CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN TWO MAINSTREAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KLERKSDORP, DR. KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation, **EXPLORING CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN TWO MAINSTREAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KLERKSDORP, DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT,** is my own work and that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in two mainstream schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District. The aim is to describe the challenges experienced by visually impaired learners and how they are truly included in the mainstream school curriculum, to analyse the nature of support as well as the adaptation and accommodation made for learners with visual impairment in the mainstream schools.

I purposefully selected the participants and used semi-structured interviews; observation method was also used to enhance the information collected during the interviews. A qualitative research approach was followed, underpinned by interpretive method as a paradigm. The participants included in two schools in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District were four teachers teaching learners with visual impairment (two from each school), two parents of learners with visual impairment, four learners with visual impairment (two from each school), one specialist (itinerant) teacher designated to assist and support learners with visual impairment in both schools and two principal (one from each school). A total of thirteen participants were involved in this study. The data were audio-recorded for accurate transcription and analysis.

From the research it was found that even though the learners with visual impairment are now physically integrated in the mainstream classes, they are not yet truly included. The teachers are not adequately supported and trained and most of the parents of learners with visual impairment are not involved in their children's schooling. The teaching methods and materials are not adequately adapted for them and the physical environment within the classes and school grounds are not yet truly accessible for them. The school needs resources and change in teachers' attitude; teachers do not understand the rationale behind inclusive education.

Finally, the vision and mission statements of the school were drafted but did not provide a clear and practical guideline towards the inclusion of learners with visual impairment. I hope that the findings of this study will be of valuable use to both schools in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District and to the Ministry of Basic Education with regard to progress in the inclusion of LVI in the mainstream.

Key Concepts: Inclusive education, Mainstreaming, Curriculum, Visual impairment, Inclusion.

LIST OF KEY TERMS, ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APA-   American Psychological Association
APO-   Area Project Office
DoE-   Department of Basic Education and Training
EDS   Education Specialist (Itinerant teacher)
EFA-   Education for All
FSS-   Full Service School
HPCSA-   Health Profession Council of South Africa
INSET-   In-service and Training
IQMS-   Integrated Quality Management System
LOLT-   Language of Learning and Teaching
LTSM-   Teaching and Learning Support Materials
LVI-   Learners with Visual Impairment
NCS-   National Curriculum Statement
NCSNET- National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NTA-   National Teacher's Awards
OBE-   Outcomes Based Education
Quid's-up-Quality Improvement Development Support Upliftment project
RNCS-   Revised National Curriculum Statement
SASA-   South African School's Act
SCCS-   School as a Centre of Care and Support
SDT-   School Development Team
SEN-   Special Education Needs
TLSM-   Teaching and Learning Support Materials
TST-   Teacher Support Team
TUP-   Teacher Upgrading projects
UNESCO- United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The implementation of an inclusive education system in South Africa is part of the significant educational reforms that occurred after the democratic election of 1994. The movement towards an inclusive education system was informed by the outcome of the Salamanca Conference held in Spain in 1994 (UNESCO, 1994). The reforms required that fundamental rights to basic education for all learners should be equal, and consequently addressed the imbalances of the past by focusing on the issues of access, equity and redress (Engelbrecht, Green & Naicker, 1999; Department of Education, 2001).

1.2 BACKGROUND

In 1994, South Africa signed the Salamanca Statement on Principles and Practice in Special Needs Education as a resolution of the conference held in Spain in June 1994. This Statement on Principle and Practice in Special Needs Education (1994) takes this as a step further by stating that:

> every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs. Education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs (Dyson, 2001:02).

The Salamanca statement highlights diversity as a core issue of inclusive education. In South Africa, White Paper 6 on Special Education Needs (SEN) states that "in order to understand the concept of Inclusive Education within the South African

context, one needs to reflect on the history of special education" (Department of Education, 2001:19). There have been changes in the department of education since it was democratized in 1994. One of the goals of these changes was to bring about educational equality among learners, especially within different races, and to build egalitarian society among all South Africans. Under the apartheid policy there were great disparities in educational resources between the white and non-white sections of society.

The new political dispensation brought along changes in the department of education and these affected various education policies. Prior to 1994, the education department comprised eighteen departments, and due to South Africa's restructuring after 1994, they were reduced to two departments, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) which is responsible for primary and secondary schooling, and the Department of Higher Education (DHE) which is responsible for higher education like universities.

In the quest to address the education quality, curriculums also underwent various changes. New policies were introduced, such as Outcomes Based Education (OBE), introduced in 1997and implemented in 1998 in Grades 1 and 7; National Curriculum Statement (NCS) introduced in 2000; Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) 2002 and reviewed in 2009, and the newly implemented Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in 2012.

> The Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) as a new curriculum 2005 was regarded as a useful vehicle for implementing inclusive education in that it is more flexible and makes more allowance for variation in learning rate, pace and style. (Yorke 2008:49)

According to Spady (1994) in Naicker (2007), one of the most important features of OBE is that "it is concerned with establishing conditions and opportunities within the system that enable and encourage all students to achieve essential outcomes.''

Outcomes Based Education was modified, hence the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS).

1.3 EDUCATORS' TRAINING IN IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

For teachers to implement successful inclusion, they need certain skills in order to give the necessary support and guidance to both learners with and without special needs. Staff development with a view of improving inclusive teaching practices should ideally occur on an ongoing basis within the school context and not be limited to random workshops (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:4).The implementation of inclusive education is possible once the school promotes sustainability, alliances collaboration and mutual support. Schools need to encourage direct interaction between equal partners in the system affecting a child with learning barriers.

"The psychosocial environment of the school can either act as a barrier to or an opportunity for learning", according to (Lazarus, Daniel & Engelbrecht (2007:48). The classroom as environment where inclusive education materialises needs to be adjusted to cater for the needs of learners with visual impairment (LVI). Thus there needs to be an opportunity for learning with no obstacles to curb positive inclusion of LVI in mainstream schools.

> The learning support teacher in conjunction with the general education teachers is the integral part in establishing the learning environment and the general classroom needs to provide a safe and supportive atmosphere where all learners are prepared to take risks and learn from their mistakes without being reprimanded or ridiculed (Lomofsky *et al.* 2007:72).

The inclusion of learners with learning barriers in mainstream has never been an easy task; hence there have been contextual factors to curb successful inclusion. Contextual factors include teachers' lack of knowledge, unadjusted environment, and environment which is not user-friendly to learners with learning barriers. This is done by making all facilities available to the community. White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001: 19) states that "even though learners with visual impairment are now physically integrated in the mainstream schools, they are not yet truly included." The teaching methods and materials are not adequately adapted for them and the physical environment within the classes and school grounds is also not yet truly accessible to them.

The teachers are not adequately trained and supported, and not all stakeholders are participating sufficiently to give learners with visual impairment the necessary support within the teaching and learning environment. The introduction of learning support teachers may also play a pivotal role in enhancing learners' true inclusion and thus promote positive relationship within the classroom, school and community. They may "promote social and relationship development by modelling through their interaction and language usage respect for difference, interdependence and conflict resolution skills" (Donald *et al.* 2004:190).

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of inclusion started with the principle of "normalization". This principle of normalization was introduced in Scandinavia in the 1950s and can be defined as "making available to all handicapped people patterns of life and conditions of everyday living which are close to regular circumstances and the way of life of society"(Nirje (1996) in Du Toit, 1996:7).

UNESCO (1994) in Dyson (2001), argues that "the most effective way of creating equal, non- discriminating, welcoming and inclusive society is to start with the youth, making regular school accessible to all children." Different countries

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followed different methods to start the process of including learners with disabilities and other types of barriers in learning in mainstream schools (Dyson, 2001:1).Inclusion is concerned with the "process of increasing the participation of all the learners in regular activities within the culture, curricula and communities of local schools" (Lynch, McCall, Douglas, McLinden, Mogesa, Mwaura, Muga, & Njoroge, 2011). The Salamanca Statement on the Principle and Practice in Special Needs Education (1994) emphasizes that:

> every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs, therefore the education system should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs (Dyson, 2001:2)

Inclusive education is based strongly on a "right perspective" (Dyson, 2001). The Education For All (EFA) initiative states that "Education is a fundamental human right" (World Education Forum, 2000; International Agency Commission, 1990 in Dyson, 2001) and the policy statement on EFA (1993) with its goal of access, equity and equality compels the Minister of Basic Education in South Africa to provide education to learners with disabilities and barriers to learning (Zimba, Mowes, & Naanda, 2006). Inclusion can be implemented at different levels and can be based on "different motives, reflect different classification of special educational needs," and can relate to services in different contexts (Peters, 2007:117).

Inclusive education is the process of strengthening the capacity of ordinary schools to educate all children within their communities (UNESCO, 2009). Therefore capacitating educators with skill development programmes to withstand the challenges experienced by learners is significant, specifically in dealing with those with vision impairment. Furthermore, educator development, in-service training and capacitation play significant roles towards successful inclusion of learners with visual impairment (LVI) as these enable them to face daily challenges and thus alleviate their frustration.

It is important that educators know about the "different eye conditions that impair normal vision of the learners with visual impairment and the effect of such conditions on learners' visual functioning and learning ability" (Landsberg, 2008:332). When learners with learning difficulties are included in mainstream classes, the successful inclusion of such learners depends largely on the educators' training, the quality of support such educators receive, and how confident educators feel about teaching learners with special learning needs (Sadler, 2005:148). To understand and fulfil the needs of a learner with visual impairment, the teacher should know "what risks factors may lead to a visual impairment and the influence they may have on the normal development of a learner" (Landsberg, 2013:364-365). Thus, more enlightened and well trained educators stand a good chance to successfully include learners in a mainstream classroom.

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Prior to1994, the South African government did not focus much on principles of all learning together in terms of race and ability. Much attention was on differences and separation, and this included philosophies of learning and the types of schools children attended. It was only after the democratization of South Africa that the constitution endorsed inclusive education by upholding and enshrining the fundamental principles of human dignity, equality and advancement of human rights. It was also with the advent of democracy (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001) that South Africa became part of advocacy on inclusive education and thus furthered the inclusion of all learners in the education system.

It is further emphasized in the Department of Basic Education's guidelines for full service/inclusive schools to uphold the Salamanca Statement, principle 5. The department reaffirms its belief that:

> Ordinary schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system. (Department of Education, 2010:4)

According to Education Management Information System (EMIS) Educational Statistics (2008), there were 3,764 learners who are partially sighted and 286 learners who are blind in the country in 2008 (Minister of Education: Directorate of Planning, 2008). However, there is a challenge in including learners with visual impairment in the mainstream, because many educators and personnel lack the knowledge to cater for them, according to Swart and Pettifer (2005:17):

> The lack of success in including the learners with visual impairment could be attributed to different factors such as lack of properly trained educators to teach such learners, inefficient teacher professional development, lack of resources, the lack of research in the field, and poor understanding of the disability

However, teachers in the mainstream schools are not well trained and prepared, as they are not qualified to meet the needs and to teach learners with visual impairment as expected by the guidelines in White Paper 6. The lack of a professional development framework makes it difficult for teachers to meaningfully teach learners with visual impairment. According to Swart & Pettipher (2005), staff development with a view to improve inclusive teaching practices should ideally occur on an ongoing basis within the school context and not be limited to random workshops as it is with the current practice.

The focus of this study is the North-West Department of Basic Education and its efforts to prepare teachers as curriculum implementers capable of inducing social change by equipping teaching students with the skills, values and knowledge necessary to adapt, survive and succeed in a constantly changing world. However, according to Bhana, Morrell, Epstein & Moletsane (2006), the North-West Department of Basic Education has neglected the diverse nature of the personal, professional and social contexts within which teachers practise. While there are studies that focus on learners with visual impairment in general (Human, 2010; Jones, 2006), no studies have been found on experiences of learners with visual impairment in inclusive schools in the North-West Province.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION

Against this background the following research question was formulated:

- What are the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in two mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District?

Sub question

- How can learners with visual impairment be supported in mainstream primary schools in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District?

1.7 AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment (LVI) in the mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp,
Dr Kenneth Kaunda District, with the aim of highlighting the specific challenges they experience in their daily classroom activities.

1.8 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND DESIGN

1.8.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Paradigms are central to research design, because they impact on the nature of the research question; that is, what is to be studied. In designing the research study, the principle of coherence can be preserved by ensuring that the research question and methods used fit logically within the paradigm (Delport & Fouche, 2005). According to Merriam (2002), the paradigm of a study provides the frame and the structure of the study, and guides the researcher's actions.

This study was based on the interpretive paradigm. According to Terre-Blanche & Durrheim, (1999:09) interpretive paradigm is "the way of studying human experience through empathetic identification with the individual." Thus, it is essential to understand the experience from the participant's perception. The interpretive paradigm functions on the assumptions that there are no fixed realities; rather people make individual, subjective meaning of the world as they interact with it. These meanings are influenced by an individual's particular cultural, historical and political background (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2005; Niewenhuis, 2007). The researchers seek to understand social members' experience and perception of their situation from the standpoint of their unique contexts and backgrounds. For the interpretive researcher, cause and effect are mutually interdependent; any event or action is explainable in terms of multiple interaction factors, events and processes (Henning, 2005).

Rooted in the interpretive paradigm, the researcher will explore the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in two mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp District.

1.8.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

"Methodology defines how the researcher will go about studying any phenomenon" (Silverman, 2000). In this study the qualitative method was used. It is an inquiry application useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon, which are learners with visual impairment. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed; that is, how they make sense of their world and the experience they have in the world. Qualitative researchers collect data in the form of written or spoken language or in the form of observations, and analyse the data by identifying and categorising themes. Qualitative methods allow the researcher to study selected issues in depth, openness and detail, as they identify and attempt to understand the categories of information that emerge from the data (Lister, Middleton & Smith, 2001).

1.8.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a "plan or a blue-print of how one intends conducting the research" Babbie & Mouton (2003:74). The main focus of the research design is on the end-product and on what the researcher aims to achieve at the end of the study.

1.8.4 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Purposive sampling was employed in this study to select the participants. The participants were selected due to some defining quality that makes them holders of the data needed for the research (Human, 2010).
The guidelines for selection were:

- Two full service/inclusive schools in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District in Klerksdorp area.
- Four teachers teaching learners with visual impairment (two from each school).
- Two parents of learners with visual impairment.
- Four learners with visual impairment (two from each school).

- One specialist (itinerant) teacher designated to assist and support learners with visual impairment in both schools.
- Two principals (one from each school).

1.8.5 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Semi structured interviews; observation and document analysis were used for data collection. The selected data collection technique is significant because participants use the interviews in telling the stories in a microcosm of their consciousness (Greef, 2005); interview is also necessary when we cannot observe behaviour or feelings, or how people interpret the world around them (Merriam, 1998). The semi-structured interviews were conducted for the duration of thirty minutes per participant. By making use of the semi-structured interviews, participants provide the researcher with rich qualitative data with regard to their life experiences (Henning, *et al.* (2005).Permission to use the audio-recording was sought from the participants for data transcripts.

Semi-structured interviews employed in this study are regarded as face to face interviews and are characterised by synchronous communication in time and place. Due to this, interviews can take advantage of social cues, such as voice, the tone and body language of the interviewee. The interviewer can get much information from the value added by the interviewee's verbal answer. The observation method will be used to enhance the information collected during interviews. Observation is a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place (Kumar, (2005). Observation implies seeing as well as observing with other senses (Henning *et al.*, (2005).

1.8.6 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The third technique which will be employed for data collection is document analysis. The documents in this study will be the vision and mission statements of both schools. The vision and mission of both schools will be analysed and be made available to the researcher at the time of classroom observation.

1.8.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The aim of data analysis is to convert the information gathered to answer the research question (Human, (2010). The process of data analysis is "ongoing and takes place throughout the research process." Merriam (1998:162) proceeds by suggesting that "without ongoing analysis the data can be unfocused, repetitious and overwhelming." Thus, it is the process where the researcher brings order, structure and the meaning to gathered data.

Qualitative data analysis is the non-numeric assessment of observation made through participant observation, content analysis, in-depth interviews, and other qualitative research techniques (Babbie, 2007). Data analysis strategies will be carefully considered to ensure that the design is consistent, as the researcher will match the analysis to a particular type of data, to the purpose of the research and the research paradigm (Durrheim, 1999).

