwig and Stead (2011: 130), reliability can depend on various factors (the observers/raters, the tools, the methods, the context, the sample) and can be estimated in a variety of ways, including:

• Inter-observer reliability. To what degree are measures taken by different raters/observers consistent? Consider pre-testing if different raters/observers are giving consistent results on the same phenomenon.

• Test-retest reliability. Is a measure consistent from one time to another? Consider administering the same test to the same (or similar) sample on different occasions. But, be aware of the effects of the time gap.

• Parallel forms reliability. Are previous tests and tools constructed in the same way from the same content domain giving similar results? Consider splitting a large set of questions into parallel forms and measure the correlation of the results.

• Internal consistency reliability. Do different measures on a similar issue yield results that are consistent? Consider testing a sampling of all records for inconsistent measures.

When constructing reliable data collection instruments:

• ensure that the questions and the methodology are clear;

• use explicit definitions of terms; and

• use already tested and proven questioning methods.

3.7 THE VALIDITY OF THE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Cherry (2012: 2) indicates that validity is described as the degree to which a research study measures what it intends to measure. Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008) further state that validity is often defined as the extent to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure. Validity requires that an instrument is reliable, but an instrument can be reliable without being valid. For example, a scale that is incorrectly calibrated may yield exactly the same, albeit inaccurate, weight values. A multiple-choice test intended to evaluate the counselling skills of pharmacy students may yield reliable scores, but it may actually evaluate drug knowledge rather than the ability to communicate effectively with patients in making a recommendation. Cherry (2012: 4) writes that there are two main types of validity, namely internal and external validity.

'Internal validity' refers to the validity of the measurement and test itself, whereas 'external validity' refers to the ability to generalise the findings to the target population. Both are very important in analysing the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of a research study.

De Vos *et al.* (2011:153) define 'external validity' as the extent to which results can be generalised to the whole population. A high degree of external validity thus

means that the experimental findings can be generalised to events outside the experiment; that is, the findings should not only be true in similar experiments, but also in real life (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 151). On the other hand, Cherry (2012: 2) indicates that external validity is the extent to which generalising from the data and context of the research study to the broader populations and settings is possible.

Based on the above-mentioned aspects with regard to validity and reliability, it is evident that validity and reliability go hand-in-hand and have a strong relationship in research practice. Reliability is obtained with consistency over time; however, it is only valid if you are measuring what you intend to measure.

3.8 THE POPULATION AND SAMPLE

3.8.1. The population

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 262; 266), the 'population' refers to the entire group of people, events, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. Bless and Higson-Smith (2004: 33) state that a population is the complete set of events, people, or things to which research findings are to be applied. The population that interests the researcher is not the same as the everyday notion of the population of people in a certain country or city. A population is the sum of all the cases that meet the study's definition of the unit of analysis.

The population of this study comprised of the principals and SMTs of all the schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area, namely, Bloemfontein, Botshabelo, and Thaba Nchu.

3.8.2 Sample and sampling procedure

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 263), a 'sample' is a subgroup or subset of the population and comprises of members selected from it. Furthermore, a sample can be defined as a subset of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from the target population (De Vos *et al*., 2011: 225).

By studying the sample, the researcher should be able to draw conclusions that will represent the population. When doing research, it is often impractical to survey every member of a particular population because the sheer number of people is simply too large. In order to make inferences about characteristics of a population, researchers can make use of a random sample. The appropriate sample size is influenced by your purpose in conducting the research. If your sample size is too small, you could miss important insights. However, if it is too large, you could waste valuable time and resources, such as the budget of the study. Robson (in Xoyane, 2012: 68) points out that the use of sampling allows for more adequate scientific work by making the time of scientific workers count. Instead of spending their time on analysing a large mass of material from one point of view, they can use that time to make a more intensive analysis from many points of views. Furthermore, researchers also save time and money by employing scientific sampling techniques to gather data from the target population.

All the principals and SMTs of the selected schools formed the sample. The total number of SMTs at these selected schools, who took part in this study, was 150 (70 respondents in Bloemfontein, 40 respondents in Thaba Nchu, and 40 respondents in Botshabelo).

According to Market Intelli-Sense (2012: 3), it is essential to use the correct sample size to accurately represent the population. Choosing a sample size that is too small may not give an accurate representation of the population distribution. Too large a sample size is wasteful and sometimes impossible to complete.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION

Various data collection instruments are utilised in quantitative research, such as questionnaires, interviews, observation, etc. The researcher decided to use questionnaires, as this instrument is probably the best suited to conduct survey research that is of a quantitative nature.

3.10 THE DATA ANALYSIS

McMillan and Schumacher (in Smit and Mpya, 2011: 69-70) defines 'data analysis' as primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns among the categories. Rubin and Rubin (2012: 67) describe data analysis as a process that begins with research design and is ongoing throughout the research.

In this study, analysis of data obtained from the structured questionnaires and document analysis was conducted using content analysis. Although there is data analysis in both quantitative and qualitative research, data analysis in quantitative research will be discussed as it is the research method that will be used for this research.

White (in Alberts, 2011: 60) mentions that data analysis and presentation indicates the statistical techniques to be used in data analysis and specifies how the data will be presented. Educational research projects often make use of descriptive statistics when analysing their data. White (*ibid.*) further indicates that the researcher chooses the statistical test for each research question, and if necessary, the rationale for the choice of the test. The rationale may be in terms of the purpose of the study, sample and size, and the type of scales used in the instrument. A statistical technique is selected on the basis of appropriateness for investigating the research question and/or hypothesis.

3.11 THE PILOT STUDY

De Vos *et al.* (2011: 237) define a 'pilot study' as a procedure for testing and validating an instrument by administering it to a small group of participants from the intended test population. The participants who participate in the pilot study should not participate in the main inquiry.

In this study, the researcher used SMT members from two schools at Excelsior in the Free State, a small town that is not part of the municipal area where the research was conducted.

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A pilot study can involve pre-testing a research tool, like a new data collection method. It can also be used to test an idea or hypothesis. Pilot studies can also be used in clinical trials, in order to test different doses, routes of administration, dosing schedules, and possible barriers to adherence before a large-scale, multicentre drug study is launched.

Pilot studies are used as feasibility studies to ensure that the ideas or methods behind a research idea are sound, as well as to "work out the kinks" in a study protocol before launching a larger study.

A sample from the target population was identified which consisted of 10 members of SMTs from the two schools at Excelsior. The researcher personally visited the two schools during their lunch breaks and distributed 10 questionnaires for them to complete. They were asked to give their honest opinion with regard to the questionnaire. The questionnaires were not explained to them and no assistance was given to them during the time they completed them. All of them completed the questionnaires and all of them were returned to the researcher.

A pilot study is imperative in any study since it enables the researcher to identify and rectify problems prior to the survey or research being conducted. It provides an indication of the response rate that can be expected.

Attention was paid to the critique given by the 10 respondents from the two schools at Excelsior. Suggestions were written on the back of the questionnaires and this enabled the researcher to design a better questionnaire. Certain questions were changed and others were improved, as some of the questions were found to be unclear and others were ambiguous. The language usage on the questionnaire was also addressed and the questionnaire, which was only in English, was also made available in Afrikaans.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Salmons (2015: 11), as dictated by the principles of ethics, participants have the right to know what will happen in the study that will be conducted. Furthermore, Salmons (2015: 12) is of the view that researchers need to ensure that participants comprehend their roles in the study and grasp that involvement is voluntary. Creswell (2013: 66) points out that the researcher explains the purpose of the study and does not engage in deception about the nature of the study. Participants also have the right to decline participation in the study should they feel uncomfortable. They also have the right to anonymity (Creswell, 2013: 69). Salmons (2015: 12) states that participants in any study must understand the researcher's purpose and anticipated commitments, and freely agree to participate, without repercussions if they do not. Salmons (2015: 13) also suggests that the right thing to do, is for the researcher to approach subjects at the very beginning of the research to ask for consent.

Further, Van Stuyvesant Meijien (2007: 96) is of the view that researchers need to have a firm understanding of what is considered right and wrong when researching. Researchers are in a privileged position where they gain information from respondents, and are expected to perform their duties and use the information in an ethical manner.

Struwig and Stead (2011: 66-70) identify a number of ethical considerations that researchers have to observe, particularly when human participants are involved. These include:

• Participants need to know that their privacy and sensitivity will be protected and what is going to happen with their information after the interview and completion of the questionnaire

• Participants should volunteer to take part in the study and should not be forced

• Researchers should anticipate possible risks to participants and should counteract them

• Participants should be told that they are at liberty to withdraw from participating in the study, should they find it unpleasant. Hence, is it the responsibility of the researcher and assistants to ensure that the aforementioned does not happen and

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• The researcher remains accountable for the ethical quality of the study and should therefore take great care and, when in doubt, ask for advice.

Based on the above-mentioned identified ethical considerations it is evident that the researcher has observed, particularly as human participants were involved, confidentiality and trustworthiness. Kgothule (2004: 134) states that confidentiality involves a clear understanding between the researcher and the participant concerning the use of the data provided. Confidential information implies that the identity of the individual will remain anonymous. It also assumes that the researcher cannot identify the individuals. It is generally agreed that reports on the behaviour of persons in public office performing the role of their job can be disclosed, but their personal lives should be protected.

Above all, the quantitative researcher should have personal integrity, be truthful, and credible. The reader of a research report should be able to believe that what the researcher says happened, actually happened, otherwise it is all for nothing. Falsifying data to make findings agree with the research question is unprofessional, unethical, and unforgivable (De Vos *et al.,* 2011: 115-121). It should therefore be emphasised that confidentiality, trustworthiness, common sense, and personal integrity prevail.

3.13 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The focus of this chapter was on the design procedures that the researcher followed in conducting this study. The next chapter will focus on the reporting of the findings of the empirical study among the SMTs of all the selected schools to obtain a clear picture of the situation with regards to the role of SMTs in the implementation of inclusive education and to assist management in the effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education at these schools.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, the research methodology and design was outlined. In this chapter, the responses given by the participants/respondents to the questions put in the structured questionnaire are presented, collated, analysed and interpreted.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to present the empirical findings of this research, and analyse and interpret the findings in relation to the theoretical perspectives (refer to Chapter two regarding inclusive education and the role of the SMT in the implementation of inclusive education at schools), which will enable the researcher to make recommendations with regard to the effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education by SMTs.

A total of 99.3% of the questionnaires that were distributed to the members of the SMTs of the selected schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area, namely, Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu, were returned. Out of the 150 questionnaires that were given to the respondents for voluntary completion, 149 were returned. The high and satisfactory response rate implies that valuable deductions can be made from the data.

The questions listed in the structured questionnaire in this study were developed from a literature study on inclusive education and the role of the SMT in the implementation of inclusive education, and from expert opinions. These questions were grouped into two sections, namely Section A and Section B. Section A of the questionnaire dealt with the personal and demographic profile of the respondents who took part in this study. Section B dealt with the responses of the respondents with regard to the role of the SMT in the implementation of inclusive education.

The questionnaires were processed by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University (the Potchefstroom campus) using SPSS (Pallant, 2007).

Responses were entered as frequencies and converted to percentages to make them easy to compare and convenient to display as tables (frequencies and valid percentages were used).

4.2 PERSONAL DATA OF THE RESPONDENTS

The personal data of the respondents related to information in terms of gender, population group, age, home language, educational qualification, position, and number of years in a management position. This information assisted the researcher to determine, for instance, if results were in any way influenced by the respondents' personal data or not. The data is displayed in tables and figures. The data in the figures were rounded off to the nearest integer.

4.2.1 Gender

In question one of the questionnaire for the SMT, the respondent had to indicate his/her gender. According to the data in Table 4.1 below, there were more female respondents (52.3%) than male respondents (47.7%) who completed the questionnaires. This indicates that the sample is representative in terms of gender, as there are 51.60% females and 48.40% males in the Free State, the province where this study was conducted, according to the Census of 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Table 4.1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	71	47.7
Female	78	52.3
Total	149	100

4.2.2 Population group

This question was designed in such a way that the respondent must indicate which population group he/she is from. From Table 4.2 below, the results indicate that the majority of the respondents, who are members of the SMTs of the selected schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area, are black (68.5%), followed by white

(18.8%), and Coloured (12.8%). This indicates that the sample is representative in terms of population group, as there are blacks (87.61%), whites (8.71%), and Coloureds (3.05%) in the Free State, the province where this study was conducted, according to the Census of 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Table 4.2: Population group

Population group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Asian	0	0
White	28	18.8
Coloured	19	12.8
African/black	102	68.5
Total	149	100

4.2.3 Age group

A breakdown of the respondents by age is represented in Table 4.3. The researcher is of the opinion that a broad range of age groups participated in this study; thus, the age groups were well represented. Table 4.3 below indicates that the majority of the respondents (43.6%) in this study are between 50 and 59 years. The table below further indicates that the minority of respondents (3.4%) are between 60 and 69 years. People younger than 17-years-old did not participate in this study, as they usually are not employed yet and would not occupy a management position.