The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. All the information obtained from transcribed interviews will be analysed. Data in this study will be analysed by means of content analysis, which, according to Kumar (2005), provides the basis for identifying the main themes that emerge from the responses given. The final stage of analysis involves the identification and interpretation of the dominant themes in each learner's life story and experience.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

This study is not only obliged to adhere to the ethical policy (ethical certificate number **2014October/47898917/MC**) of the University of South Africa, but was also granted permission by the Department of Basic Education. The names of the participants are changed to protect their identity. This study adhered to the research ethical principles namely:

The right to withdraw: The participants were informed about the purpose of the research, expected duration and procedures, their rights to decline to participate, and to withdraw from the research once participation had begun. Duffy (2008) also states that in qualitative research, informed consent is particularly important due to the personal and in-depth nature of the data to be collected.

Anonymity and confidentiality: The Health Profession Council of South Africa's (HPCSA) Code of Ethical Conduct (2008) defines anonymised data as data from which the client cannot be identified by the receiver of the information. In any qualitative study, the ethical issue regarding the protection of participants is of a greater concern. The researcher will address concerns regarding privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. Participants will be informed that their names will not be mentioned; pseudo names will be used. Participants in this study will be asked to give their consent to participate in the research. Parents of learners with visual impairment will be given letters requesting their consent to their children's participation in the research interviews. In this study four learners will be interviewed; that is, two learners from each school.

According to HPCSA (2008), those learners cannot give consent, and also due to the fact that learners with visual impairment are a vulnerable group, I asked them to give assent and their parents to give consent in writing by signing a form. I assured them that all matters resulting from the research would be treated with the greatest confidentiality and the results would never be used to discriminate against and/or diminish the reputation of learners with visual impairment in any mainstream school in the Klerksdorp District.

Finally, adhering to the ethical consideration in dealing with reporting of the end-product of the research, no fabrication and plagiarism were practised. I obtained written informed consent from research participants prior to making the recordings. Once the research was completed, all information was kept in a safe place and only the participants and the supervisor had access to the research data.

1.10 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.10.1 VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

It is a generic term which includes a wide range of visual problems, such as deficit in acuity, visual field and/or eye movement. Visual impairment, as a form of visual disability, has been found to adversely affect learners' academic performance (Engelbrecht *et al.*1999:173). For the purpose of this study, the term visually impaired will be used to refer to those learners with limited light perception, not totally blind but unable to read print, even when a magnifying device is used or when the font is enlarged.

1.10.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

"Inclusive education is the learning environment that promotes the full personal, academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, religion, culture, sexual preference, learning style and language" (Hay, 2001:21). Lomofsky & Lazarus (2001:317) define inclusive education as "the system where all learners have the right to attend the neighbourhood school, which is important for social as well as financial reasons." For the purpose of this study, inclusive education refers to those learners with visual impairment educated at the same time, by using the same teaching methods, same curriculum, the same

teaching and learning environment, and using the same language of learning and teaching (LOLT) as their non-disabled peers.

1.10.3 INCLUSION

Inclusion in education refers to the process of allowing all learners the opportunity to fully participate in regular classroom activities, regardless of disability, race, or other characteristics. It is commonly applied in the field of special education. Inclusion involves providing a variety of activities and experiences so that all students can participate and be successful in the regular classrooms of their neighbourhood school (Stainback & Bray, 2006).

Inclusion refers to "the accommodation of learners with special needs in the main stream without discrimination" (Farrell & Ainscow, 2002:3). For the purpose of this study the term inclusion refers to the incorporation of those learners with limited vision in general community schools in order to address the wide diversity of needs of all learners.

1.10.4 MAINSTREAMING

Rehzaglia, Karvoner, Drasgow, and Stoxen (2003) imply that individuals with disabilities should have a separate placement and enter the mainstream only for the activities that they can perform at the level needed to succeed. Stainback & Bray (2006) refer to mainstream as the placement of students with diverse characteristics into a shared educational setting. For the purpose of this study the term mainstream will refer to those learners who are visually challenged and incorporated in schools with learners who are not visually challenged.

1.10.5 CURRICULUM

Curriculum is a sum of the means by which a student is guided towards attaining the intellectual and moral discipline requisites to the role of an intelligent citizen in a free society. It is a whole spectrum of compulsory and optional activities which are formally planned for students (Carl, 2002). These include all planned activities by an educator which will help to develop learners. These can be extra-mural activities, a debate or even visits to a library (Harley, 1999). For the purpose of this study, the term curriculum refers to all planned formal and informal activities, including oral and written exercises, projects, assignments, research projects, sporting codes, etc., that the learner and the teacher will be engaged in throughout the teaching and learning process.

1.11 CONCLUSION

In this introductory chapter, the background for the study was given. It also outlined the many changes system that have occurred because they were perceived as necessary following the democratic election in April 1994. The chapter proceeded to give the research design and research paradigm, followed by a scholastic review of literature. The chapter was concluded by ethical consideration and clarification of concepts. Chapter two consists of the scholastic review of literature, the purpose of which is to advance the argument of the study as conveyed in chapter one.

1.12 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: The significance and the context of the study are explained. The statements of the problem and research aims are outlined, and a review of key concepts is provided.

Chapter 2: Literature Review on visual impairment (VI), learning and inclusive education is presented.

Chapter 3: The research paradigm, design and methodology for data collection of the study are discussed.

Chapter 4: The research findings, analysis and interpretation are produced and discussed in details.

Chapter 5: Discussion on recommendations, concluding remarks, outline of limitations and strengths and formulation of suggestions on further fields of study.

CHAPTER TWO

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review is the orientation or position that the researcher brings to the study. This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion of the literature consulted, which provides the framework of the study. The study is contextualised from inclusive education framework, an ecosystem perspective. The purpose of this study is to explore the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp area, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.

2.2 THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION

The ecosystemic approach demonstrates how individual human beings and groups of people interact and are dependent on one another in their environment. This approach also acknowledges the idea of Vygotsky that no person lives in a vacuum (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2002). Human beings are embedded in a variety of systems that influence, and are influenced by, them.

According to Donald et al (2007:35), the ecosystemic approach "show(s) how individual people and groups at different levels of society are linked in dynamic, interdependent, interaction relationships." The ecosystem approach is described as the interdependence of organisms in the natural world; it encompasses the combination of ecological theory and system theory (Cooper & Upton, 1990).

The systemic theory describes relationships between human beings and the interactive groups of people in their social context; the systemic theory espouses a view that human values, understanding and actions are influenced by the social

context in which they occur (Engelbrecht, 1999). Donald et al (2007) argue that the systemic approach provides a clearer understanding of the relationship of a school with its different parts such as staff, learners, curriculum and its administration. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory is an example of a multidimensional model of human development. The model suggests that "there are layers of levels of interacting systems resulting in change, growth and development such as physical, social, psychosocial and cultural" (Swart & Pettipher 2013:10). In the field of inclusive education, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development, just like the systemic theory, has much relevance in emphasizing the interaction between an individual's development and the system within the social context.

The ecological model, also called development in context or human ecology theory, identifies five environmental systems with which an individual interacts. This theory provides the framework from which community psychologists study the relationship of an individual's context within communities and wider society. The five systems are microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. The microsystem, which is the layer closest to the child, contains the structure with which the child has direct contact. The microsystem encompasses the relationship and interaction the child has with his immediate surroundings (Berk, 2000).

The mesosystem provides the connection between the structures of the child's microsystem (Berk, 2000), such as the connection between the child's teacher and his parents, between the family and the school, etc. The exosystem involves the links between a social setting in which the individual does not play an active role and the individual's immediate context. Parents' workplace schedules or community based family resources are examples. The child may not be directly involved at this level but he does feel the positive or negative force involved with the interaction with his own system.

The macrosystem may be considered as the outermost layer in the child's environment. This layer comprises cultural values, customs and laws. Cultural contexts include developing and industrialized countries, socio-economic status,

poverty and ethnicity. The child, his parents, his school and his parents' workplace are all part of cultural context. In the macrosystem, members of the cultural group share common identity, heritage and values. The chronosystem encompasses the dimension of time as it relates to a child's environments. Elements within this system can be either external, such as timing of parents' death, or internal, such as physiological changes that occur with the maturation of the child. As the child gets older, s/he may react differently to environmental changes and may be more able to determine more how that change influences him/her.

The shift to Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model (Swart & Pettipher, 2005) was greatly influenced by the way human development, as well as learners in an education system, is portrayed. In the bio-ecological systems approach of Bronfenbrenner there are multiple causes of a barrier, so there are also multiple interpretations that can be made concerning that barrier. The barrier can be viewed as being the visual impairment that disables learners to access the curriculum. This way of looking at the barrier leads to a dead end since there is little that can be done about the impairment, Zulch (2010).

The ecological model however, can therefore also assist us to understand and explore inclusive education as being about the development of a system (e.g. mainstream education system), and the development of the individual, e.g. attitude of teachers within the system (Landsberg, 2013). Therefore the school as a system has educators, learners, parents, and school management team as a subsystem which interact with one another whilst shaping, developing and limiting one another.

Bronfenbrenner's model assists in understanding classroom, teachers, practices, school and family, by viewing them as a system in themselves, in interaction within broader social context (Donald et al 2007). The social context includes both schools as the teaching and learning environment where teaching and learning take place. In this study, the two schools where participants will be interviewed as contextual environment are situated in a semi-urban area. The language of teaching and learning in one school is English and the other is Setswana home language. Both

schools enrol learners who are from marginalized families who depend solely on social grants.

Participants in this study will be learners with visual impairment, parents of learners with visual impairment, one principal from each school, a senior education specialist who works directly with learners with visual impairment and teachers teaching learners with visual impairment.

2.3 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusion, in education, is the process of allowing all children the opportunity to fully participate in regular classroom activities, regardless of disability, race, or other characteristics. Inclusion in South Africa describes the kind of schools, classrooms and assessment procedures which might be characterized as inclusive and support structures, both formal and informal (Stainback & Bray, 2006).

> Inclusive education is learning environment that promotes the full personal, academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, religion, culture, sexual preference, learning style and language (Hay, 2001:21).

Education For All (EFA) is a global initiative, launched at the World Conference on Education for all in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. It is led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO), in partnership with governments, development agencies, civil societies, non-governmental organizations and the media (UNESCO, 2014). At this conference, 150 organizations from 155 countries, including South Africa, agreed to universalize primary education and massively reduce illiteracy by the end of that decade (UNESCO, 2014). The Jomtien world conference endorsed education as fundamental human right and urged represented countries to strengthen their efforts to ensure that the basic learning needs of all were met (UNESCO, 2014).

Inclusive education in the context of Education For All (EFA) goals is complex, hence White Paper 6 has been coupled with EFA to address the complexity of inclusivity. The policy statement on EFA (1993) with its goal of access, equity and equality, urges the Ministry of Education to provide education to learners with disabilities and barriers to learning (Zimba *et al.*, 2006).

Table: 2.1: Difference between inclusion and mainstreaming

MAINSTREAMING	INCLUSION
Mainstream is about getting learners to fit into a particular kind of system or integrating them into this existing system.	Inclusion is about recognizing and respecting the difference among all learners and building on the similarities.
Mainstreaming is about giving learners extra support so that they can fit or be integrated into the normal classroom routine.	Inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as whole so that the full range of, learning needs can be met. The focus is on teaching and learning actions, with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will benefit all learners.
Mainstream focuses on changes that need to take place in learners so that they can fit in. Here the focus is on learner.	Inclusion focuses on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs. The focus is on the adaptation of and the support system available in the classroom.

(Department of Education, 2001:17-18)

2.4 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The concept inclusive education system in South Africa is part of the resolution after the Salamanca conference held in 1994 (UNESCO, 1994). South Africa committed itself to the movement towards quality and equality in education for all, in other words, inclusive education (UNESCO, 1994).Thus, inclusive education in South Africa aims to provide all learners with the opportunity of attending schools that will provide quality education (Donald, 2007).

Prior to the new dispensation there was great disparity in educational systems between black and white societies where black community schools were almost ignored by the then government. Black majority schools greatly lacked support and development, and received limited assistance from the government. Schools of the white minority received resources within a conducive teaching and learning environment (Donald, 1996).

The main objective for the new education system for all, including inclusive education, is to build an egalitarian government which will cater for the needs of all learners irrespective of their race, ethnicity, beliefs and disability. However, putting this in reality, it is significant that learners be priority. Inclusive education can therefore be seen as a vehicle for the creation of equity and quality education (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001).

The successful implementation of inclusive education also needs complete restructuring of the entire education system in such a way that it caters for the needs of learners with learning challenges. The reality of the implementation of Inclusive education will be witnessed only if every part of the education system is adapted to incorporate its values. This is in line with Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory that emphasizes how each system is interconnected with, and depends on, other systems. Therefore if one system fails to make the necessary adaption to cater for its needs, this may negatively affect the other systems, including education systems as a whole.

2.5 LEARNING BARRIERS EXPERIENCED IN CLASSROOM

According to White paper 6,

> different learning needs may arise in the learner not only
> from the visual impairment itself which may hamper the normal
> development of the child from birth but also from negative
> attitude and stereotyping of differences and our inflexible
> curriculum (Department of Education, 2001: 17-18)

In "mainstream schools there are learners who are being ignored unintentionally by our education system" (Soudin, 2006:126), and according to White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001: 18) different learning needs may also arise because of the following, and when not attended can result in learning barriers:

1. An inflexible curriculum;

2. Inappropriate language;

3. Inappropriate communication;

4. Inaccessible and unsafe built environment;

5. Inadequate support services;

6. Inadequate policies and legislation;

7. The non-recognition and non-involvement of parents;

8. Inadequate and inappropriately trained education managers and educators.

2.5.1 An inflexible curriculum.

One of the most significant barriers to learning for learners with special needs is the curriculum. Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001:19) states that:

> central to the accommodation of diversity in our schools, colleges, and adult and early childhood learning centres and higher education institutions is a flexible curriculum and assessment policy that is accessible to all learners, irrespective of the nature of their needs.

In this case, barriers to learning arise from different aspect of the curriculum as stated in Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001:19).

- The content (i.e. what is to be taught);
- Language or medium of instruction;
- The pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum;
- The learning materials;
- How learning is assessed.

The learners with visual impairment need to be considered when the curriculum is drafted to make them beneficiaries of inclusive education.

2.5.2 Inappropriate language

Language can be a huge barrier when learners cannot understand the language of instruction. In two schools where this research was conducted, English and Afrikaans are Languages of Learning and Teaching (LoLT).This is a challenge as most learners don't have either of these languages as their mother tongue. Therefore the language should be such that it enhances the inclusion of learners with barriers which will result in successful inclusion. The learners with visual

impairment depend on language to perform instructions given, as it is a tool for communication.

2.5.3 Space of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum

Curriculum is a strong inclusionary and exclusionary device because it encompasses what is believed to be essential for the children to learn in order to become productive citizens in an inclusive society (Soudien, 2006). Soudien (2006) suggests that "curricula embody the values that we espouse and shape the essence of our teaching-how we teach, what we teach, where we teach." According to Hatlen (2006), learners with visual impairment need an expanded core curriculum in order to accommodate the various barriers to learning that visual impairment brings to education. Hatlen (1996) further argues that the existing curriculum of sighted learners allows learners with visual impairment (LVI) the opportunity to be equal. However, the right to be different implies that they will need additional help and services in order to be truly included.

2.6 INAPPROPRIATE AND INADEQUATE SUPPORT MATERIALS

Inappropriate and insufficient (sometimes total absence of) teaching and learning support materials are serious barriers, specifically for learners with visual impairment. Without teaching and learning support materials (TLSM), many learners cannot cope in the mainstream classes. The availability and accessibility of resource material will enhance learners' participation and contribution in the facilitation of teaching and learning. It is also suggested that learning and teaching support materials be edutainment orientated to enhance more participation in and completion of class activities; the learners with visual impairment comprehend and master the subject content more easily through the use of teaching and learning support materials. For example, in the class where the teacher uses

experimentation teaching methods the teacher may emphasize active learner participation which thus will enhance positive and better understanding.

The use of assistive devices like Braille, voice activated calculators, computers equipped with synthetic and adjustable font, is significant to cater for the needs of learners with visual impairment. "Assistive technology is important in integrating within the classroom for LVI. In supporting an inclusive education movement, obtaining and utilizing assistive technology for learners with visual impairment who would benefit is important." (Marsack, 2013)

2.6.1 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

According to (Knouwds, 2010:35) in Vaughn, Bos and Schumm, (2000) there are "five environmental dimensions that the teacher can modify to maximize the functional vision of learners with visual impairment." These are: colour, contrast, time, illumination/lighting and space (size). In the first dimension the teacher should assess the learners with visual impairment to determine which colours such learners see most easily. In the second dimension, time, learners with visual impairment or even those with low vision take more time to read and complete the assignment, therefore it is important to give them more time to complete their given tasks. This implies that educators need to make use of differentiated assessment strategies to cater for those learners with learning barriers.