Table 4.3: Age group

Age group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18 – 29	6	4.0
30 – 39	17	11.4
40 – 49	56	37.6
50 – 59	65	43.6
60 – 69	5	3.5
Total	149	100

4.2.4 Home language

Table 4.4 below reveals that out of all the respondents in this study, 34.7% speak Sesotho at home, followed by Afrikaans with 29,2%, Setswana with 27,1%, Xhosa with 4.9%, English with 2.1%, Zulu with 0.7%, and language unknown with 3,4%. As a resident of the municipal area for more than 40 years, the researcher noted that in most cases the vernacular or first language is not the home language, as is the case with people who stay in Bloemfontein, the capital of the Free State. Their first language can be Sesotho or Xhosa, but their home language might be Tswana.

This study further indicates that the sample is representative in terms of home language, as the two most spoken languages in the municipal area are also two of the three official languages of the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality – Sesotho, Afrikaans and English. The two most spoken languages in the Free State are Sesotho (64.20%) and Afrikaans (12.72%), according to the Census of 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Table 4.4: Home language

Home language	Frequency	Percentage (%)
English	3	2.0
Zulu	1	0.7
Xhosa	7	4.7
Setswana	39	26.2
Sesotho	50	33.6
Afrikaans	42	28.2
Other	2	1.3
Missing	5	3.4
Total	149	100

4.2.5 Educational qualification

Respondents were asked to indicate their highest educational qualification; this information is reflected in Table 4.5 below. Almost half of the respondents who are members of an SMT in this study have acquired a postgraduate qualification (51.1%), followed by 32.2% who indicated that they have an undergraduate degree,

and 14.1% who indicated that they have a diploma. The table below shows that 2.7% of the respondents indicated that they have qualifications other than a diploma, an undergraduate degree, an Honours degree, or a Master's degree.

Table 4.5: Educational qualification

Educational qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diploma	21	14.1
Bachelors degree	48	32.2
Honours degree	57	38.3
Master's degree	19	12.8
Other	4	2.7
Total	149	100

4.2.6 Current management position

Respondents were asked to indicate their current management position; the information in this regard is reflected in Table 4.6. This table indicates that the majority of the respondents in this study (69.4%) recorded that their current management position is Head of Department (HOD), followed by Deputy Principal (20.8%), then Principal (9.7%), and finally those who did not indicate their current management position (3.4%).

Table 4.6: Current management position

Current management position	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Head of Department (HOD)	100	69.4
Deputy Principal	30	20.8
Principal	14	9.7
Missing	5	3.4
Total	149	100

4.2.7 How long in current management position?

Table 4.7 indicates that more than 50% of the respondents in this study have been in their current management position for less than 10 years (56.4%), followed by 25.3%

who indicated that they have been in their current management position between 11 and 20 years, 13.7% indicated 21 to 30 years, and 3.4% indicated more than 31 years.

Table 4.7: How long in current management position?

How long in current management position?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	12	8.1
1 – 10 years	72	48.3
11 – 20 years	37	24.8
21 – 30 years	20	13.4
More than 31 years	5	3.4
Missing	3	2.0
Total	149	100

4.2.8 How long a manager at the school?

This question was designed in such a way that the respondent must indicate how long he/she has been a manager at the school. From Table 4.8 below, the results indicate that more than 50% have been a manager at their school for less than 10 years. The table further indicates that more than a third (33.6%) indicated that they have been a manager at the school for 11 to 20 years. Finally, 11.7% of the respondents indicated more than 21 years.

Table 4.8: How long a manager at the school?

How long a manager at the school?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	9	6.0
1 – 10 years	71	47.7
11 – 20 years	49	32.9
21 – 30 years	16	10.7
More than 31 years	1	0.7
Missing	3	2.0
Total	149	100

4.2.9 What type of school are you a manager at?

Respondents were asked to indicate what type of school they are a manager at. Table 4.9 shows that 53.4% of the respondents indicated that they are at a secondary or high school, followed by 31.8% who indicated that they are at a primary school, and 14.9% who indicated that they are at a combined school.

Table 4.9: What type of school are you a manager at?

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary school	47	31.5
Secondary/high school	79	53.0
Combined school	22	14.8
Missing	1	0.7
Total	149	100

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSE RELATING TO THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS (SMTs) IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT SCHOOLS.

Pietersen and Maree (in Petzer, 2010:79) are of the view that by means of descriptive statistics, data is organised and summarised to promote an understanding of the data characteristics.

This section presents the responses obtained from the participants for this section of the questionnaire (Section B). The researcher has grouped the questions of Section B according to the response scale used in the questionnaire – all the questions related to Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and Don't Know.

Table 4.10 presents the responses obtained from the participants for this section of the questionnaire (Section B). The data from the responses will be summarised with percentages (%) and also missing in percentage (%), mean, and standard deviation.

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The frequency analysis for each enabler was calculated and reported on per statement as a percentage (%) and covered "Strongly Agree" (1); "Somewhat Agree" (2); "Somewhat Disagree" (3); "Strongly Disagree" (4); and "Don't Know" (5).

The descriptive statistics were calculated and reported per statement as:
- number of missing answers;
- mean; and
- standard deviation.

The "Don't Know" (5) answers were not used in the calculation of the statements' means and standard deviations, because very few respondents marked the "Don't Know (5) answer on the questionnaire. Thus, it will have no practical or statistical significance (Ellis, 2014).

Table 4.10: Participants' responses with regard to questions in Section B, related to whether they Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question	Statement or question	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing	Mean	Standard Deviation
10	I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about.	43.6	40.9	13.4	0.7	1.3	1.71	0.723
11	I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive	26.2	49.0	20.1	2.0	0.7	1.98	0.750

	education.							
12	I have an understand-ing on the principles of inclusive education.	23.5	55.0	15.4	2.0	0.7	1.96	0.701
13	I have the necessary training to implement inclusive education.	18.1	36.9	29.5	8.7	0	2.31	0.892
14	I have an understand-ing of what are the barriers for the implement-ation of inclusive education.	24.8	50.3	20.1	2.7	0	2.01	0.757
15	The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implement-ation of inclusive education.	18.8	53.0	18.8	6.0	0	2.13	0.792
16	The school have plans	17.4	43.0	26.8	10.7	0	2.32	0.893

	and strategies in place for the implement-ation of inclusive education.							
17	The principal and SMT sell the vision of the school by ensuring that the policy on inclusion is addressed in most staff meetings.	18.8	50.3	22.1	7.4	0	2.18	0.828
18	The principal and the SMT encourage the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education.	18.8	41.6	32.9	5.4	0	2.25	0.826
19	The principal and the SMT have a procedure of monitoring and evaluating the progress	12.1	43.0	31.5	10.7	0	2.42	0.847

	made with regard to inclusive education.							
20	The monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners.	28.2	40.9	24.8	6.0	0	2.09	0.877
21	The principal and the School Management Team (SMT) encourages classroom discipline based on mutual respect and understand-ing.	51.7	40.3	6.7	0.7	0	1.56	0.652
22a	The principal and the	36.2	51.0	10.1	2.7	0	1.79	0.729