In the third dimension learners may benefit from additional or reduced lighting, depending on their specific visual disorder. Learners with retinal detachments will usually benefit from increased lighting and learners with intact cataracts will need variable lighting or lighting from behind (Cox & Dykes, 2001). This dimension implies that learners' sitting position in the classroom is vital, for example too much light or limited light may have a negative impact and obscure their vision.

In the fourth and last dimension, which is space, learners with visual impairment might benefit from moving to and from different positions in the classroom. "A learner with poor distance acuity may perform better by sitting in front row of the class" (Knouwds, 2010:36). The font size of the print is another dimension of shape where some learners with low vision benefit from enlarged print, whereas others may find large print challenging because it does not fit their visual fields.

2.6.2 Inadequate policies and legislation

In order for the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in the North-West province to establish an inclusive education and training system, the policies and legislation for general, further and higher education training need to be reviewed and aligned with the White Paper 6. The implementation will require that all advisory bodies need to provide advice on how to implement the policy that is contained in White Paper 6. Admission policy plays a major role in the admission of learners with visual impairment, as is further explained in White Paper 6 (Education Department 2001:27) that,

> Admission policy will be revised so that learners who are
> accommodated outside of special schools and specialized
> settings can be accommodated within designated full-service
> or other school and settings. Age grade norms will be revised
> to accommodate those learners requiring a departure from
> these norms as result of their particular learning needs.

Schools are also required to have assessment policies as these play a pivotal role in inclusion of learners with visual impairment in the inclusive/mainstream schools. "The teacher should be able to make appropriate use of different assessment practices, with particular emphasis on competence-based assessment and formative use of assessment" (Department of Education, 1998:69).During assessment, learners with visual impairment can be accommodated, for instance,

by giving them more time to complete given tasks. It should be borne in mind that they cannot be assessed in exactly the same manner as those without visual impairment, as their needs are different. Tasks should be modified so that they are accessible to learners with visual impairment; this can only be possible if the teacher is acquainted with all assessment methods and criteria. There are various means of assessment that can be employed in the schools. For instance, tasks can be read orally so that learners with visual impairment can then answer or write down their answer making use of Braille.

Inadequate policy, that is, policies that do not reach the expected level of learners with learning barriers, also hinder maximum participation of LVI. For example, a language policy in school is there to validate the equal status of the languages. While English is the language of instruction, the language policy allows the students to enquire in their mother tongue and aspire to multilingualism. The school is committed to providing as much diversity as possible. Language adequacy acknowledges the transfer of cognitive skills from the mother tongue to English and vice versa, and also the adequate acquisition of an additional language.

2.6.3 The non-recognition and non-involvement of parents

Another important feature in implementing inclusive education is the collaboration of all stake-holders. Lack of parental involvement has a negative impact on learners' academic performance and in extra-curricular activities. Parental involvement not only indicates physical presence in terms of attending school meetings or participating in other school activities such as parent associations; lack of parental involvement can include withholding crucial information about the child's potential and disabilities. According to Roberts (2011:91).

> lack of involvement of parents manifests in parents
> withholding certain crucial information about their
> children as they often fail to avail certain information

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and records needed by the school, health and education professionals

The withholding of crucial information about the child can lead to educators not being able to assist learners regarding diagnosed barriers; thus they may have to have assistive devices in place.

Collaboration between educators, parents, learners, School Governing Body (SGB), and professional bodies (nurses, educational psychologists, counsellors) is at the heart of an inclusive school community. Collaboration between the school personnel and the parents may offer services such as homework assistance that will ultimately result in better performance and improvement of academic results.

Involving parents in their children's learning provides many opportunities for success. Parental involvement not only improves a child's morale, attitude and academic achievement, but also promotes better behaviour and social adjustment (S4): 2012).

In all these instances, family involvement in education helps children to grow up to be productive, responsible members of the society. One of the most important things that parents can do is to support the goals and the process of education in that school. Parent participation enhances a real partnership between the school and the families; then commonality of interest is developed which thus results in better learner performance, and learners stay in school longer (S4).

Henderson and Berla (S4:2012) outline the following benefits of parents and family involvement for students, schools, and the parents themselves:

2.6.4 Student benefits

Studies have documented these benefits for students:

- Higher grades and test scores;

- Better attendance and more homework done;

- Fewer placements in special education;

- More positive attitudes and behaviour;

- Higher graduation rates, and

- Greater enrolment in post-secondary education.

2.6.5 School benefit

Schools and communities also profit. Schools that work well with families have:

- Improved teacher morale;

- Higher ratings by teachers and by parents;

- More support from families;

- Higher student achievement, and

- A better reputation in the community.

As parents become more involved in their child's school, they begin to develop more confidence in the school, which then results in parents participating in all school activities.

2.6.6 Inadequately and inappropriately trained education managers and educators

The Department of Basic Education during 2006, through the service provision of the Sisonke Consortium, embarked on massive training in the schools that were part of the National Field Testing Projects in the implementation of inclusive education. Sisonke Consortium was a "project for the implementation of inclusive education [and was responsible for] the establishment of thirty District Based Support Teams (DBSTs), the development of thirty full-service schools and thirty special schools as resource centres, physical and material resources, human resources development and advocacy." (Roberts, 2011:37).

2.6.6.1 The District Based Support Team

These are groups or teams of staff based at district level. They may be from different departments like health, social service and safety and security, e.g. health specialists (nurse), psychologists, therapists, and from the education department there are itinerant teachers and senior education specialists. The core function of this team is to give support to learners by supporting educators and school management, with a particular focus on curriculum. The District Based Support Team) assists education institutions (including early childhood centres, schools, further education colleges, and adult learning centres) to identify and address barriers to learning and promotes effective teaching and learning. This includes classrooms and organizational support, providing specialized learner and educator support, as well as curricular and institutional development (including management and governance), and administrative support (|Department of Education, 2005:6).

2.6.6.2 Full-Service Schools

Full-service schools are ordinary schools which are specially equipped to address a full range of barriers to learning in an inclusive setting (Education Department, 2008:10), and according to Retief(2006:6), full service schools are seen as part of a wider provision of educational support, especially for learners who experience moderate barriers to learning. Therefore it is vital for the education system to work towards to maximizing full participation of learners with barriers. A full-service school engages itself in the process of inclusion, i.e. increasing the participation of all learners in the school and attempting to remove or reduce the barriers that may inhibit learning and participation.

In developing a full-service school, it might be useful to look into institutional development in relation to different dimensions of inclusion, i.e. cultures, policies and practices as illustrated in Figure 1. Below.
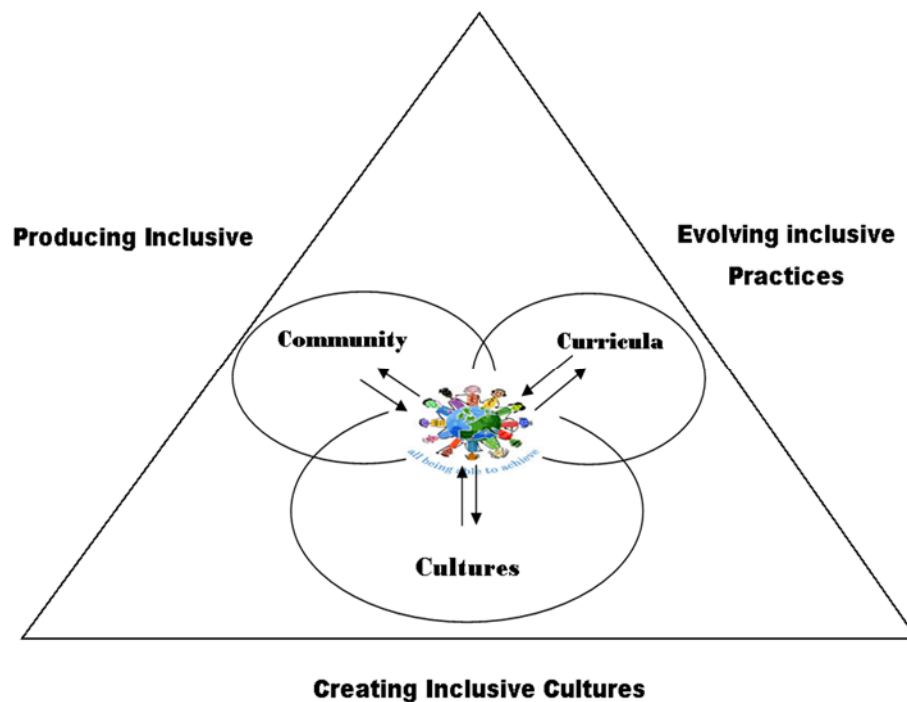
Figure 1: Dimension of inclusion (adapted from Booth *et al.*, 2000)

The heart of the education institution development is the learning site community composed of different stakeholders, including learners, teaching and non-teaching staff. They all interact and participate within the common task of education that is working towards positive inclusion. Participation of all stakeholders, including health practitioners, plays a significant role towards positive inclusion of learners with visual impairment. Each dimension stated in the above illustration should be valued equally as long as it contributes towards a greater inclusion:

2.6.6.3 Creating inclusive cultures.

A foundation for all learning is the creation of an inclusive ethos of the education institution; a secure, accepting, collaborating and stimulating community in which everyone is valued. These principles should guide decisions about policies and moment to moment practices.

2.6.6.4 Producing inclusive policies

Inclusion needs to be the heart of the development process and permeate all policies. Policies related to behaviour management, assessment procedures, organization of support, professional development, etc., need to reflect this. Support is considered to be all those activities that increase the capacity of the education institution to respond to diversity.

2.6.6.5 EvoLVIng inclusive practices

Institutional practices need to reflect inclusive cultures and policies. They are concerned with ensuring that classroom and extra-curricular activities encourage the participation of all learners, and draw on their knowledge and experience outside the site of learning. Inclusive practices encourage educators' creativity, improve their skills and knowledge, and make space and time for sharing, supporting and participation.

2.6.6.6 Resource centre

The Special School as a Resource Centre (SSRC), as described in White Paper 6 (2001) on Special Needs Education, plays an important part. Building an Inclusive Education and Training System in (Education White Paper 6), suggests a radical transformation of the existing system and a new way of thinking. Further, according to Special School as a Resource Centre (Department of Education, 2005), the process of providing support is a dynamic one and makes provision for learners to move to SSRCs for intensive support, and possibly to an ordinary school after receiving this. For example, a visually impaired learner may be required to learn Braille and move back to a full-service school depending on other forms of support required.

2.7 EDUCATORS' TRAINING AND SUPPORT

For the successful inclusion of learners with visual impairment, teachers and school principals are trained through the system called Integrated Quality and Management System (IQMS). IQMS came into being after an agreement had been reached in the Education Labour Relation Council (ELRC) Resolution 8 of 2003) to integrate the existing programmes on quality management in education. The existing programmes were the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) that was in place on 28 July 1998 (Resolution 4 of 1998), and the Performance Measurement System that was agreed to on 10 April 2003 (Resolution 1 of 2003, and Whole-School Evaluation (WSE Policy, 26 July 2001. All three Quality Management Systems were integrated to constitute the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), signed as Education Labour Relation Council (ELRC) collective agreement no. 8 of 2003.

The integrated quality management system is informed by schedule 1 of Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, where the Minister is required to determine performance standards for educators in terms of which their performance will be evaluated. For this initiative, planning for training and development of educators and managers emerged.

Apart from the introduction of IQMS as planning for training and teacher development, the influence of pre-service also concerns self-efficiency about inclusion of learners with visual impairment in mainstream schools. Over recent years, the movement towards the inclusion of learners with visual impairment in mainstream classroom has directed greater attention to how teachers are trained and supported. Commensurate with this has been a growing interest in the way practising teachers and pre-service teachers perceive and respond to these learners with visual impairment (Woodcock, Hemmings & Kay, 2012).

Although professional development remains the most prominent approach to prepare in-service teachers for inclusive education, greater focus has to be placed

on university lecturers and course designers to prepare new teachers for teaching in inclusive classrooms (Van Laarhoven, Munk, Lynch, Bosma, & Rouse, 2007).

2.8 VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

The International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries, and Causes of death, 10th revision (ICD-10), bases its definition of visual impairment on best-corrected vision, i.e. visual acuity obtained with the best possible refractive connection. Visual impairment caused by uncorrected refractive errors is defined as visual acuity of less than 6/18 in the better eye that could be improved to equal to or better than 6/18 by refracting (Resnikoff, Mariotti & Pokharel,2008).

> Visual impairment is a generic term which includes a wide range of visual problems, such as deficit in acuity, visual field, and eye movement. Visual impairment in spite of visual disability adversely affects learners' academic performance (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 1999: 173).

Educators should be aware of the broad spectrum of visual impairment and to be able to identify those learners with visual disability so that they can make better and informed decisions pertaining to the teaching and learning of the learners with visual impairment. This knowledge will empower educators to know where to place the child with visual impairment in the classroom, for instance nearer to or further away from the chalkboard.

The concept of visual impairment is also known as vision impairment or vision loss, and it is a decreased ability to see to a degree that causes problems that are not fixable by usual means, such as glasses (Encarta, 2005). Visual impairment also includes those who have a limited ability to see because they do not have glasses or contact lenses, and may have difficulties with normal daily activities such as driving, reading, walking and socializing.

2.9 CAUSES OF VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

There are five types of eye problems that can cause vision impairment. They are cataract, trachoma, macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma. According to Thomas (2006), these account for 70% of all cases of the sightlessness.

A lack of vitamin A in the diet, almost always associated with malnutrition, is the chief cause of exophthalmia, which is the extreme dryness of the conjunctiva and the more advanced condition known as keratomalacia. One of the devastating effects of severe vitamin A deficiency is cornea destruction and perforation of the eye-ball. It is the major cause of childhood blindness in the developing countries.

Photo Researchers, Inc./Biophoto Associates/Science Source

Eye with Cataract
Senile cataract, pictured here, may cause blindness by obstructing the passage of light. This most common form of cataract usually occurs in people over 50. The only treatment is extraction of the lens of the eye.

Figure 2: Eye with cataract

Lolwana *et al* (2007:286) suggest the following general signs that might help to recognize a visually impaired learner:

> holding head in a strange position or holding material close to the eye, squinting at the chalkboard or complaining of not being able to see what's on it, and persistent redness, continuous swelling, watering, rubbing of eyes.

2.9.1 Cataract

Cataract is opacity, or cloudiness, in the normally clear lens of the eye that interferes with vision. Although regarded by many people as an unavoidable effect of advancing age, cataract may develop at any time in life−even before birth.

2.9.2 Trachoma

Trachoma is an eye disease caused by a micro-organism and is very infectious. "It is spread through direct contact with infected eye, nose or throat secretion or by contact with contaminated objects, such as towels or clothes." (Landsberg, 2010:368) Trachoma is "a contagious disease of conjunctiva (the membrane that covers the pupil and iris of the eye ball) and it is spread by the bacteria Chlamydia trachomatis" (Redmond, 2005). It can be treated effectively with orally administered antibiotic and other drugs, although it may recur.

2.9.3. Glaucoma

Glaucoma, characterized by abnormally high levels of pressure within the eye, initially causes progressive destruction of peripheral vision due to irreversible damage to the optic nerve. Early signs of glaucoma are difficult to detect, and the disease often goes untreated (Redmond, 2005).

In treating glaucoma (Landsberg, 2010:368) "eye drops can be prescribed or an operation can be done to improve the circulation of the aqueous humour between eye chambers", and loss of vision can be restored, but glaucoma cannot be cured.

2.9.4 Macular degeneration

Macular degeneration is a leading cause of severe vision loss, affecting about 25 to 30 million people worldwide. In this order, the macular, the small area of the retina responsible for sharp central vision, is progressively destroyed (Redmond, 2005). Landsberg (2010: 369) argues that the person with macular degeneration has to turn his or her head to the side to see from the corners of the eye, thus disadvantaging those learners who are placed right in front of the chalkboard. Because this is hereditary, genetic counselling is necessary.

2.9.5 Diabetic Retinopathy

The last cause of eye disease is diabetic retinopathy which is a common eye complication of diabetic mellitus, a disease in which glucose or sugar is not properly used by the body, allowing high levels of sugar to build up in urine and in the blood (Redmond, 2006). In treating diabetic retinopathy, laser treatment has proven highly effective in forestalling severe vision loss in certain stages of the disease.
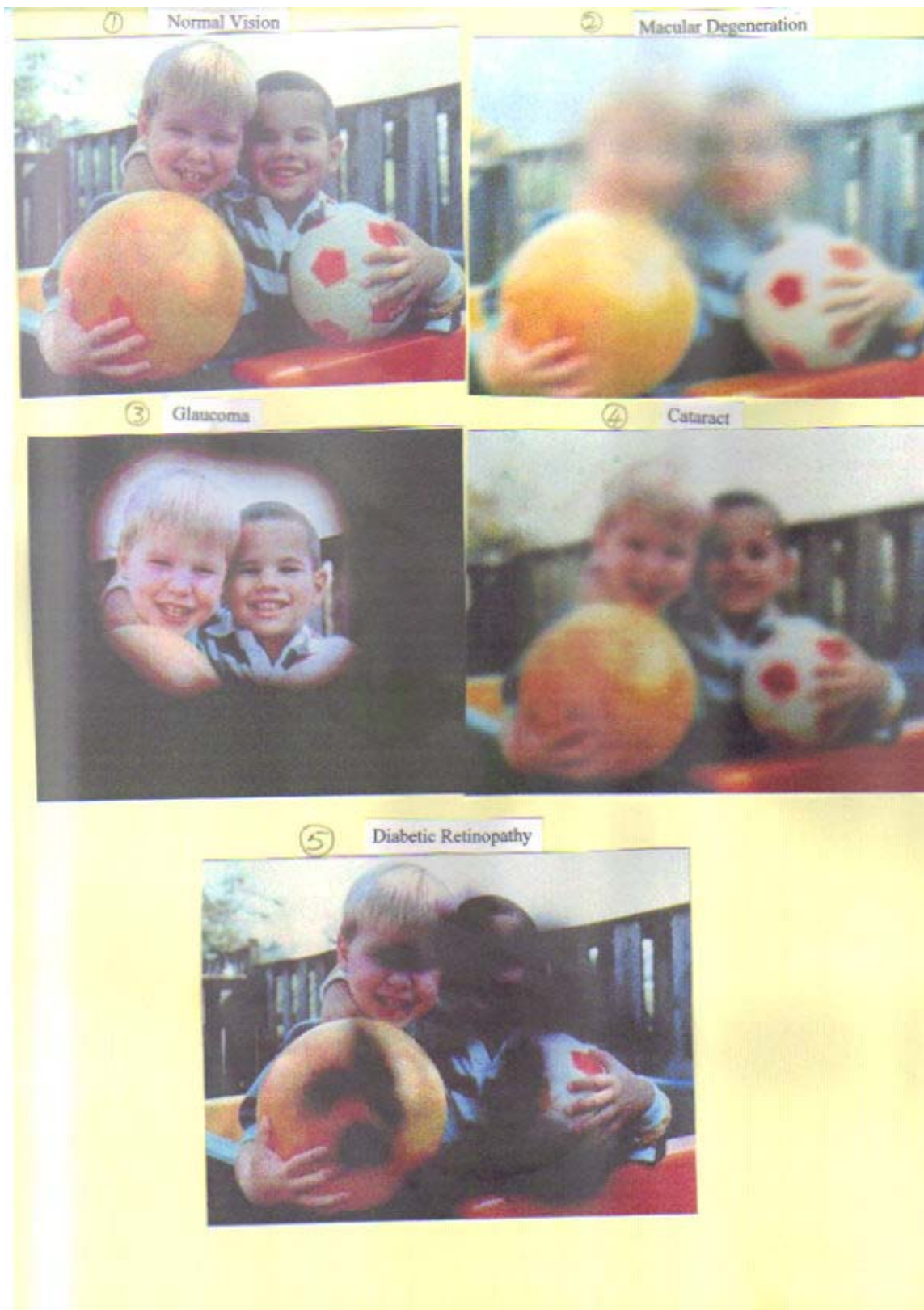
Figure 3: Learners whose vision is impaired

The diagram above represent vision by the learners whose vision is impaired from different angles. Visual impairment could result in poor hand writing, inattentiveness, and losing one's place during reading because of eye discomfort, light sensitivity and dislike of visual tasks.

According to Winkler *et al* (2000:12), there is a variety of causes of visual problems ranging from temporary to permanent, which can cause visual impairment in learners, which will adversely affect their performance at school. Such problems include

- Visual acuity;
- Visual field;
- Poor eye movement;
- Colour perception.

Winkler *et al* (2000:13) continue and state the following three categories of visual impairment.

➤ **Blind:** This term is used for individuals who have no vision at all, or only light or shape perception.
➤ **Low vision:** A learner with low vision can see objects when they are within a few centimetres, but has severe limitations with distance vision, even when wearing spectacles.
➤ **Visually limited/Partly sighted:** Their vision acuity may be anywhere between 20/70 and 20/200. Learners differ according to their visual impairment. The following are causes of visual impairment, (Mason, 1997:2)
- Poor acuity;
- Central vision loss;
- Peripheral vision loss;
- Interrupted vision;
- Low contrast sensitivity;
- Adaptability to light;

- Impaired ocular mobility.

2.10 ADAPTING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND FLEXIBILITY

"Flexibility in a curriculum means that all aspects of the curriculum need to be developed to ensure that the diverse needs of the learners are addressed." (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 2004:51) For the curriculum to be flexible in its true sense, the following aspects must be adjusted according to learners' needs (SA, 2001:19)

- The contents;
- Medium of instruction;
- Class-room organization;
- Teaching methods;
- The space of learning;
- Learning materials assessment.

Curriculum is a sum total of the means by which a student is guided in attaining the intellectual and moral discipline requisites for the role of an intelligent citizen in a free society. "It is a whole spectrum of compulsory and optional activities which are formally planned for students" Carl (1995:35).

The Salamanca conference in Spain, 1994, clearly states that curricula should be adapted to children's needs, not vice versa. Schools should therefore provide curricular opportunities to suit children with different abilities and interests. Learners with visual impairment are learners with special educational intervention needs and should receive additional instructional support in the context of the regular curriculum, not a different curriculum. The guiding principle should be to provide all children, irrespective of their disabilities, with the same education, providing additional assistance to support children who may require it.

Curriculum development is the umbrella concept for the process which is characterised by the presence of phases such as curriculum design, dissemination, implementation and evaluation. "It is an ongoing and dynamic process within which there is a variety of involved person and role players" Carl (1995:80). Effective and flexible curriculum is curriculum that provides a framework for instruction in a specialized set of vision-related skills for learners with impaired vision.

According to Lofomsky *et al.*(2001:312) "a flexible curriculum is needed in order to respond to the diverse needs of learners' diverse potential." In this sense the curriculum needs to accommodate those learners with visual impairment. A rigid and inflexible curriculum will disadvantage learners with special educational needs. In White Paper 6, South Africa (2001:20) "the Ministry asserts that a flexible curriculum across all bands of education be accessible to all learners, irrespective of learners' learning needs."

Maghuve(2003:85) indicates the following alternative approaches to curriculum adaptation and delivery which have been applied to the teaching of blind and visually-impaired learners:

- Setting substitute tasks of familiar scope and demand;
- Replacing one impossible or unfriendly task with a task of a different kind;
- Allowing the learner to undertake the task at a later date;
- Using another planned task to assess more outcomes than originally intended;
- Giving learners extra time to complete the given tasks;
- Using technology, aids or other special arrangements to undertake assessment tasks;
- Using an estimate based on other assessment or work completed by the learner (where the above provisions are not feasible or reasonable).

Teachers, as people in contact with learners from day to day, must be able to know their eye conditions (eye problems that impair normal vision) and the effect of such conditions on learners' visual functioning and learning ability. This knowledge will enable the teacher to know what specific teaching method to use. In cases where the learner needs professional support and intervention, a teacher may invite the senior education specialist to assist with special needs. Visually impaired learners, like any other learners with barriers, have their unique needs. Though it is difficult to meet and satisfy these during teaching and learning, inclusive schools should do whatever is possible to meet the needs in order to reasonably accommodate those LVI.

The most important aspect of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) is the end results, i.e. outcomes. Outcomes are what they should have achieved at the end of the lesson presentation.

- Educators should have high expectations from the learners and all learners should be provided with all the opportunities to develop full potential (is that possible in our present situation?)
- Learners should be regarded and be treated as individuals (can this materialize in our overcrowded classes?)
- The approach may not be seen as a competition among learners but as a means to address various needs and challenges facing us.
- Learners should be developed fully by educators (holistically).

2.11 CURRICULUM AND INCLUSIVITY

Curriculum is a sum total of the means by which a student is guided in attaining the intellectual and moral discipline requisite to the role of an intelligent citizen in a free society. It is a whole spectrum of compulsory and optional activities which are formally planned for students (Carl, 2002). These can be extra-mural activities, a debate or even a visit to a library (Harley, 1999).It refers to all planned formal and informal activities including oral and written exercises, projects, assignments,

research projects, sporting codes, etc., that the learner and the teacher will be engaged in throughout the teaching and learning process.

2.11.1 INEFFECTIVE USE OF LABORATORY EQUIPMENTS SUCH AS MICRO-SCOPES BY LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

It is important for science educators to use a variety of teaching equipment when conducting experimentation for learners in classrooms or laboratories, even though such equipment might not be user-friendly to learners with visual impairment.

It is always important for educators to look out for ways in which to assist learners with barriers to learning when conducting any experimentation, i.e. by checking as to whether all learners can see in the microscope the bacteria or cells that are presented.

The teacher can detect a problem when conducting practical experimentation to learners with visual impairment by always looking out for signals or warning signs such as a learner rubbing eyes, tears running out of the eyes, abnormal blinking of the eyes, and the colour of the whites of the eyes changing from normal to red.

Learners with visual problems cannot complain all the time of not seeing clearly, but the teacher can give learners reports to write concerning experimentation conducted in order to understand how learners respond to the equipment used, and whether the expected outcomes have been achieved or not.

2.11.2 OPTIONS REGARDING TEACHER TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

Teachers who are researchers are aware that education authorities and institutions of higher learning are doing very little to bridge the training gap between regular training and training of educators for learners with special educational needs to include training teachers on how to include learners with visual impairment in the mainstream schools.

Most institutions of higher learning have not introduced courses in the facilitation of learning to blind learners. This implies that those educators are inadequately skilled and remain poorly motivated in teaching in special schools. Mason (2000:45) argues that the norms and standards for the training of educators should acknowledge that it is necessary for teachers to understand the educational needs of learners. In order to do so, educators have to be equipped and be allowed to study specialization in various fields of study within the problems encountered and other factors that affect learners' participation, achievement and assessment.

2.11.3 PERCEPTION TOWARDS VISUALLY–IMPAIRED LEARNERS

Educators with negative perceptions towards blind and visually impaired learners usually lack confidence in their ability to teach these children. Consequently, such educators with a pessimistic attitude and inadequate experience will beget more negative attitudes in such learners. Blind and visually-impaired learners, like any other disabled learner, have their unique needs. Though it is difficult to meet and satisfy these during the teaching and learning mediation of biology, special as well as inclusive schools should do whatever is possible to meet these needs in order to reasonably accommodate learners.

2.12 PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

2.12.1 PERSONAL APPLICATION

- *Emotional issues*: Children with visual impairment or blindness may experience anxiety or depression in response to their disability or to social isolation and rejection which they may experience from their peers.

Recognition of their emotional reactions and appropriate responsive interventions may be necessary with both the child and his or her peers.

- *Acceptance of the use of devices, technology and equipment to assist the child*: Children with visual impairment may feel uncomfortable with the use of technology and thus reject the technology and equipment that have been designed to help them, because they perceive the technology as marking them as different from their peers. They may also become frustrated with the learning curve associated with the learning to use the equipment.

- *Self- concept and self-efficiency*: Children with visual impairment may struggle with low self-esteem or see themselves as helpless and unable to achieve academically and also socially.

2.12.2 SOCIAL APPLICATION

- *Social- behavioural issue*: Children with visual impairment may experience social isolation and rejection from peers, may fail to join with peers because they are not aware of their informal activities, or may not be aware of how they are presenting to their peers. Individual, group or classroom guidance activities can be designed to address specific needs of the individual or the peer group. Teachers can be encouraged to identify specific tasks that the students can do to make positive contributions towards the learning environment.

2.12.3 ACADEMIC APPLICATION

- *Seating in class*: Attention should be paid to the equipment LVI need to use; such equipment should not be cumbersome to other learners. The teacher should also take care with the placement of LVI in the classroom for optimal learning.

- *Interactive teaching methods*: Instructional techniques that promote classroom interaction with peers as well as with course material are especially beneficial. Using the child's equipment in creative ways will help the child learn important material in user friendly manners.

- *Note taking*: Written language may be difficult for students with visual impairment. Laptop computers can be used to take notes in class; voice recording mechanisms can be used to capture teachers' lectures so that information can be reviewed later; peer note takers can be assigned, or the teacher's notes can be printed in Braille for the students' use.

- *Test taking*: Written language may be a struggle for learners who are visually impaired. Teachers may opt to give tests orally, or use a computer so that information can be seen clearly or repeated back to them verbally as assessment for comprehension.

- *Homework assignments:* Pertaining to homework, some equipment available at school may not be accessible to learners at home. Special time before or after school may need to be given to the child to complete given tasks.

2.13 INADEQUATE TRAINING AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Human resource development is very important in implementation of inclusion, especially in learners with visual impairment. Lack of skills, inadequate preparation and insufficient training and experience are the key factors associated with the inclusion of learners with visual impairment in our mainstream schools. Hay *et al.* (2001:214) support this statement by stating that "educators feel that effective pre-service and in-service training is essential for the implementation of inclusion of learners with visual impairment in our mainstream schools."

Kapp (2008: 366) suggests that educators feel that the "training received at colleges and universities in our South African Education system is inadequate and insufficient", especially in incorporating visually impaired learners and in meeting their needs. Without effective and appropriate training educators may experience stress, which will result in low self-esteem, and demotivate educators and other stakeholders in our education system. Such training of educators is based on the supposition that the candidates already possess a recognized qualification for teaching sighted children. "In some instances such candidates in teacher training are also sent to other schools for the blind to observe the teaching there and undergo intensive training" (Kapp, 2008:366).

For the inclusion of learners with visual impairment to be successful, human resource and material resources are important. Human resources include school psychologists, audiologists and school nurses, remedial and occupational therapists. Material resources include buildings and teaching aids, as well as equipment such as magnifying glasses, Braille typewriters and other audio-visual aids.

2.13.1 Assistive technology

The availability of Teaching and Learning Support Materials (TLSM) in our schools enhances, and contributes to, the successful implementation of inclusive education. Profitable utilisation of computer technology in school is essential to compensate inclusivity. In supporting an inclusive education movement, obtaining and utilising assistive technology for learners who would benefit is significant. The term "assistive device"

> means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether
> acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that
> is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of
> children with disabilities(Marsack: 2013:17).

Braille, as indicated in 2.11.1., is still the basic and unique reading and written medium of communication and learning for persons who are blind and those who are partially sighted, "therefore they must learn to read and write Braille at the same time as the sighted begin to read and write" (Landsberg, 2013:379).

Computers play a significant role toward inclusion of visually impaired learners and thus enhance their full participation in learning. Computers can be equipped with screen access software, which allows learners who are visually impaired to navigate the screen, generate and read documents, and surf the internet (Landsberg, 2013:379); then information is converted into voice output.

For partially sighted learners, magnifying glasses can be used if large-print books are not available. Instead of using the ordinary class-work books with dull lines that we are presently using in our schools, parallel lines can be drawn on blank A4 paper with a black pen (dark marker). This will be more visible for learners with visual impairment, especially if they find it difficult to write between the lines.

2.13.2 Educators with stress and negative attitudes

According to McDonagh (2005:336)"it is not the blindness, but the attitude of the sighted people towards people who are blind (that) is the hardest to bear". This was emphasized by Engelbrecht *et al.* (2005:462) stating that:

> many teachers have negative attitudes towards inclusion of learners with visual impairment because they are not taken for in-service training, workshops, and seminars to equip them with knowledge and skills to work with learners with visual impairment.

Most of the negative attitude of educators is owing to lack of knowledge and/or understanding, and if not addressed, this can demoralize learners as well and result in large numbers of dropouts, especially those with visual impairment.