	School Management Team (SMT) have a plan of action to check that educators are concerned with supporting the learning and participation of all learners.							
22b	The school is engaging all stakeholders in order to assist with the implemen-tation of inclusive education.	23.5	49.0	19.5	6.7	0	2.10	0.839
23	The school does have learning material (resources), such as computers and desks for	19.5	37.6	28.9	12.1	0.7	2.34	0.935

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	the implemen-tation of inclusive education.							
24	The school ensures that the rights of all learners are protected and ensure that all learners are treated fairly and with respect.	53.7	36.2	8.7	1.3	0	1.58	0.709
25	The principal and School Management Team (SMT) create a safe, friendly, and welcoming school climate for learners and parents/ families as well as staff, based on collaboration and inclusive-ness.	47.0	38.3	12.1	2.7	0	1.70	0.784

| 26 | All learners take part in extramural activities outside the classroom. | 14.8 | 39.6 | 28.2 | 17.4 | 0 | 2.48 | 0.949 |
| 27 | The school makes its building physically accessible to all people. | 25.5 | 45.0 | 19.5 | 9.4 | 0 | 2.13 | 0.906 |

In Table 4.10 above, 84.5% (Strongly Agree to Somewhat Agree) of the respondents indicated that they have an understanding of what inclusive education is. The researcher is of the view that this is a favourable situation for the principal and the SMT in order to implement inclusive education. The aforementioned statement by the researcher is supported by that fact that they all are of the opinion that they are sufficiently qualified; thus, they will be able to do whatever is expected of them (Chapter two, refer to 2.3). This is not always true, especially if teachers are expected to do new things that they have not been trained to do. The aforementioned statement is also supported by Nel *et al.* (2011: 77), who state that many teachers in South Africa are ill-prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners, hence the development of a negative attitude towards inclusion. This is exacerbated by a lack of strategies for teacher support and systematic training.

Although more than 60% of the respondents (65.2% for Strongly Agree to Somewhat Agree) indicated that they have an understanding of the policies of inclusive education, the challenge is that there is still a disparity between policy and what actually happens in schools (Gous, 2009: 6). This dilemma is clearly illustrated by challenges such as incoherent conception and understanding of the strategic intent and approach towards developing an Inclusive Education and Training System, at all

levels of the system, that retard the progress that is being made in the development of an Inclusive Education and Training System (Chapter two, refer to 2.2).

More than 75% of the respondents (78.5%) indicated that they have an understanding of the principles of inclusive education. The researcher (based on her personal experience as a principal at a school) is of the opinion that the aforementioned indication is positive. This is supported by the fact that the Education White Paper 6 provides guiding principles for the new education system it envisages for South Africa, and includes the following: protecting the rights of all people and making sure that all learners are treated fairly; ensuring that all learners can participate fully and equally in education and society; providing equal access for all learners to a single, IE system; and making sure that all learners can understand and participate meaningfully in the teaching and learning process in schools (Chapter two, refer to 2.7).

In Table 4.10, 55% of the respondents indicated that they have the necessary training to implement inclusive education. The researcher is of the view that this percentage is satisfactory because, in her opinion, teachers were apprehensive when inclusive education was introduced because they did not understand what it entailed. Some were confused because they did not understand what they were supposed to do. Others were worried because they had not been trained to teach children who were not able to participate in learning activities like the other children in their classes. Some teachers felt that inclusive education was an extra burden because they did not understand that it was an important part of outcomes-based education (OBE). Because of all these misunderstandings, some teachers were resistant to inclusive education at first (Chapter two, refer to 2.3). However, despite their limited training, many educators seem to be able to cope with the challenges posed by inclusive education (Chapter one, refer to 1.2).

More than 70% of the respondents (75.1%) indicated that they have an understanding of what the barriers for the implementation of inclusive education are. The researcher is of the view that this percentage is encouraging.

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Murungi (2015: 2) points out that challenges to the realisation of inclusive basic education in South Africa are compounded further by the pertinent issues underlying the implementation of basic education, such as the question of equality in education, the financing of basic education, the nature of the state's duties pertaining to the provision of basic education, and the interpretation of the notion of basic education. The understanding of inclusive education in South Africa has also been impacted by historical factors, such as the apartheid exclusion of the masses from mainstream basic education, and the subsequent need to "include" everyone in post-apartheid education (Chapter two, refer to 2.8).

According to Table 4.10, more than 70% of the respondents (71.8% for Strongly Agree to Somewhat Agree) indicated that they have the skills and leadership needed for the implementation of inclusive education.

According to Stofile (2008: 43), training programmes that educate teachers on how to accommodate and teach learners with disabilities are generally a week or two long, and teachers report that although these brief training programmes are helpful, they are insufficient. The programmes also tend to focus on developing a few skills, whereas teachers often need far more comprehensive training programmes (Chapter two, refer to 2.7). Furthermore, the time allocated to the departmental workshops is insufficient – too short and not presented frequently enough, according to the Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001 (2015: 7).

The researcher is of the view that the duration of training is a worrying factor as inclusive education depends on the capacity of the school, and therefore on the capacity of educators to be innovative and to implement differentiation (Chapter two, refer to 2.6). Harmuth (2012: 3-4) indicates that many teachers state that they do not receive formal training and development regarding the accommodation of the diverse learning needs of learners, and the in-service training which they receive for inclusive education is too short (Chapter one, refer to 1.3).

In Table 4.10, more than 70% of the respondents (72.5%) indicated that their school is engaging all stakeholders in order to assist with the implementation of inclusive education. The aforementioned is supported by the Education White Paper 6 on

Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System of 2001, which states that community involvement is imperative in changing the education system (Chapter two, refer to 2.4). Furthermore, to understand the new approach and programmes, there has to be engagement in the development and support of all educators and stakeholders. All educators and stakeholders should be trained and oriented to manage diversity through the development of the inclusive learning programmes.