2.13.3 Language barrier

Language is one of the most prominent barriers in South Africa identified by the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET). Language can be a huge barrier when the learners cannot understand the language of instruction. In most schools, English and/or Afrikaans is the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT), and those who speak other languages may find it difficult to understand. Written language may also be a problem to LVI.

For children who are able to see, speech and language development occurs mainly through the integration of visual experience and the symbols of spoken words (Hardman *et al.*, 2005). With adequate support and stimulation from parents, teachers and education specialists, they can largely overcome this barrier, usually around eleven to twelve years of age. In order to enhance this, they need many concrete experiences. Objects can be described in detail to them while they are touching them, and parents and teachers can give running commentary of things happening around them. It is also important that the learners with visual impairment have practical experience in order to understand events that are often learnt visually (Webster & Roe, 1998). This poses a problem again for most learners who do not have English or Afrikaans as their mother tongue (Lomofsky *et al.,* 2001).

2.13.4 Parent-school collaboration

The new education policy framework adopted in South Africa in 1994 considers parents/family-school collaboration as a critical element for maximizing learners' academic achievement. The idea is that "teachers cannot do it alone, without

support of the parents/family" (Raborife & Phasha, 2010:84). On that basis, the concept of school-community collaboration is flagged in major educational policies, the most important of them are the South African Schools Act (SASA) (DoE 1996) and the White Paper 6 on inclusion of learners Special Education Needs (SEN) (DoE 2001).

School-family collaboration is an essential element for learner's academic success. Studies have linked the school-family collaboration to the following aspects: (Raborife & Phasha, 2010:85).

a) Improved learner achievement.

b) Better behaviour.

c) Higher self-concept.

d) More positive attitude towards school.

Collaboration is based on the assumption that education is a shared responsibility between all stakeholders, and most importantly families. Parents play an important often irreplaceable part in their children's progress in school. In many homes in South Africa, there is no culture of learning or even reading (Lomofsky et al., 2001).

In the schools we have homework policies which encourage parents to participate in their learners' work and attach their signature to show that they have seen their children's work. This encourages parents' involvement and they may then become aware of the challenges and progress of their children regarding their school work. Parents should be educated on how to stimulate their children with visual impairment, and to display attitudes of respect and acceptance.

Parents need to be empowered on the behaviour of their children. They must be aware if the child is less interested in his school work, if learners do not play with other learners. Learners who are continuously rubbing eyes, and who are unable to copy work properly from the board, may be identified as LVI. The Basic Education department should avoid using only green chalk-boards; chalk-boards of other colour are essential to learners with visual impairment. Involving parents,

grandparents, businesses and universities can help to make inclusion a reality in a cost-effective way (UNESCO, 2005). The education of children with special educational needs is a shared task of parents and professionals.

2.14 CONCLUSION

This review of literature is an attempt to outline an overview of the development of inclusive education in South Africa. The overview presented the distinction between mainstream and inclusion, learning barriers experienced in the classroom, assessment of learners with visual impairment, educator training and support, causes of visual impairment and adapting curriculum development. The chapter concluded by stipulating inadequate training and human resource development.

Different learning needs arise, not only from visual impairment itself- which may hamper true inclusion - but also from negative attitudes, inflexible curriculum, inaccessible environment, inadequate support services, lack of parental involvement and inappropriate communication (Department of Education, 2001).

In Chapter three, the research design, paradigm and methodology used to gain insight into the inclusion of visually impaired learners in two mainstream schools in Klerksdorp District will be used.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN, PARADIGM AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the research design, paradigm and methodology will be discussed. Specific attention will be given to the paradigm in which the study is embedded, including the plan in which the guidelines are provided to the researcher to conduct the study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between the research question and the execution or the implementation of the research (Durrheim, 1999). Durrheim (1999) describes the research design as a combination of four dimensions: purpose of the research, contents of the research, paradigm which informs the research, and the applicable research technique that will be used for data collection and analysis.

The concept "research design" refers to the planned structure of an investigation used to obtain evidence to answer a research questions (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:31). A design entails an outline and discussion of the procedure that was used for conducting a study, which includes answering the questions when, and from whom the day to day experiences were, and under what conditions the data were obtained.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

In this study, qualitative research methodology was used as the study focused on understanding how participants make meaning of a phenomenon. Qualitative research, according to Merriam (2002), is a multi-method approach to research that aims to study phenomena in their natural settings, trying to make sense of happenings in terms of the meanings people bring to them. William & Trochim (2006) describe qualitative research as "either explicit or implicit, the purpose of qualitative research, the role of the research, stages of the research, and the method of data analysis."

According to Human (2010:9), qualitative researchers collect data in written and spoken language and analyse these by identifying them in themes. Data in this research study will be collected through interviews and they will be transcribed and finally analysed.

3.3.1 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Purposive sampling was used to select participants. Participants were selected because they had characteristics that make them holders of the knowledge/experiences needed for the study. Therefore purposive sampling means selecting participants according to pre-selected criteria relevant to a particular research question (Maree, 2007).

For the purpose of this study, the following participants were selected: four learners with visual impairment (two from each school); two parents of learners with visual impairment (they are parents of the selected learners); four teachers teaching learners with visual impairment and the specialist teacher (itinerant teacher) who is designated to support learners with visual impairment, and two school principals (one from each participating school). Thus, there were thirteen participants selected for this study.

Table 3.1: Participants

Participants	Number of participants
Learners with visual impairment (two from each school)	4
Parents of learners with visual impairment	2
Teachers teaching learners with visual impairment	4
Specialist teacher (itinerant teacher)who is designated to support learners with visual impairment	1
Two school principals	2
TOTAL	**13**

3.3.2 DATA COLLECTION

3.3.2.1 INTERVIEW WITH PARTICIPANTS

O'Donoghue (2007) argues that the qualitative research interview is a conversation with purpose. Interviews allow the researcher to enter another person's world, to understand a person's thinking and reasoning, and inner perspective upon outward behaviour. By making use of interviews, participants may provide the researcher with rich phenomenological data with regard to their lived experience (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smith 2005).

There are four basic data collection procedures: observations, interviews, documents and visual images (Creswell 1994:149). Most qualitative research depends on multi-method strategies to collect data. Multi-method is the use of multiple strategies to collect and corroborate data (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:428. Interviewing was the predominant mode of data collection in this study, but, documents analysis and observation were also used. Merriam (2002) in O'Donoghue (2007) identifies three major types of interview: the structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview. In this study, semi-structured interviews were used because they are face to face, which is synchronized in time and place, therefore can take advantage of social cues such as voice, body language, etc. of the interviewee. The questions in the interview guide will be structured to gather thematic, relevant information around support and collaboration, school culture, and curricula of the main schools used in the research. Interviewing allows the researcher to enter another person's world, to understand a person's inner perspective to outwards behaviour.

In the qualitative research interview the basic aim is to discover the interview's own framework of meanings, and the research task is to avoid imposing on the structure and assumption of the research as far as possible. In a semi-structured interview method the researcher is able to follow up particular interesting avenues that emerge in the interview, but the participant is able to give the fuller picture (Greef, 2005).

Taking into consideration that some of the participants in this study are learners of twelve years of age and younger, and bearing in mind that English is their second language, simple language that is appropriate to their age and within their understanding was used. Participants were allowed to express themselves in their mother tongue.

Interviews were conducted in two schools situated in a black township in Klerksdorp area. The Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in school 1 is English and it

has English speaking educators while school 2's LoLT is Setswana and all educators are Setswana speaking.

Table 3.2: Outline of all the participants and the two schools

	SCHOOLS	TEACHERS	PARENTS	PRINCIPALS	LEARNERS	SENIOR EDUCATION SPECIALIST
SCHOOL 1	1	2	1	1	2	1
SCHOOL 2	1	2	1	1	2	-
TOTAL	**2**	**4**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**1**

An outline of the questions to be posed was given at beginning of the interviews and all participants were notified when, where and how the interviews would be conducted. Interviews lasted for thirty minutes for individual participants, thus allowing them leverage to express uncertainties and have matters clarified. The individual semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and were transcribed by the researcher.

3.4.2 OBSERVATIONS

Observation is the technique of gathering data through direct contact with the object-usually another human being (Polkinghorn (2005). Observation notes were kept and details recorded during observations, including physical surroundings, learners' actions and people's physical characteristics.

Learners with visual impairment were visited for three different days to observe how they engage with their educators in their classroom, also how they interact with other learners (their peers) during free time so as to note how they interact with their peers. Furthermore, the physical environment and media room of learners with visual impairment were also observed. Learners were not informed of the observation due to the fact that they might act differently if they knew that they were being visited.

3.4.2.1 CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

During classroom observation, specific attention was on the following observational characteristics as indicated by Guy (1981:169):

      i)   There is a particular place in the organization.

      ii)   There is a specific group of people.

      iii)   Some activity by the people is evident.

The particular place in which study was conducted was the classrooms of learners with visual impairment (LVI) involving teachers teaching those learners. Specific groups of people to be observed were thus learners in classrooms, and their educators. In order to achieve this, teachers whose classes formed part of the observation were approached to obtain their consent. Those who consented, provided their timetables to allow the researcher to identify suitable dates for visits, which were concealed from the teachers to ensure that teacher did not prepare themselves specifically for the observation. Subsequently the plans of the teacher on which lesson to teach and the teaching methods were not obstructed. The teachers were only informed upon the arrival, which was timed to allow for proper arrangements for the actual observation. In the classroom the observer was introduced as a learner teacher intending to acquire experience in the inclusion of learners with visual impairment.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The aim of data analysis is to transform information of data into an answer to the original research question. Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns among the categories, most of which emerge from the data (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 461). Data analysis is ongoing and takes place throughout the process. To analyse literally means to take apart words, sentences and paragraphs in order to make sense of,

deduce and theorise data (Henning, 2005). The researcher will identify common themes in participants' descriptions of their experience, and their interpretations will be scrutinized for underlying themes and characteristics.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical considerations were of the utmost importance in the study; the participants are learners with visual impairment and thus are described as vulnerable children (Duffy, 2008). In this study, an ethical clearance application was lodged with the College of Education (Unisa) and the permission to collect data was granted **(Certificate number: 2014/47898917/MC)**. Application letters for permission to conduct research in the South African selected public schools were obtained and sent, and permission was granted by the North-West Department of Education as well as the principals of the schools from which the participants would be drawn. The researcher also obtained written consent from the participants through the signing of the consent forms explaining the nature of study, emphasizing the voluntary nature of participation.

The participants need to have knowledge of the nature or the extent of the harm or risks they might be exposed to. They were informed about the research in which the interview was going to be used. The consent forms also clearly stated that the data collected would be treated with confidentiality, and participants' privacy and anonymity would be upheld all times. They were also informed that they might withdraw from the research at any time with no ill effect.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Teachers, itinerant teachers, school based head of departments and the principals are the main implementer of inclusive education, holds the key to its successful implementation. It is they who have to teach and assure each and every learner in

their care. Their challenges are multifaceted. Challenges are the stressors under which so many crumble. Therefore, all mentioned educationists as part of a dynamic and multilevel ecosystem need to have courage and fortitude to work towards successful inclusive education.

In this chapter the research design and methodology were discussed in details. The methods used, for example data collection, selection of participants, interview with participants, observation, data analysis and ethical considerations, were highlighted and fully explained. Data analysis will be discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Data analysis is a process that "entails categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising the data, and describing it in a meaningful manner" (Punch, 1998:166). This chapter provides a discussion of the analysis of the study. The information was gathered from interviews, observation and document analysis in two mainstream primary schools in the Klerksdorp District, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality.

4.2 OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The primary participants in this study were learners with visual impairment in two mainstream primary schools in the Klerksdorp district, their parents, their teachers, one specialist assigned to assist those learners with visual impairment, and the principal from each school.

In this study semi-structured interviews and observation were used as methods of data collection. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with four learners–two from each school in the Klerksdorp area.

Data collected were grouped into main themes and related categories, which were interconnected to the research question of this study. In this data presentation and analysis some of the participants' comments are quoted verbatim in order to illustrate the themes and their respective categories.

4.3 POSITION OF THE RESEARCHER

In such a qualitative study, as a researcher, it is important to explain my position as the researcher in the community in which this study was conducted. The researcher's position in relation to the participants is significant, as it may have an influence on the relevant responses. Participants might refrain from antagonistic engagement with the researcher, because of dual responsibility of the researcher. I worked closely with the school community under the investigation, in particular with the teacher component in the school. Firstly, the researcher is a principal in the Bojanala region, and a member of the Institution Level Support Team (ILST). In his current position, the researcher supports educators in the school who provide training to educators of learners with learning barriers. Therefore even with the research site not being the school where I work, it is possible that participants might know me due to our common interest in education in the region.

Being both a school principal and the chairperson of the aforementioned school's ILST, I may have been perceived as in an authoritative position. In the process some participants may have reverted to a strategy of misleading and impressing me by utterances that they deemed pleasing and/or pleasant for me to hear.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Table 4.1 below represents the themes found in the study. The following themes aimed to answer the main research question of exploring the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in two selected mainstream primary schools in the Klerksdorp district.

TABLE 4.1: Main themes and categories relating to educators' and learners' experiences in classroom

	MAIN THEMES	CATEGORIES
THEME1	Understanding of inclusion	Physical environment Classroom layout Curriculum adaptation
THEME 2	Resources and support from Department of Basic Education and Training	Availability of Human resources In-service training Availability and functionality of ILST
THEME 3	Factors that have negative impact on LVI in mainstream school	Attitude towards learners with visual impairment
THEME 4	Challenges in the implementation of training	Sustainable support from Area and District Offices Specialised equipment
THEME 5	Support and collaboration	Teacher support team Parent-school-collaboration

Data analysis is the process that "entails categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising the data and describing them into meaning full terms" (Punch, 1998:166).After completion of the interviews, a full transcript was made and notes and information collected were organised. This was done immediately after interviews had been conducted, on the same specific day. The data analysis in qualitative research is done descriptively by means of words (Brink, 1997, and Punch, 1998), and in this study findings emanating from the collected data obtained through individual semi-structured interviews are presented.

From here onwards, Participant One i.e. learner number one from school one, will be referred to as L1s1. Participant Two, being learner number two from school one, will be referred to as L2s1. Learner number three from school two will be L3s2 and lastly learner number four from school two will be L4s2.

Teachers who are teaching learners with visual impairment, were also interviewed and they are referred to as teacher number one from school one, which will be written as T1s1. Teacher number two from school one will be T2s1 and teacher three from school two will be referred to as T3s2; similarly, teacher four from school 2 will be T4s2. Learners' parents who were also interviewed will be labelled as P1 (parent one) and parent number two will be labelled as P2. The principal from school one will be referred to as Pr1s1 and the principal from school two will be referred to asPr2s2.

4.4.1Understanding inclusion

Grade seven learners stated in the interview that they had received no orientation session when they arrived at the school in order to familiarize them with the physical learning surroundings. Learner one (L1s1) said:

> L1s1: *Not really, Sir, because we felt like we are bit ignored at school and some of learners were just fine with us.*

When asked whether they received assistance in the classroom, one participant said:

> L1s1: *It might not be all the learners, but some learners would try to help us when we struggle in the classes.*

L1s1 therefore made it clear that there was no form of orientation in the school or assistance in class to familiarize them with their physical surroundings. They were only assisted by some fellow learners.

When L2s1 was asked the same question, he responded that, although there was no formal orientation and induction, as learners they received assistance from other learners:

> L2s1: *No sir, I was assisted by classmates.*

The learners continued and stated that there was no form of assistance in the classroom. The last question the learners were asked to answer was whether they

felt included and accepted. They indicated that they were laughed at and made to feel uncomfortable:

> L4S2: *No. Akere ba ntshega ga go nne monate.*
>
> *(*Translated*: because they laugh at me and it's not nice)*

According to learners, as well as the educators and principals, many of the learners in the school also have a negative attitude towards the learners with visual impairment. Negative perspectives and perceptions often result in prejudice towards LVI.

In responding to the same question, parents indicated that the term "inclusive education" referred to the type of education where learners are just grouped with those who suffer from epilepsy or other related conditions and impairments. They also believe that if there could be sustainable support, learners' academic achievement would be enhanced.

> P1: *Ee rra, ga se yona thuto e go tweng bana ba kopakopanngwa le bana ba bangwe ba ba nang le bolwetse bo ba go wa le malwetsenyanaa mangwe?*
>
> *(*Translated: Yes sir is it not that type of education where learners are mixed or incorporated in one class with learners with epilepsy and or other related diseases?)
>
> P2: *Ee ke mokgwa wa thuto o akaretsang bana botlhe ba ba nang le bokgoni le ba ba bokoa ka kakaretso ke raya gore ngwana a agiwa (in totality).*
>
> *(*Translated: Yes this is the type of education that incorporates all learners with ability and those with learning barriers).

It is clear that P1 did not understand the term inclusive education since she asked whether it was the mixing of learners who were epileptic and those with other related diseases. P2 clearly showed limited knowledge regarding the term. Therefore it is of utmost significance to invite parents when conducting workshops where the general inclusion concept is deliberated. This will encourage parents' participation

in their children's education and acquaint them with any other challenge they might experience. Parents also agree that there will be improvement in their children's education if support is provided in school.

4.4.2 Physical environment

The Department of Education, (2001:29) "has committed itself in providing the necessary infrastructure to establish a comprehensive support system to full-service schools". It is therefore vital to create a conducive physical environment for successful inclusion of LVI.

The principal one from school one (Pr1s1) made it clear that the physical environment of the school is not really safe for learners with visual impairment. The reason for this is that the school was not ready for such inclusion at the time of the interviews.

> Pr1s1: *The school is not geared to accommodate learners with visual impairment.*

The principal (Pr1s1) also indicated that even the playing grounds were not user friendly for (LVI).

> Pr1s1: *Playing grounds... unfortunately the learners with visual impairment are not really catered for. So in the sense then, no we.... there is no real accommodation for the learners with visual impairment.*

It was also indicated by principal 2 from school 2(Pr2s2) that the school was not a safe environment for learners with visual challenges. She made it clear that in the playgrounds no form of adaptation had been made so far:

> Pr2s2: *....in the case of playgrounds there is no adaptation that has been made up to so far.*

It was also articulated by teacher 1 from school1 (T1s1) that the environment did not at all cater for LVI. It was made very clear that physical environment had not been modified towards accommodating LVI, and this was aggravated by the rural environment in which the school was situated.

T1s1: *No, it is not because actually there are no.... The environment is not conducive at all because there are no even fields, even learners who are able…. So for disabled ones it is worse. So they can maybe be involved in accidents.*

According to a Senior Education Specialist (SES), they do have support from the District Based Support Team (DBST), but most of them don't offer help for this kind of impairment. She indicated:

SES: *Yes, we have District Based Support Team whereby whenever there is a problem or learner with a learning barrier like such, we do call them in. We have physiotherapists and other..... and psychologists. But most of them don't help with this kind of impairment, the visual one.*

When a learner was asked whether the external environment (in this instance being a sports ground) was user-friendly, she clearly stated:

L1s1: *No, no, because some of the learners with visual impairment who…. Like some of my friends, broke her leg and cannot walk properly at school, as there are lot of stairs, and (she) cannot walk downstairs.*

From what was uttered by the participants, it is clear that the school environment is not conducive to inclusion. The environment is hazardous to learners and the chances for positive inclusion are very limited. Lastly, the teachers mentioned that the physical environment of the classrooms was also not suitable for LVI; therefore the environment needs to be well organised and nicely arranged to allow free movement, and thus enhance positive inclusion.

In contrast with this, the SES expressed appreciation for the fact that she saw a real inclusion in her environment because most of the LVI were included, and that learners with different learning barriers were actually making progress. She also added that those learners would later in life be able to earn a living.

4.4.3 Curriculum adaptation

Curriculum can be a significant barrier to LVI. According to the Pr1S1 it is not really possible for the teachers to make any adjustments for the learners with visual impairment. She indicated that teachers had to take all learners into consideration and had to teach using the same teaching methods and assessment strategies. Pr2S2 responded by outlining the following:

> Pr2s2: *There is no curriculum adaptation. In terms of school infrastructure, since we have a new building in our school there is provision for wheelchairs and there are stairs.*

The Senior Education Specialist (SES) also responded to the same question:

> SES: *Only concessions, so that learners can be given enough time, so that learners can be given question paper with an enlarged font.*

4.4.4 Resources and support from area and district office

4.4.4.1 Availability of human resources

The availability of human resources refers to skilled and equipped staff to teach and appropriately assist learners with visual impairment. This can include but is not limited to access to teacher assistants that could support the educators in the implementation of inclusion. The shortage of human resources poses a serious challenge for the true inclusion of LVI. Educators indicated that they needed teachers with more expertise who would work with them with learners who needed individual assistance, like itinerant teachers.

Educators in this study raised a concern regarding the lack of provision for the employment of class assistance in their schools (Landsberg, 2005). They strongly believe that such a service would reduce their workload and enhance their flexibility in the provisioning of additional support to LVI. Landsberg (2005) further argues that "assistance plays an important role in the supporting of educators who have to accommodate learners with learning barriers". Learning support assistance can contribute to making inclusion effective for the whole range of learners with special educational needs (Farrell, 2001). In the absence of all these services, the need of additional support for educators becomes cumbersome. Educators made it clear that they did not have these itinerant teachers and they stated:

T4s2: *No, no we don't have those educators who give us that support.*

T3s3: *No assistance teacher.*

T2s1: *No sir, we don't have any.*

The unavailability of assistant educators leaves educators frustrated with regard to inclusivity. A teacher with the necessary expertise, like a senior teacher or itinerant teacher, is vital in the implementation of successful inclusive education.

4.4.4.2 In-service training and learner assistance programmes

Learners 1 from school 1 (L1s1), L2s2 and L3s2, were very negative about the support that they received from the school. All three learners articulated that there was no assistance and only a few learners would try to assist. Yet, they still felt ignored:

L1s1: *It might not be all the learners in the class but some of the learners try to help but still you (learner) feel like a bit ignored in the classes.*

Learner 2 from school 1(L2s1) and Learner 3 from school 2 (L3s2) responded that they did not receive support. However, L4s2 acknowledged some support from the teacher, although not sufficient. This is how they responded when they were asked whether there was support provided to them in the class:

L4s2: *No. no support. Actually a few teachers will try to assist us.*

While the teachers are not equipped to support learners in terms of their visual impairment, the Senior Education Specialist expressed appreciation for the fact that there is a non-governmental organisation called Spec-Savers that helps them with LVI by conducting free eye tests and also donating spectacles where needed.

4.4.4.3 Functionality of institution level support team

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The availability of an Institution Level Support Team (ILST) is vital in the inclusion of learners with visual impairment. According to Pr2s2, there is no functional ILST in their school. Pr1s1 proclaimed that she had requested support from the Area Office, but there had not been any response. The researcher was told the SES was the only one in the relevant area office and had to cater for sixty schools.

The Pr1s1 affirmed that since they did not have an ILST unit in their school, learners did not have diagnostic files, and remarked:

> SP1: *No. As we don't have kind of structure in our school, no, we don't have diagnostic files.*

The Pr2s2 proclaimed that they had an ILST structure, yet it was not functional. However, diagnostic files (files containing leaner's health information) were completed and nurses (health practitioners) did come to screen learners:

> Pr2S2: *Yes they complete it.........*

The Pr2s2 continued to state that diagnostic file still didn't work, because teachers were not given support from the area and district office. She remarked:

> Pr2s2: *...sometimes diagnostic file doesn't work because...the problem lies with us as teacher because parents give us information we need.*

Both principals expressed that they were doing their level best to capture all the necessary information needed from the parents in learners' diagnostic files. However, educators need functional ILST and there is a need for support from the area and district office. They both shared the opinion that as long as there was no support from relevant bodies such as ILST; their schools were not on the way to dealing with LVI.

4.4.5 Factors that have a negative impact on learners with visual impairment

4.4.5.1 Attitude towards learners with visual impairment

McDonagh (2005), in Landsberg (2005:336), laments that "It is not the blindness, but the attitude of the sighted people towards people who are blind that is the hardest to bear." So, it is of paramount significance to accept and to treat those LVI in such a way that they feel they are part of the community. According to L1s1, L2s1 and L3s2 many of the learners in the school have a negative attitude towards LVI. They mentioned that they were often teased, joked about and made fun of. Even though L1s1 mentioned that though some of the learners would treat them very well, there were those who would laugh at and tease them. The LVI told of the negative attitude:

> L1s1: *They treat some of us very good and some of them would make fun of us and make jokes which really make us very uncomfortable because we have problems with eyes.*

> L2s1: *Some are good, but they tease me because I can't see well.*

> L3s1: *Some learners laugh at us, tease and make fun of us.*

Teachers explained that the other teachers had a type of nonchalant attitude, akin to indifference, and they just wanted to brush it away, negate it. Most of the negative attitude of educators is due to a lack of knowledge and understanding. The teacher remarked:

> T2s1: *You see, the attitude of other teachers is just that kind of nonchalant attitude. It's like indifferent and they just want to brush it away. It's one of those things that require too much focused attention and straining and it's time*

consuming so they just push it aside and, you know, go on business as usual. So it's unfortunate...

If this is not addressed, it can be demoralizing to learners and could result in a large number of dropouts – especially from those with visual impairment.

The Senior Education Specialist also indicated in her response that she was concerned about them, since they were actually not taken into consideration. She continued to state that even the eye test that was conducted actually served no purpose, as it ended there:

> SES:*....they are actually not taken into consideration .....*
> *... Educators do not know how to tackle such learners.*

The LVI are integrated, yet do not fully participate in the entire school curriculum. This was further confirmed by the principal, educators, and SES and they remarked:

> Pr1s1: *Our school is really not geared towards the learner with visual impairment. Playing grounds, unfortunately the learners with visual impairment is not catered for......there is no real accommodation for the learners with visual impairment.*

> Pr2s2: *Under curriculum sir, there is no curriculum adaptation. In terms of the school infrastructure since we have new structure in our school there is provision for the wheel chair and there are also stairs. In case of the play-grounds there is no adaptation that has been made up to so far.*

> T1s1: *The problem is that learners are unable to write properly. You can see by the omission in their writing, some*

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words you find they have omitted some words because they
can't see properly. Even their hand writing is not clear, that's
a challenge.

Teacher 2 from school 1 (T2s1) further emphasised that training that they received did not necessarily include inclusive education and that the concept was new in South Africa, so they needed a full comprehensive course on inclusion of learners with leaning barriers. She said:

T1s1: *Inclusive education is a new concept which came in the new democracy and so forth. So for that reason there has to be a comprehensive course for me as an educator, to be able to deal with because those are that relates to other, sometimes it has psychological aspects of, you know, disabilities and that needs special training and skills to deal with that. So for that reason I would like to receive, not a crash course in Inclusive Education, but an actual training in how to handle learners with such disabilities.*

T3s2: *Sport field are not user friendly for learner with barriers......teachers are negative because they did not go in-service training.....No curriculum adjustment.....No specific assessment methods.*

T4s2:*Ga ba kgone. Ga bana dithusa-thuto tse di maleba*

*(*Translated: they are unable, they do not have the appropriate teaching and learning support materials).

The senior education specialist (SES) suggested that since there was no specialised equipment, they could at least help them with concessions to enable them to

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complete given tasks. She also indicated that they might be taken to an eye specialist so that they might get spectacles. She responded:

> SES: *Actually there are no specialised equipments in classes, especially in classrooms where there are learners with such impairment, but at least what can help them is for concessions so that their question papers can be… the report of their question papers can be enlarged. And otherwise they can be taken to an eye specialist so that maybe they get spectacles. That's all that can help them.*

4.4.5.2 Challenges in the implementation of the training

Principal 2 from school 2 (Pr2s2) responded that she had requested support and training from the area and district office and she was informed that there was only one senior education specialist in the area who had to cater for many schools, therefore it was impossible for her to cater for schools individually.

> P2s2*: As a school principal I requested a support from our circuit office and there is no positive response since I was told the Senior Education Specialist is only one in our area and has to cater for about thirty six schools.*

Even though Pr1s1 outlined that there were a few workshops conducted on the inclusion of LVI, the impact is minimal.

> P1s1: *There are some workshops in a very short way. They are not really, really equipping us to understand learners with visual impairment.*

Both principals shared the same sentiment by reporting that the few conducted workshops did not stipulate specifically the accommodation of learners with visual impairment. Therefore it is of vital significance to provide workshops that will equip principals and educators with necessary skills to cater for learners with visual impairment.

It is also imperative to provide more education specialists as Pr2S2 reported that when she requested support from the circuit office, the response was that there was only one Senior Education Specialist who had to cater for more than thirty schools.

4.4.5.3 Sustainable support from Circuit/District office

In an interview with the T1s1, he proclaimed that they hadn't received any support from the Area Office regarding the inclusion of LVI, except for a workshop presented by the department on "the white paper thing". The impression made on the researcher was that educators do not know anything regarding White Paper 6 by referring to it as that "thing". This what he proclaimed:

> T1s1: *No, not at all. I haven't received any assistance except for the workshops that we got from the Department, from a White Paper thing in the workshops.*

The Pr1s1 outlined that there was some form of support that teachers were receiving, but not really anything much he could think of. The principal indicated that there was actually no fruitful workshop on teaching LVI, as classes were overcrowded, which made it impossible to attend to learners individually:

> Pr1s1: *If one can have classes that are really small and you can have maybe resources to include those learners, but in a big school with big classes those learners will definitely fall by the wayside.*

Pr2s2 also proclaimed that she requested support from their area office and there was no positive response, since she was told that there was only one senior education specialist in their area who had to cater for almost sixty schools. This makes it impossible for the education specialist to make some follow ups, even second visits are not that simple. The principal indicated:

> Pr2s2: *As a school principal I requested a support from our Area Office and there is no positive response since I was told the Senior Education Specialist is only one in our area and has to cater plus minus thirty six schools.*

4.4.5.4 Specialised equipment

Learners who are visually impaired require adaptation to the environment, materials and instructions in order to have access to the curriculum. Each learner with visual impairment will have his or her own unique visual needs; therefore specialised equipment is of vital importance towards inclusion of LVI. Educators related that they did not have any specialised equipment, not even magnifying glasses; their classrooms are just normal and ordinary with no special provision for LVI. The other teachers outlined that they were from marginalized and under-resourced community schools:

> T4s2: *We do not have (specialised equipment) especially we people who are under-resourced and from.... who are coming from the disadvantaged community school.*

The Senior Education Specialist also added that there was no specialised equipment, but that they were willing to assist LVI in making concessions so that they might be able to completely respond to their examination questions. She concluded by adding that even teachers did not have specialised equipment.

Unavailability of equipment or resources created a lot of extra work and preparation for teachers, led to them not finishing their work on time and most importantly, they had no training to work with LVI.

Pr2s2 mentioned that there were no resources available in their schools. She gave the example of a teacher writing on the chalkboard where there was no font that could be adjusted, and when the question paper was set, LVI were not accommodated. She outlined:

> Pr2s2: *It is not real and cannot be, because there are no resources available in our schools. For example, if the teacher writes on the board, there is no font that can be adjusted. Again, when the question papers are set they are not…they cannot accommodate the learners with visual impairment.*

4.4.5.5 Support and collaboration

Support in an inclusive setting is called educational support, rather than learning support (Johnson &Green, 2006); therefore it is of paramount importance to bring about educational support to enhance positive inclusion. The term educational support provides for a wider understanding of the word support and refers not only to a learner system, but also the wider system that has an impact on the learner.

It was outlined by L1s1 that there were no support services provided to them, only few learners would try to assist. This is what he uttered:

> L1s1: *No support at all, at times some learners would try and assist us.*

Therefore, it is clearly vital that the circuit office should give support to educators working with learners with visual impairment.

4.4.5.5.1 Teacher support team.

Teacher-support-teams are very important, because they provide a safe haven where teachers can express their frustrations and where they are encouraged, supported and advised (Hallet al, 1999). Pr1S1 said that in the school there was no support such as a teacher-support-team; she continued that they had nowhere to vent their frustration.

Raborife and Pasha (2010:09) also emphasise the support and collaboration by stating that "As the shift towards inclusive education intensifies, the need for schools to work collaboratively with families becomes more necessary for the sake of maximising students' academic successes." Pr1s1 concluded by stating that they did have the ILST, but it was not functional at all:

Pr1s1: *In our school yes we have ILST but it is not functional.*

Principal 2 from school 2 (Pr2s2) stated that in their school they did not have ILST: she outlined that:

Pr2s2: *We do not have that team in our school.*

All educators shared the opinion that they did not receive any workshops or in-service training regarding the inclusion of LVI. This is made evident when they state that they do have ILST structure, yet it is not functional.