According to Table 4.10, nearly 90% of the respondents (89.9% for Strongly Agree to Somewhat Agree) indicated that their school ensures that the rights of all learners are protected and ensures that all learners are treated fairly and with respect. The aforementioned is supported by Smit and Mpya (2011:29), who state that all learners should be given the fundamental right to basic education, thereby addressing the imbalances of the past by focusing on the key issues of access, equality, and redress (Chapter one, refer to 1.2).

Table 4.10 illustrates that more than 70% of the respondents (70.5%) indicated that their school makes its building physically accessible to all people. The researcher is of the view that this percentage is encouraging. The 1994 Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action states, "Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions" (Chapter two, refer to 2.3.1).

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: COMPARISON BETWEEN SECTION A AND SECTION B

The researcher will examine the impact of the personal data (biographical data) variables on the respondents' responses. The personal data variables were examined to determine their influence on the respondents' perceptions regarding the role of the SMT in the implementation of inclusive education (Section B). Although there are nine variables in Section A (personal data), for the purpose of this research the researcher will only focus on four variables, namely:

- Age group
- Highest educational qualification
- What is your position currently at the school?

- For how long have you been in a management position?

The researcher is of the opinion that the remaining five personal data variables, which were not used, do not have an impact on the study. The researcher is further of the opinion that given the nature of this study, the responses should only be impacted by socio-economic factors (Ellis, 2014).

In order to determine whether there were any statistically significant differences between the responses grouped using the questions in Section A and certain questions in Section B (as some of the questions are related), the responses were compared for each of the aforementioned questions in Section A and all the questions in Section B.

In order to understand what the statistics want to tell researchers, tests or analyses look at, firstly, statistical significance, which indicates to researchers that there is a correlation or difference depending on the purpose of the test. Statistical significance further allows us to say how sure we are that what we see in the sample; thus, what we will also see in the population. For this, we use p-values. Our cut-off is 0,05, thus if $p \leq 0,05$, we say there is a 95% chance of finding something in a population.

This study will therefore focus on the practical significance of the relationship between variables as indicated by the correlation coefficient or r- value.

Table 4.11: Test statistic interpretation levels

	Small – No real effect	Medium – Practically visible effect	Large – Practically significant effect
R	0.1	0.3	0.5

When performing statistical analysis, there are two groups of tests available, namely parametric and non-parametric tests. Parametric statistical tests assume that your data are normally distributed (follow a classic bell-shaped curve). An example of a parametric statistical test is the Student's t-test.

Non-parametric tests make no such assumption. An example of a non-parametric statistical test is the Sign Test. Parametric tests are better at picking up a correlation or difference, but require assumptions of normality and constant variances.

The researcher tested for normality using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk, which indicate non-normal data, but the QQ-plots indicated that the deviations were not severe.

The Levene's test was used to test for constant variances and the p-values were larger than 0, 05, indicating homogeneity of variance. However, for the purpose of this study, non-parametric tests were performed to ensure accurate representation.

4.5 CORRELATIONS

Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient Correlation Test was performed for this study. It is a non-parametric measure of a linear relationship between two variables. It assesses how well the relationship between two variables can be described using a monotonic function. A perfect Spearman correlation of +1 or −1 occurs when each of the variables is a perfect monotone function of the other.

The researcher will briefly discuss the two variables where there is a correlation and which are relevant to this study. Where there is no correlation between the variables, the researcher will only indicate and discuss the effect sizes and their significance.

Table 4.12: Correlation between Question A3 (age group) and Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).

	Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).	
Question A3 (age group)	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.137
	P-value	0.099
	N	147

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A3 (age group) and Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).

Table 4.13: Table 4.14: Correlation between Question A3 (age group) and Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).

Question A3 (age group)	Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.047
	P-value	0.571
	N	145

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value >0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A3 (age group) and Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).

Table 4.14: Correlation between Question A3 (age group) and Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Question A3 (age group)	Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.071
	P-value	0.401
	N	143

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A3 (age group) and Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Table 4.15: Correlation between Question A3 (age group) and Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).

Question A3 (age group)	Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.015
	P-value	0.859
	N	144

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A3 (age group) and Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).

Table 4.16: Correlation between Question A3 (age group) and Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).

Question A3 (age group)	Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.025
	P-value	0.766
	N	147

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A3 (age group) and Question B18 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Table 4.17: Correlation between Question A3 (age group) and Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).

Question A3 (age group)	Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners.).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.078
	P-value	0.342
	N	149

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A3 (age group) and Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).

Table 4.18: Correlation between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).

Question A5 (highest educational qualification)	Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.151
	P-value	0.072
	N	143

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).

Table 4.19: Correlation between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).

Question A5 (highest educational qualification)	Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.052
	P-value	0.541
	N	141

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).

Table 4.20: Correlation between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Question A5 (highest educational qualification)	Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.058
	P-value	0.498
	N	139

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Table 4.21: Correlation between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).

Question A5 (highest educational qualification)	Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.071
	P-value	0.404
	N	140

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).

Table 4.22: Correlation between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).

Question A5 (highest educational qualification)	Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.060
	P-value	0.475
	N	143

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).

Table 4.23: Correlation between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).

Question A5 (highest educational qualification)	Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.010
	P-value	0.904
	N	145

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A5 (highest educational qualification) and Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).

Table 4.24: Correlation between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).

	Question B10 ((I have an understanding of what

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Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?)	inclusive education is all about).).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.085
	P-value	0.317
	N	142

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B10 ((I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).

Table 4.25: Correlation between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).

Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?)	Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.145
	P-value	0.087
	N	141

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).

Table 4.26: Correlation between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Question A6 (What is	Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

your position currently at the school?)	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.056
	P-value	0.512
	N	139

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Table 4.27: Correlation between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).

Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?)	Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.062
	P-value	0.465
	N	140

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).

Table 4.28: Correlation between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).

Question A6 (What is	Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive

your position currently at the school?)	education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.036
	P-value	0.669
	N	142

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).

Table 4.29: Correlation between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).

Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?)	Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.036
	P-value	0.669
	N	142

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A6 (What is your position currently at the school?) and Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).

Table 4.30: Correlation between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).

Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?)	Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.046
	P-value	0.584
	N	144

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B10 (I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about).

Table 4.31: Correlation between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).

Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?)	Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.152
	P-value	0.070
	N	142

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B11 (I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education).

Table 4.32: Correlation between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?)	Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.102
	P-value	0.228
	N	140

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B12 (I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education).

Table 4.33: Correlation between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).

Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?)	Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.055
	P-value	0.515
	N	141

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management

position?) and Question B15 (The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education).

Table 4.34: Correlation between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).

Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?)	Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education)	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.071
	P-value	0.397
	N	144

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B18 (The principal and the SMT encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education).

Table 4.35: Correlation between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).

Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?)	Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.085
	P-value	0.306
	N	146

Effect size = r-value<0,5, meaning there is no practical significant association and p-value > 0,05, meaning it is not statistically significant.

There is no practical significant relationship, as the effect size is small and there is no real effect between Question A8 (For how long have you been in management position?) and Question B20 (Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the SMT in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners).

4.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter provided an analysis and interpretation of the respondents' data that were collected by means of questionnaires. In essence, the data revealed that the effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education by the principals and the SMTs at the selected schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area is cause for concern and that it impacts negatively on education delivery. Hence, the researcher is of the opinion that serious intervention is needed in order to change and improve the situation at schools.

In the next chapter, concluding remarks will be made based on the empirical and literature review. Recommendations will also be provided regarding the effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education, and how the principal and the SMT can improve in order to accelerate and improve education delivery at schools.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher attempts to revisit the purpose of the study in order to ascertain whether it has been achieved, or not. Questions with regard to problems were posed in the first chapter of this study; and these questions needed to be answered during the study.

This chapter also discussed, whether the literature review, as well as the structured questionnaires that were administered, contributed to answering the problem questions on which this study was based.

This chapter provides information regarding the following:
- An overview of the study;
- Findings from the literature review;
- Findings from the empirical research;
- Findings in relation to the objectives of the study;
- Recommendations;
- Areas for future research; and
- Summary of the chapter

Principals and SMTs must play a critical role in setting priorities for learning in their schools. Through values, commitment, knowledge and skills, the principal and the SMT make the difference. Effective leadership by the principal and the SMT is especially important if schools are to be truly inclusive and meet the educational needs of an increasingly diverse learner population.

5.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This section intends to provide a brief overview of the preceding chapters. The purpose of this exercise is to focus the reader's mind on the important aspects of each chapter, so that the findings and the recommendations that follow make sense.

5.2.1 Chapter one

The purpose of this chapter was to orientate the reader with regard to:
- The problem statement is very clear that there is a need to protect and advance the rights of people so that all citizens, irrespective of race, class,

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gender, creed, disability or age, have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential, enabling them to make a full contribution to society. The researcher supports the view that South African schools are facing the problem and challenge of providing knowledge and leadership skills to educators, including principals and SMTs, as leaders and managers who must effectively manage the inclusive schools. Furthermore, a lack of knowledge of inclusive education, as well as a lack of appropriate leadership and suitable skills in this regard, leaves principals and SMTs to be uncertain of how they will lead and manage inclusive schools when these schools come into existence. Teachers, who include principals, deputy principals, and heads of departments, lack skills and competence as they have to deal with large numbers of learners and have insufficient resources. Teachers also state that they do not receive formal training and development regarding the accommodation of the diverse learning needs of learners, and the in-service training that they receive for inclusive education is too short

- The primary objective of this study is to investigate the role of SMTs in the implementation of inclusive education and to develop a framework to assist management in the implementation of inclusive education

- The secondary objectives of this study are to provide an overview of the concept of inclusive education and to indicate how managing inclusive education can assist in the delivery of education, and establish and analyse the factors that contribute to the gap between inclusive education and delivery of education and

- An empirical research design was utilised for this research. A quantitative design was chosen as it was the researcher's intention to establish and confirm what the given situation is at the selected schools in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area, which includes Bloemfontein, Thaba Nchu and Botshabelo, with regard to the effective and efficient management of inclusive education. The research was conducted amongst school managers (principals, deputy principals, and heads of departments).

All the selected schools were visited personally by the researcher and the researcher waited for the respondents to complete the questionnaires. The completed questionnaires were collected by the researcher immediately after completion.

5.2.2 Chapter two

This chapter explores issues on the nature, extent and impact of the role of SMTs in the implementation of inclusive education. Furthermore, in this chapter a conceptual framework for the study was presented. The focus then shifted to the role of SMTs and the implementation of inclusive education at schools. Inclusive education was briefly described, followed by a description of the process of implementing inclusive education globally and locally, with specific reference to policy documents (i.e. Assessment Guidelines for Inclusion, Department of Education, 2002; Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education, Department of Education, 2002 and 2005; Revised Education White Paper 6 Special Needs Education, 2001 and 2015; Building an Inclusive Education and Training System – Department of Education, 2001) and literature that address the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa.

5.2.3 Chapter three

This chapter elaborated on the empirical research design used in this study to investigate the research problem. The choice of research design and the data collection instrument were discussed in detail, and the implementation of quantitative descriptive survey research by means of questionnaires was motivated. A quantitative approach was chosen for the purpose of this study as it was the researcher's intention to establish and confirm a given situation in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipal area, through the views of the SMTs regarding their role and the implementation of inclusive education at their schools.

5.2.4 Chapter four

The data obtained from the questionnaires were analysed and interpreted in this chapter. The findings show that respondents who are principals, deputy principals, and heads of departments at selected schools in Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu are of the opinion that there are challenges with regard to the role of SMTs and the implementation of inclusive education at their schools.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The information obtained from the literature review was utilised for the formulation of questions for the structured questionnaire. Literature such as textbooks, journals, magazines and newspapers, internet sources, Department of Education policy documents, and other documents published by the South African government such as the Constitution of the Republic of South Arica were used to identify specific guidelines and prescriptions for general education. The Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education and Training Manuals for Educators were also used.

Dalton *et al* (2012: 2) conducted research that found that, following the implementation of US Public Law 94–142 (Education for All Handicapped Children Act 1975), learners have been included increasingly in the general education system and are increasingly expected to achieve in similar ways (and to similar standards) as their general education peers, thus supporting learners with disabilities to be involved with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible (Chapter one, refer to 1.8).

Inclusive education should not be perceived as an option for education, but rather a strategy to enhance democracy and social justice in the community by involving all learners with disabilities, and not merely making special arrangements for a selected few (Chapter two, refer to 2.2).

The Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001 (2015: 6 - 7) indicates that there are persistent challenges that retard the progress that is being made in the development of an Inclusive Education and Training System. These include incoherent conception and understanding of the strategic intent and approach towards developing an Inclusive Education and Training System, as articulated in the Inclusive Education Policy, at all levels of the system, and lack of knowledge about inclusive education, as well as a lack of appropriate leadership and suitable skills in this regard, which leaves principals and the management teams uncertain of how they will lead and manage inclusive schools (Chapter two, refer to 2.2).

Many teachers in South Africa are ill-prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners, hence the development of a negative attitude towards inclusion. This is exacerbated by a lack of strategies for teacher support and systematic training (Chapter two, refer to 2.3).