Principal 1 from school 1(Pr1s1) and principal 2 from school (Pr2s2) stated that there had been some very brief workshops, but these did not really equip them to understand learners with visual impairment. They also indicated that the workshops that were conducted did not really equip them with the necessary knowledge to cater

for LVI. The lack of functionality of the ILST aggravates the challenge, as it fails to gather information from learners about the visual challenges they do experience.

Responding to the question whether they have specialised/itinerant teachers, the educator remarked:

> T2s1: *Yah, but I have never come across them. I have never seen them or interacted with them. I don't know.*

The teachers made it clear that they had not met any itinerant teachers, nor knew who they are. They merely know that there is an itinerant teacher in their area office.

4.4.5.5.2 Parent-School Collaboration.

According to Westling and Fox (2005), collaboration between educators, parents, learners and professionals (which include nurses, social workers, occupational therapist, speech therapists, and psychologists), is the centre of an inclusive community. It is crucial that all these stakeholders work together towards achieving the positive inclusion of LVI in mainstream schools.
It is also very important for the parents to collaborate with the educators regarding their children's schooling, since they are the experts on their own children (Swart, 2004).This collaboration contributes to the successful implementation of inclusive education. The interview with the P1 revealed that they were not actually much acquainted with inclusive education; they felt that, since our education system was dynamic, it changed from day to day.

It is evident that parents know very little about inclusivity and still believe that it is an education system where all learners are just randomly mixed. When the researcher asked the parent what she understood under the term "inclusive education" she answered:

P1: *Ee rra, ga se yona thuto e go tweng bana ba kopakopanngwa le bana ba bangwe ba ba nang le bolwetse ba go wa le malwetse a mangwe?*

Translated*:* Yes, Sir, is it not that type of education where learners are mixed or incorporated in one class with learners with epilepsy or other related diseases?

The principal from school 2 (Pr1S2) made it clear that they were assisting their learners with homework, and that the school could provide more support if additional teachers with expertise could be employed to work with learners with barriers to learning. Parents strongly believe that if there were continuous support from the area office, learners' results could improve.

Parental involvement in education through the Board of Governors (BOG) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) must be acknowledged (Ijaz& Muhammad, 2011). Their involvement is underpinned by the assumption that they will contribute positively to the learning of their children, and therefore the quality of education will improve and children will attain better results.

4.6 DOCUMENTS

4.6.1 Vision and mission statements

Your vision is your dream. It is what your organisation believes are the ideal conditions for your community; that is how things would look if the issues of importance to you were completely and perfectly addressed. Vision and mission statements are important because they help people to focus and bond together to work towards reaching common goals.

Two categories, which are grouped into themes, emerged from the analysis of the available documentation from the schools.

Table 4.2: Themes related to documents used in the research study

THEMES	CATEGORIES
School (1): Vision and Mission Statement.	**Discussed as a whole.**
School (2): Vision and Mission Statement.	**Discussed as a whole.**

The documents used in this study are the vision and mission statements of both schools. The vision of school1 is to be the preferred school of excellence for every career-minded learner. The vision of the school, as stated by the principal, does not state anything about the inclusion of learners with barriers. She remarked:

Pr2s2: *Yes we have but it doesn't cater for inclusion at all.*

Responding to the question whether they have a functional vision and mission statement for the school, the Pr2s2 confirmed that they did have these, but they containednothing about inclusion. The mission statement focuses on providing quality education for all learners, and the creation of a conducive teaching and learning environment. Lastly it educates learners and the community about good moral values and about the spread of HIV/AIDS. The issue of inclusion is not mentioned in the mission statement. So this means it does not cater for or support the inclusion of learners with visual impairment at all.

Vision and mission both relate to an organisation's purpose and are typically communicated in some form. Mission and vision are statements from organisations that answer the questions about who we are, what we value, and where we are going. As reiterated by Pr2S2, their school's mission and vision statement doesn't augment inclusion of LVI in any way. Therefore, mission and vision statements are

there but serve no purpose. It has been confirmed by Davis R and Stazyk E (2015) that employees who are committed to the organisation's mission and goals are more likely to engage in behaviour such as organisational citizenship behaviour that benefits organisations generally, and are associated with stronger organisation performance. In a nutshell, the mission and vision of the stated school is on the verge of catastrophe when it comes to the inclusion of LVI.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a summary of the analysis of all thirteen interviews was given. The findings of the interviews based on the challenges experienced by LVI in the mainstream primary school in the Klerksdorp area (Dr Kenneth Kaunda District) were outlined.

The five themes namely: understanding inclusion; resources and support from area/district office; support and collaboration: factors that have a negative impact on LVI, and challenges in the implementation of training were discussed. Themes were further divided into categories to make for more coherent understanding and a clearer display of the findings where vision and mission statements of both schools were analysed.

The final chapter provides discussion of findings, concluding remarks and recommendations, and outlines limitations and strengths of the study.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in Klerksdorp area, Dr Kenneth Kaunda district. The relevant scholastic review was described in Chapter two, and then followed by research design and paradigm shift in Chapter three. Chapter four outlined the interviews conducted with learners with visual impairment (LVI), parents of LVI, educators teaching LVI, principals, and the SES. Interviews enabled the researcher to gain valuable information from and pertaining to LVI who are included in the mainstream school curriculum.

This chapter provides interpretation of data collected and conclusions on the main findings of the research, discusses recommendations, outline the limitations and strengths of the study and formulate suggestions for further research. The chapter closes with the researcher's final reflection.

5.2 INTERPRETATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The readiness of educators to implement successful inclusion strategies is still questionable because teachers have not been and still are not trained to work with LVI. Teachers indicated that they have not received any special training to work with learners with special needs in the mainstream, especially learners with visual impairment. Furthermore, participants (LVI) lamented the fact that they were ignored or not considered when registering at their current school. They expressed concern

that they had not been taken for induction in a mainstream school so that they could be familiar with their new school environment. They experienced prejudice, as the environment did not cater for their daily learning needs.

The study therefore found it important to raise school awareness, as this is a crucial element to enable learners with disabilities in general, and in particular learners with visual impairment (LVI) as the focus of this study, to be accommodated in their societies, and subsequently make communities aware of potential they possess.

Teachers stated that a nonchalant attitude brought about negativity in learners with visual impairment which results in feelings of being segregated as they are being referred to as ''they''. The phenomenon of "us" and "them" prevails as divisive between those perceived to have power (able-bodies learners) and the aggrieved (LVI). However, according to Kornat, Marek and Micgiel (2007), the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the full participation of members of the group(s) affected by the policy has to be kept in mind. This involves the inclusion of learners with visual impairment in all matters that concern them in their schools; thus teachers, while perceiving learners as indifferent or uninvolved in the school activities should also check whether learners feel part of the decision making in school, or simply feel like people unable to drive their course. One teacher also emphasised that if the nonchalant attitude was not addressed, it could be demoralizing to learners and might result in a large number of drop-outs - especially those learners with visual impairment.

5.2.1 Understanding of inclusion.

a) Physical environment

The learning environment was pointed out as not user-friendly for the inclusion of LVI. Learners indicated that their learning environment is dangerous, and an example presented during one of the interviews was that of a learner from a particular school who broke her leg because there was no proper pathway, and that

the stairs were difficult to use unaided. One of the principals in this study also highlighted that their schools were not geared for accommodating LVI. The principal emphasised that learners with visual impairment were merely physically placed in the class with the rest of the mainstream learners, and outlined that nothing at all was done to ensure that the physical environment did not hinder their inclusion.

The conditions expressed by both the learners and principals infringe on the learners' right to education and to learn in a secure and safe environment. Such environment speaks different from what was announced by the Department of Education (2001:29) that it had committed itself in providing the necessary physical environment to establish comprehensive support systems within full-service schools. However, as indicated by data collected in this study, learners with visual impairment are not catered for in terms of the building and the infrastructure at large.

It is recommended that the creation of a conducive positive physical environment for successful inclusion of LVI be regarded as vital. The principal and the learners with visual impairment said that the environment was not really "visually friendly", as there were lots of stairs when they had to move from one class to another to attend another period.

b) Classroom layout

Participants described the classroom layout as not conducive to accommodating learners with visual impairment. Participants also indicated that overcrowding is another challenge. Overcrowded classes make it impossible for teachers to attend to LVI individually. The policy of learner-teacher ratio in "normal" schools is 1:40, according to National Norms and Standard for School Funding (2004). This so-called ideal ratio can be too high, as learners with barriers to learning and participations including the LVI should be weighted at a different scale than learners without barriers to learning and participation, according to the National Norms and Standard Funding Policy (2004). It is vital to take cognisance of the fact that learner

enrolment must be considered to avoid overcrowding that may aggravate challenges experienced by educators in inclusion of LVI.

The classroom for learners with visual impairment needs to be user-friendly, as the physical environment should encourage and promote teaching and learning for learners with barriers. Participants also mentioned that classroom layout should be neatly and orderly arranged so that learners can have free movement; even the space between the tables is significant and should not be cluttered. It is thus important that books, magazines and learners' school bags should not be left lying around, as these hinder learners' free movement and thus discourage positive participation. Materials like books, magazines, newspapers and school bags that are lying around and cluttering, may trip learners and cause injury, so it is extremely important to clear the floor to enhance free movement in the classroom.

It is recommended that teachers should be aware of the need for proper seating arrangements for these learners. Proper and sequential arrangements will result in the teacher maintaining eye contact with LVI during any conversation.

c) Curriculum adaptation:

Curriculum development is the umbrella concept for the process which is characterized by the presence of phases such as curriculum design, implementation and evaluation. Curriculum can be a significant barrier to learners with visual impairment. Participants pointed out that it was not possible for the teachers to make curriculum adjustments for the learners with visual impairment because teachers were not trained or skilled on curriculums which would accommodate work with LVI. This is aggravated by lack of teaching and learning support materials. It was also supported by participants stating that teachers had to take all learners into consideration, yet had to teach all learners using the same teaching method and assessment strategies.

It is recommended that the curriculum should be effective and flexible to provide a framework for instruction in a specialized set of vision-related skills for LVI. A rigid and inflexible curriculum will disadvantage learners with special education needs but flexible curriculum will promote and encourage learners' participation, and also participation of LVI. This can be achieved if teacher training programmes, both pre and in-service, offer adequate training where they are taught how to make use of differentiated teaching styles and methods to meet the needs of learners with learning barriers. The training might include aspects like learner-teacher pace accommodation, and professional support forums that are organised at circuit level.

Learners with visual impairment should be provided sufficient time; in other words, concession should be made to enable them to complete their given tasks e.g. class-work, assignments, projects. Those learners who are not high achievers may be given more time to establish the concepts; it is therefore recommended that more time be made available for learners to complete given tasks.

It is further recommended that the curriculum be designed in a manner that accommodates learners with visual impairment; that allows them to enhance their academic maximum participation. The use of differentiated teaching methods enables learners to participate. Using differentiated methods, the teacher uses more than one teaching method which will cater even for those who are visually impaired.

Inadequate and insufficient teaching and learning support material hinders successful inclusion and curriculum delivery. There should be enough provision of teaching materials and equipment to enhance active involvement. Learners with visual impairment need to conduct experiments as they learn through exploring, touching and observing, so it is significant that they make use of teaching and learning support materials.

5.2.2 Resources and support from circuit office

a) Availability of human resources

Human resource development is very important in the implementation of inclusion, especially for learners with visual impairment. Educators feel that training at colleges and a university in South Africa is inadequate, especially pertaining to incorporating LVI (Kapp, 2008:366). According to a Senior Education Specialist (SES), there are six schools that she has to cater for, and that involves travelling, thus making it difficult for her to reach all schools at the set time. The SES agreed that itinerant teachers were also faced with the same challenge; they simply could not reach all the schools for assistance and development.

It is recommended that effective and appropriate training of teachers be done. This may boost their self-esteem and motivate them and other stake-holders in our education system to work with LVI. Such training of educators is based on the supposition that the candidates already possess recognized qualifications for inclusion of LVI. They may, for example, be sent to schools for the blind to observe the teaching there and undergo intensive training.

Regular support and training given by itinerant teachers plays a significant role towards inclusion of LVI. It was disclosed by one of the teachers in this study that they were only trained as educators, and the concept inclusive education was not incorporated in their curriculum. Therefore, it is vital for teachers to be developed in and informed about the concept inclusive education, specifically for learners with visual impairment. Educators' fears and frustrations may be alleviated by regular visits from itinerant teachers, and will hopefully result in positive inclusion.

It is recommended that learning support assistants be established in schools; they can contribute towards making inclusive education effective for the whole range of learners with special needs.

b) In-service training

Educators and principals responded that they received limited workshops and support from the circuit office, and that the workshops provided by the Department

of Basic Education did not develop them to cater for the learners with visual impairment. Learners emphasised that there was no guidance and training for them in their schools; they were rather assisted by co-learners than by teachers. Learners and educators should be made aware of the background on inclusive education. A better understanding of inclusive education may result in educators modelling respect for celebrating diversity within their classrooms, which will enhance the reality of inclusive education.

The training of teachers at universities and colleges, but also in-service, will provide much-needed skills and knowledge, resources and tools on how LVI can best be included in the mainstream school curriculum. Teachers should acquire as much information as possible regarding the inclusion strategies and procedures; they should have relevant information about learners with visual impairment.

Teachers complain that they are not acquainted with the concept of *inclusive education* and thus are pleading for in-service training that will encapsulate the inclusion of learners with visual impairment. This will enable them to screen learners with visual impairment and practise the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) document The SIAS document is aimed at identifying learners with learning barriers, and giving them necessary support (Department of Education, 2008).The implementation of policy on SIAS is significant in the inclusion of LVI. The SIAS document is structured in such a way that it ensures that teachers and schools understand the support needs of all learners to enhance successful inclusion. The policy also outlines a process of identifying learners' needs in relation to home and school context, and to establish the level of additional support that is needed. It is recommended that teachers should be orientated on the implementation of SIAS to maximise support required in schools and in classroom. To enhance learner participation thus results in successful inclusion.

Teachers need to be made aware of and understand that implementing inclusion is a process that can best be learnt in practice. However, they need support on different levels to help them make inclusive education a reality. Not only should the

teachers be trained and made aware of inclusion, "but the learners and parents within the school community should also regularly be informed and updated on details" (Zulch, 2010:114).

It thus recommended that the District Offices should see to it that teachers are given opportunities to update their knowledge through upgrading their qualifications, and through ongoing professional development and in-service training.

The South African Council of Educators (SACE) offers workshops and trainings for the in-service teachers, to equip teachers to deal with challenges they experience in their daily teaching and learning. The workshops and trainings offered encourage educators to further their studies, and empower teachers in relation to labour related matters. Thus the teacher is able to realise the importance of furthering studies in order to face challenges they encounter in working with learners with visual impairment.

c) Availability and functionality of Institution Level Support Team

It is outlined by the Senior Education Specialist (SES) that all schools should have an Institution Level Support Team (ILST) to co-ordinate educator and learner support. According to the guidelines for the implementation of inclusive education (2005), the co-function of ILST is to fulfil the roles of mediator, mentor and assessor. Learners with visual impairment will then be assisted and teachers would be able to assist and promote positive inclusion. The other function of ILST is to support the teaching LVI and learning process by identifying and addressing the needs of learners and teachers, and also institutional needs. The Senior Education Specialist in this study disclosed that there was an ILST, but it was not functional as the committee members were not aware of their duties. She also declared that they had physiotherapists and psychologists, but these did not help them with that kind of challenges.

The institutional level support team should arrange workshops on the National Strategy of SIAS which is aimed at offering guidelines on how to screen, identify, assess and support learners with learning barriers, and thereby improve the teaching and learning environment for maximum participation by learners with visual impairment. This will make it easy for teachers to work with learners with visual impairment.

It is recommended that the District Based Support Team (DBST) should regularly monitor the work done by ILSTs with the aim of supporting them regarding the relevant procedures on how to screen, identify, assess and give support. The ILST should be well informed, as their role may be sensitive when they have to request learners' health information from the parents. At times some parents are reluctant to disclose learners' family information that could be important for filing. Yet, learners' information is important for referrals and should be at hand when requested by health practitioners.

Effective collaboration among professionals is vital in the education system as it could contribute significantly to the functionality of ILST. To ensure effective functionality of the ILST, it is important that continued and quality support and development should be provided to schools in order to enhance positive inclusion. It was also affirmed by the SES in this study that the DBST did not provide sustainable and quality support to schools, therefore it is recommended that the ILST should not entirely rely on the DBST for support. They should form inter-sectoral collaboration teams with relevant stake-holders to address challenges experienced by LVI, teachers and institutions.