Inclusive education depends on the capacity of the school, and therefore on the capacity of educators, including principals and SMTs to be innovative and put differentiation into place. Learners with learning impairments and special needs should not be segregated from other learners, but be supported in the mainstream in such a way that their needs are met (Chapter two, refer to 2.3).

The intention of the process of implementing inclusive education has been to develop an education system in which all learners are provided the opportunity to develop their full potential, irrespective of the barriers to learning they experience (Chapter two, refer to 2.4).

The practice of inclusive education has been widely embraced as an ideal model for education, both in South Africa and internationally. However, this acceptance of ideal practices does not necessarily translate into what actually occurs within the classroom. Successful inclusion depends on the attitudes and actions of principals and the investment of other school personnel as they create the school culture and have the ability to challenge or support inclusion (Chapter two, refer to 2.5).

Management, governing bodies and professional staff have to be introduced and oriented to the inclusive model. Learners who are experiencing barriers to learning must be identified early and targeted, and intervention strategies should be followed. Systems and procedures should be put in place so that barriers to learning can be identified and addressed as early as in the Foundation Phase (Chapter two, refer to 2.6).

Training programmes that educate teachers how to accommodate and teach learners with disabilities are generally a week or two long, but teachers report that although these brief training programmes are helpful, they are insufficient. The

programmes also tend to focus on developing a few skills, whereas teachers need more comprehensive training programmes (Chapter two, refer to 2.7).

The principal and SMTs should involve all the stakeholders in the operations of the school. School leaders are accountable to the community and the Education Department for the facilitation of quality education for all learners. School leaders are required by law (South African Schools Act) to explain their decisions and actions to the school community and the Department of Education. The SMTs have a responsibility to run schools according to the principles of democracy and human rights, and be accountable for doing so (Chapter two, refer to 2.9).

Strategic leadership is essential for the implementation of inclusive education in a school. Therefore, principals are important in managing the paradigm shift that is necessary to transform schools into inclusive schools (Chapter two, refer to 2.10).

The leadership of a school is paramount for developing policies, aims, and strategies that create an inclusive school culture, for providing support, and for identifying external factors that may hinder the development of an inclusive school (Chapter two, refer to 2.10).

5.4 FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL REVIEW

More than 80% (84.5%) of the respondents indicated that they have an understanding of what inclusive education is. The researcher is of the view that this is a favourable situation for principals and SMTs in order to implement inclusive education (Chapter four, refer to Table 4.10).

Respondents in this study also indicated, with a satisfactory percentage of more than 60% (65.2%), that they have an understanding of the policies of inclusive education. More than 75% of the respondents (78.5%) indicated that they have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education (Chapter four, refer to Table 4.10).

More than half of the respondents (55%) indicated that they have the necessary training to implement inclusive education, and more than 70% (71.8%) indicated that

they have the skills and leadership needed for the implementation of inclusive education (Chapter four, refer to Table 4.10).

More than 70% (75.1%) indicated that they have an understanding of what the barriers are for the implementation of inclusive education, and more than 70% of the respondents (72.5%) indicated that their school is engaging with all stakeholders in order to assist with the implementation of inclusive education (Chapter four, refer to Table 4.10).

Almost 90% of the respondents (89.9%) indicated that the school ensures that the rights of all learners are protected and ensures that all learners are treated fairly and with respect. Furthermore, more than 70% (70.5%) indicated that the school makes its building physically accessible to all people (Chapter four, refer to Table 4.10).

5.5 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

5.5.1 The primary objective of this study was to investigate the role of SMTs in the implementation of inclusive education. This was achieved through the responses of the participants to the questionnaire. It was found that a large number of the respondents (84.5%) indicated that they have an understanding of what inclusive education is. The researcher is of the view that the aforementioned is a favourable situation for principals and SMTs in order to implement inclusive education (Chapter four, refer to Table 4.10).

Furthermore, more than 75% (78,5%) of the respondents (principals and SMTs) indicated that they have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education. In addition, more than 70% (75,1%) of the respondents indicated that they have an understanding of what the barriers are to the implementation of inclusive education (Chapter four, refer to Table 4.10).

More than 70% (71,8%) of the respondents, who are principals, deputy principals and heads of departments, indicated that they have the skills and leadership needed for the implementation of inclusive education; while almost 90% (89,9%) of the respondents indicated that their school ensures that the rights of all learners are

protected and make sure that all learners are treated fairly and with respect (Chapter four, refer to Table 4.10).

5.5.2 The following were the secondary objectives of the study:

- **To provide an overview of the concept of inclusive education and indicate how managing inclusive education can assist in the delivery of education.** This objective was attained through the literature that was reviewed for this study. The conceptual framework with regard to inclusive education was discussed, looking at the Constitution and certain legislation with regard to inclusive education (Chapter two, refer to 2.2, 2.3, 2.3.1, 2.6, 2.7). Furthermore, the concept 'school management team' (SMT) was discussed; assisting the SMTs to deal with the implementation of inclusive education and also understand the principles and barriers for the implementation of inclusive education (Chapter two, refer to 2.8, 2.9, 2.10).

- **To establish and analyse the factors that contribute to the gap between inclusive education and the delivery of education.** This objective was also attained through the literature that was utilised for this study. The investigation into the knowledge based on inclusive education, and policy principles and guidelines on the implementation on inclusive education were discussed (Chapter two, refer to 2.3, 2.7). Furthermore, the barriers to learning and teaching of inclusive education: implementation challenges were also discussed (Chapter two, refer to 2.8).

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings and to assist principals and SMTs to ensure that facilitative measures are put in place to enable them to effectively and efficiently manage and lead inclusive schools for better education delivery, the researcher recommends the following:

- In order to address one of the biggest challenges of preparing educators for inclusive education, they must be trained to understand what it is, and how to put it into practice in their own classrooms and schools.

- The Department of Education must look into the disparity between the Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, and what actually happens in schools. This dilemma is clearly illustrated by challenges such as incoherent conception and understanding of the strategic intent and approach towards developing an Inclusive Education and Training System, as articulated in the Inclusive Education Policy, at all levels of the system, which retards the progress that is being made in the development of an Inclusive Education and Training System.

- Many teachers stated that they did not receive formal training and development on accommodating the diverse learning needs of learners, and that the in-service training that they received for inclusive education was too brief. In order to address the aforementioned concern of teachers, the researcher recommends lengthening the duration of training, formalising the training, and making it a more comprehensive training programme.

- All educators and stakeholders should be trained and oriented to manage diversity through the development of the inclusive learning programmes.

- The principal and SMT must be pro-active and constructive in facilitating the relationships and support networks between the school, non-governmental organisations, civil-based organisations, other government departments, staff members, and parents/families with the goal of addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

5.7 AREA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following area has been identified for future research:

- An in-depth study to develop a framework to assist principals and SMTs in the implementation of inclusive education at schools.

5.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

There can be no doubt as to the relevance and immediate importance of this study. It was confirmed that the intention of the Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs

Education (2001), with regard to inclusive education, is to promote education for all and foster the development of inclusive and supportive centres of learning that would enable all learners to participate actively in the education process so that they could develop and extend their potential and participate as equal members of society. This statement is supported by Mahlalela (2012: 19), who points out that inclusive education should not be perceived as an option for education, but rather a strategy to enhance democracy and social justice in the community by involving all learners with disabilities and not merely making special arrangements for a selected few.

The Revised Education White Paper 6 on Special Education of 2001 (2015: 6-7) indicates that there are persistent challenges that retard the progress that is being made in the development of an Inclusive Education and Training System, such as a lack of knowledge of inclusive education, as well as a lack of appropriate leadership and suitable skills in this regard. This leaves principals and SMTs uncertain of how they will be leading and managing inclusive schools.

Furthermore, inclusive education depends on the capacity of the school, and therefore, on the capacity of educators (including the principal and the SMT) to be innovative and to put differentiation into place. Learners with learning impairments and special needs should not be segregated from other learners, but should be supported in the mainstream in such a way that their needs are met.

Successful inclusion depends on the attitudes and actions of principals, SMTs, and the investment of other school personnel as they create the school culture and have the ability to challenge or support inclusion. Effective and efficient leadership by the principal and the SMT is especially important if schools are to be truly inclusive and meet the educational needs of an increasingly diverse learner population.

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ANNEXURE 1 - QUESTIONNAIRE

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

QUESTIONNAIRE

INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT SCHOOLS IN THE MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPAL AREA IN THE FREE STATE.

Instructions to Participants:

• Your response will be kept confidential.

• Please do not write your name or the name of your school

• Read through each question or statement carefully

• Please complete the questionnaire by **INDICATION OF AN (X)**, unless stated otherwise.

SECTION A:

PERSONAL DATA

1. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

2. Population Group

Asian	1
White	2
Coloured	3
African/Black	4
Other	5

If other, please specify: ....

3. How old are you?

18 – 29	1
30 – 39	2
40 – 49	3
50 - 59	4
60 – 69	5

4. Which language do you speak at home?

English	1
Zulu	2
Xhosa	3
Setswana	4
Sesotho	5
Afrikaans	6
Other	7

If other, please specify..

5. What is your highest educational qualification?

Diploma	1
B Degree	2
Honneurs Degree	3
Masters Degree	4
Other	5

If other, please specify...

6. What is your position currently at the school?

Principal	1
Deputy Principal	2
Head of Department (HOD)	3

7. For how long are you occupying your current position?

Less than 1 year	1
1 – 10 years	2
11 – 20 years	3
21 – 30 years	4
More than 31 years	5

8. For how long have you been in management position?

Less than 1 year	1
1 – 10 years	2
11 – 20 years	3
21 – 30 years	4
More than 31 years	5

9. What type of school are you a manager at?

Primary school	1
Secondary/High school	2
Combined school	3

SECTION B:

10. I have an understanding of what inclusive education is all about?

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

11. I have an understanding on the policies of inclusive education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

12. I have an understanding on the principles of inclusive education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

13. I have the necessary training to implement inclusive education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

14. I have an understanding of what are the barriers for the implementation of inclusive education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

15. The skills and leadership I have are useful for the implementation of inclusive education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

16. The school have plans and strategies in place for the implementation of inclusive education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

17. The principal and the School Management Team (SMT) sell the vision of the school by ensuring that the policy on inclusion is addressed in most staff meetings

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

18. The principal and the School Management Team (SMT) encourages the optimal attainment of resources for inclusive education

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

19. The principal and the School Management Team (SMT) has a procedure of monitoring and evaluating the progress made with regard to inclusive education

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

20. Monitoring and evaluating system by the principal and the School Management Team (SMT) in respect of assessment encourages the achievement of all learners.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

21. The principal and the School Management Team (SMT) encourages classroom discipline based on mutual respect and understanding.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

22. The principal and the School Management Team (SMT) has a plan of action to check that educators are concerned with supporting the learning and participation of all learners.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

22. The school is engaging all stakeholders in order to assist with the implementation of inclusive education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

23. The school do have learning material (resources), such as computers, desk for the implementation of inclusive education.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

24. The school ensures that the rights of all learners are protected and making sure that all learners are treated fairly and with respect.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

25. The principal and School Management Team (SMT) create a safe, friendly, and welcoming school climate for learners and parents/families as well as staff, one based on collaboration and inclusiveness.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

26. All learners take part in extra-mural activities outside the classroom.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

27. The school makes its building physically accessible to all people.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR FRIENDLY CO-OPERATION IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!

ANNEXURE 2 – LETTER OF CONFIRMATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

24 November 2016

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that the dissertation of Mapiet Junia Alberts was edited by a professional language practitioner. The dissertation was edited using the Track Changes facility, thus giving the author the choice to accept or reject the changes made by the language editor. Although the utmost care was taken in editing the dissertation, the final responsibility rests with the author.
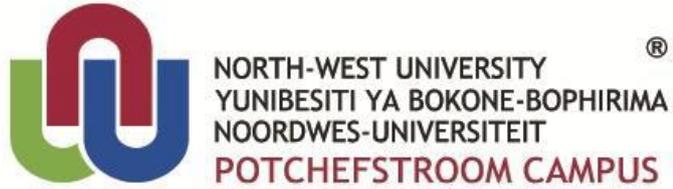
Giselle Linström-Fulton

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ANNEXURE 3 - LETTER OF CONFIRMATION OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom South Africa 2520
Tel: 018 299-1111/2222 Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

Statistical Consultation Services
Tel: +27 18 299 2652 Fax: +27 0 87 231 5294
Email: marelize.pretorius@nwu.ac.za
14 November 2016

To whom it may concern,

Re: Thesis/dissertation/mini-dissertation, Ms MJ Alberts, student number: 213050706, Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein Campus

I hereby confirm that the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University assisted with analysing the data involved in the study of the above-mentioned student and assisted with the interpretation of the results. However, any opinion, findings or recommendations contained in this document are those of the author, and the Statistical Consultation Services of the NWU (Potchefstroom Campus) do not accept responsibility for the statistical correctness of the data reported.

Kind regards

M Pretorius

Statistical Consultation Services

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ANNEXURE 4 - LETTER OF CONFIRMATION OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPAL AREA