5.2.3 Factors that impact negatively on LVI in mainstream schools

Learners mentioned that they are often teased and made fun of in their schools by able learners. It was also outlined that some teachers had a type of nonchalant don't-care attitude. Subsequently it is vital for teachers to be trained to work with

LVI. For the most part, negative attitudes towards different learners manifest themselves in the labelling of learners. Sometimes LVI are placed in a merely classroom because they are labelled as belonging to a category of learners for which a particular kind of educational placement exists.

Learners with visual impairment need to be treated with respect and dignity according to section 10 of the Constitution of South Africa Act NO. 108, of 1996.This notion was also emphasized by the President of South Africa (Jacob Zuma) in his speech on human rights day 21 March 2016, "Human rights should include the rights of all citizens including compatriots with disabilities," and the United Nations declared the 21st March the World Down Syndrome Day in 2011.It is therefore recommended that there should be a series of workshops on awareness for parents and learners with visual impairment.

5.2.4 Challenges experienced in the implementation of training

The Department of Basic Education is "still in initial stage of implementing inclusive education" (Zulch, 2010:113).Since inclusion is a process and not a destination, "it can be expected that there will be more barriers and challenges to be overcome along the way" (Zulch, 2010:113). In the interviews it was realised that stake-holders who participated in inclusive education were not ready yet for the inclusion. It is recommended that they need to go for thorough training and workshops before the concept of inclusive education is implemented.

Establishing teacher-support-team and educator assistance programmes in school might assist educators when they are experiencing frustration, and provide encouragement and guidance (Hall *et al.,* 1999). Thus educators will realize that inclusion is not a destination, but a long drawn-out never-ending process. It is subsequently also recommended that such teams be established.

5.2.5 Support and collaboration

a) Teacher support teams

Findings indicated that collaboration and support received from the circuit and district office to enhance successful inclusion was limited. One of the participants declared that he had not received any specific assistance and support, except workshops that they got from circuit office which did not actually equip teachers with knowledge for inclusion of LVI. Teachers also proclaimed that their training as teachers did not include inclusive education. The concept of inclusive education, which was established in the new democracy, is new to them. The teachers also outlined that there had never been a comprehensive course that could empower them to work with learners with visual challenges. The contributing factor to inadequate support provision relates to the nature of human resource development of both learners and educators, and also to the personnel who provide services to educators. Therefore it is recommended that continuous in-service training be provided to create awareness and equip educators with the necessary skills to deal with the daily challenges of inclusion they experience.

It is further recommended that the education system should promote effective teaching and prevent learning breakdown, and that a system be developed to capacitate educators to overcome barriers which may arise, prevent barriers from occurring and promote the development of an effective learning and teaching environment. This will encourage teachers to work and overcome challenges experienced in working with learners with visual impairment.

Teachers play a significant role in promoting inclusive education; therefore it is important for them to broaden their knowledge on inclusive education. Educators should have knowledge of the needs of learners with visual impairment and initiate remedial procedures and intervention strategies. Teachers may enrol at any of numerous universities to study for a certificate or diploma in Inclusive Education which will assist them in dealing with challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment.

Lastly, teachers indicated that their training as teachers did not involve information on teaching learners with visual impairment. One teacher also mentioned that guidance was needed on how to use flexibility which was inclusive orientated, to make the necessary adaptations to support learners with visual impairment. The organization of workshops to train teachers about the inclusion will boost their morale and encourage them to enhance positive inclusion.

It is recommended that teachers should receive training to develop their knowledge and skills regarding LVI. Adequate, continuous in-service training is necessary to keep teachers informed about the latest practices relating to inclusion of LVI. Gatherings such as Educator Development programmes may be organized to deliberate giving one another support through sharing their daily challenges and their ideas on how they would overcome such challenges.

Pertaining to collaboration, it is vital that working together between social partners, that is educator unions and the Department of Basic Education, should be considered. Social partners may also have an organised programme that empowers teachers pertaining to their daily challenges in the inclusion of learners with visual impairment.

b) Parent-school-collaboration

The active involvement of parents and the broader community in the teaching and learning process is pivotal to effective learning and development. Such involvement includes recognition for parents as major stake-holders in the education process, and primary care-givers of their children. Lack of parental recognition leads to resistance, poor commitment, and reluctant or no participation in school activities.

Parents should be included in all school activities to promote their participation and positive contribution. Stake-holders can, for example, participate in fun days, parents meetings and parents' evenings where they are given reports on learner's academic performance to stimulate and enhance contribution and participation.

Findings affirmed that parents' knowledge regarding the inclusion of LVI in the mainstream needed attention. Parents also felt that workshops on the inclusion of LVI would contribute in providing quality education. Therefore series of workshops should be held to equip parents with knowledge regarding learners with learning barriers and their inclusion in the education process in full service schools. It is therefore recommended that involving parents of LVI in the school through parents' evenings, during fun days, etc., can be helpful for the teachers and learners. This is because parents understand their children; their insights and support will be valuable and can no doubt contribute to a more successful implementation of inclusive education (Swart, 2004).

5.3 VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

Findings show that vision and mission statements of both schools are not inclusive education orientated as none of them mention inclusive education. A vision and mission statement that embraces inclusion will remind the learners and the teachers of the values of inclusive education. It is recommended that the vision and mission statements of the schools should include learners with learning barriers and be reviewed annually to guarantee successful inclusion.

It is also significant that the vision and mission statement of the school should be displayed where it can be seen by all people in the school and visitors to the school. Learners and educators will thus be reminded of their roles in inclusive education, and of the values fundamental to inclusive education. These values include non-discrimination, respect for diversity, and equality for all.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The research study concluded in answering the primary question: *the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in two mainstream primary schools*

in Klerksdorp Area, Dr Kenneth Kaunda district, by making use of semi-structured interviews as a form of qualitative research, observation and the review of documents. Through analysing and describing how learners with visual impairment are included in the mainstream school, the researcher determined that learners are not fully included in the mainstream schools. Learners with visual impairment prefer mainstream schools to special schools, but they are not yet fully accepted by the able-bodied people.

The sub-question- *How can learners with visual impairment be supported in the mainstream primary school in Klerksdorp Area in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District,* was also answered. In responding to the above mentioned sub-question, learners are supported through engaging teachers in in-service training where they are equipped with skills and knowledge to work with LVI. The school also needs all the required equipment to help the learners and teachers to reach their maximum potential. Raising awareness is a crucial element of and contributing factor to the inclusion of LVI in the mainstream schools. From the view of the participants in this research curriculum, adjustments need to be made and differentiated methods of teaching need to be applied to enhance participation of learners with visual impairment.

Placing diverse people with diverse physical abilities and disabilities in one classroom does not automatically close the gap and indicate that inclusion is happening; inclusion will not happen overnight. It cannot be assumed that learners, parents, educators and principals will readily accept inclusion. Such assumption could be dangerous, since some learners are showing negativity and some classroom environments are in fact harmful to LVI. According to educators and principals interviewed, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) did not commit itself to inclusive education before introducing inclusivity. The DBE did not prepare all the stake-holders before the process began to unfold.

After the signing of the Salamanca Statement as result of the Salamanca conference held in Spain in 1992 (UNESCO, 1994), South Africa started to develop policies in order to commence the implementation of inclusive education. The

legislation on inclusion in South African did not provide clear and practical guidelines on the implementation of inclusive education (Zimba *et al.* 2006). As stated initially in Chapter four, all the stakeholders who are to be the drivers of inclusive education were not taken on board as far as development and training is concerned.

The data collected from the participants were categorized into five themes, namely: 1 Understanding Inclusion; 2 Resources and support from Department of Basic Education; 3 Factors that cause negative attitude towards LVI; 4 Challenges in the implementation of training and support, and 5 Support and collaboration.

Vision and mission statements of two schools were outlined; the limitations were revealed and further research possibilities were recommended. The strengths of the process of including learners with visual impairment in mainstream schools in Klerksdorp District were discussed.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The first limitation is that the researcher only interviewed learners who are partially sighted, not learners who are blind. Therefore, this study did not gather a variety of information concerning the inclusion of all different levels of LVI. The study was about learners who are partially visually impaired.

The second limitation concerns the location of the participants in two full service schools in Klerksdorp Area. The learners' experience might be influenced by their environment and the school context.

The third limitation is that teachers could not be observed over longer periods of time in class to establish whether they do indeed promote positive inclusion. Ideally each teacher teaching LVI should be observed for some time to establish which teaching methods, integration and assessment strategies have been implemented.

Although data were collected from teachers, parents, principals and the specialist or itinerant teacher, the participants were limited as a result of, among others, the limited scope of the study. This study thus did not interview a large number of participants to provide for a generalizable study of the unit of analysis. If large numbers of participants had been interviewed, the researcher would have gathered a variety of information regarding positive inclusion of LVI.

5.6 STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

This study can be used as a source of information to design strategies for improving school environment and teacher effectiveness in the implementation of inclusive education peer support. It also created a better understanding of how challenging it is for the school to make a shift from mainstream to inclusion without the participation and help from the entire community.

The study has highlighted that it is important for teachers to be trained, supported and empowered to make them confident in working to accommodate LVI.

The study has also highlighted that creating a conducive teaching and learning environment is crucial in enhancing successful inclusion of LVI in the mainstream. The environment must be user-friendly and should be accommodative for learners with learning barriers.

This study provided the participants with the opportunity to express their fears and frustrations, as well as their hopes pertaining to inclusive education. Through this study the researcher was able to identify areas where improvement still needs to be effected. The study also highlighted the important role that stake-holders should play in enhancing positive inclusion, and concluded that collaboration between the school and the community is vital and leads to addressing the attitude of the whole community towards inclusive education.

5.7 FURTHER FIELDS OF STUDY

Further research can be done within mainstream schools to investigate challenges experienced by teachers teaching learners with visual impairment in mainstream schools. This can provide useful insight into the adaptation and the specialized equipment needed by LVI.

The importance of the role played by itinerant teachers in the implementation of inclusive education in the mainstream school curriculum can be established.

A further study can be conducted in a mainstream school enrolling only learners with visual impairment, thus involving roles played by parents in promoting successful inclusion.

Another further field of study may be investigating curriculum adaptation, teaching materials and classroom practice in the successful implementation of inclusive education in special schools.

A research study can be undertaken, exploring the attitude of able-bodied learners towards people with disabilities, and the awareness-making can effect changes in

attitude, especially in South Africa where inclusion is fairly new and people are unsure of what it entails in work with people with disabilities.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LETTER TO REQUEST PERMISSION FROM NORTH-WEST DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2571

15 January 2014

The Executive District Manager

North-West Department of Education

Teemane Building

Potchefstroom

2520

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH PROJECT IN TWO MAINSTREAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KLERKSDORP AREA, Dr K. KAUNDA DISTRICT.

I *Mokwena Morelle,* MEd Psychology of Education student at the University of South Africa, wish to apply for permission to conduct research in the Department of Education, North-West.

The research will be conducted in two schools in Jouberton, Klerksdorp District. The names of the schools are Thea-Morafe and Sediko Primary Schools. The topic of

the research is: ***The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp**, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.*

The study does not intend to interfere with learners' time and tuition; thus it will be conducted after school. The following people will be interviewed: parents of learners with visual impairment, learners with visual impairment, teachers who are teaching learners with visual impairment, and education specialists who have been assisting those learners with visual impairment.

The researcher will use non participatory observation to enhance the understanding of the context. The observer will minute any behaviour or events that are relevant to the research question being investigated.

The study aims to highlight, and thus assist in understanding, how learners with visual impairment can be included in our main stream education system.

It also aims to equip educators and the principals with knowledge so as to be able to face and overcome challenges in the inclusion of learners with visual impairment in our mainstream schools. The research might also improve the functionality of school- based support teams in schools.

I hope my application will be taken into consideration.

Yours faithfully

M Morelle

Cell number: 0789530800.

Student number: 47898917

Supervisor: Dr R. Tabane

education

Lefapha la Thuto la Bokone Bophirima
Noord-Wes Departement van Onderwys
North West Department of Education
NORTH WEST PROVINCE

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DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT
SENIOR PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT MANAGER

27 January 2014

M Morelle
Student Number: 47898917
University of South Africa

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON "INVESTIGATING THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN MAINSTREAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS" THEA-MORAFE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND SEDIKO PRIMARY SCHOOL, KLERKSDORP AREA OFFICE - DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT

The above matter refers.

Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct your research at Thea-Morafe Primary School and Sediko Primary School, Matlosana Area Office - Dr Kenneth Kaunda District under the following provisions:

➢   **the activity you undertake at the school should not tamper with the normal process of learning and teaching;**

➢   **you inform the principal of your identified school of your impending visit and activity;**

➢   **you provide my office with a report in respect of your findings from the research; and**

➢   **you obtain prior permission from this office before availing your findings for public or media consumption.**

Wishing you well in your endeavour.

Thanking you

MR H MOTARA
DISTRICT DIRECTOR
DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT

cc   *Mr S S Mogotsi – Area Manager: Matlosana*

APPENDIX 3: CERTIFICATE

H C Sieberhagen   *Translator and Editor*

SATI no 1001489   *082 3359846*

Hettie.Sieberhagen@nwu.ac.za

018 2994554

CERTIFICATE

Issued on 04 June 2014

I hereby declare that I have edited the language of the application

The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in the mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District

Submitted by

Mokwena Morelle, Student number 47898917

H C Sieberhagen

SATI no 1001489

ID 4504190077088

APPENDIX 4: LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOL

3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2574

29 January 2014

The Principal/Teachers

Primary School Jouberton

Klerksdorp

2571

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN THE SCHOOL

I **Mokwena Morelle,** student at University of South Africa College of Education, wish to apply for permission to conduct research at your school.

The topic of the research is: **The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp**, **Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.**

The research will be conducted through interviews, and thus permission is required to conduct interviews with selected teachers and learners in your school. The participants envisaged to be part of the study will be those who meet the following criteria:

-Two teachers from your school involved in teaching learners with visual impairment.
-Four learners with visual impairment.

In addition to the participants, I humbly request the permission to look at school documents such as the vision and mission statement of the school as they might assist and further enrich my study.

This study will strive to maintain good research practice in terms of confidentiality and anonymity, therefore information about the school and personal information of the participants will not be compromised. Furthermore, participants will be informed that participation in the study is voluntary and that they have a right to withdrawal from the participation in this study without reprisal.

The researcher will use non participatory observation to enhance the understanding of the context. The observer will minute any behaviour or event relevant to the research question being investigated.

The research findings will benefit teachers during meetings, colloquiums, workshops, conferences and seminars.

It will assist teachers, school based support teams and other concerned stakeholders in understanding how to work with learners with visual impairment and, where possible, how to included them in mainstream education system.

Thanking you in advance

Cell Number: 0789530800.

Student no: 47898917.

Supervisor: Dr R. Tabane

APPENDIX 5: ETHICS APPROVED LETTER

UNISA | college of education

Research Ethics Clearance Certificate

This is to certify that the application for ethical clearance submitted by

M Morelle [47898917]

for a M Ed study entitled

The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in the mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District

has met the ethical requirements as specified by the University of South Africa College of Education Research Ethics Committee. This certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue.

Prof VI McKay
Acting Executive Dean : CEDU

Dr M Claassens
CEDU REC (Chairperson)
mcdtc@netactive.co.za

Reference number: 2014 OCTOBER /47898917/MC   22 OCTOBER 2014

APPENDIX 6: LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL. SCHOOL (A)

Thea Morafe
Primary School

LINGWA A A MOLEMO

Enquiries: Mrs M L Mpeqeka/Mr O Persutam
Tel: (018) 465-5283 • Fax: (018) 465-5351
e-mail: mimthea@telkomsa.net

P O Box 8011
Jouberton
2574

Date: 03/02/2014
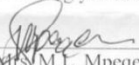
Attention: Mr Morelle

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT AT OUR SCHOOL.

On behalf of the SGB, teachers and parents of the school, I would like to inform you that permission has been granted for you to conduct a research at our school on condition your promise of not interfering with learner tuition will be standing for the duration of the research.

We wish you well in your studies.

Thanking you in advance

Mrs M.L. Mpeqeka
Principal

THEA-MORAFE PRIMARY
SCHOOL
P.O. BOX 8011
JOUBERTON
2574
TEL: 071 688 8931
FAX: 071 689 0263

Mission Statement

To uplift the standard of education by instilling life skills providing good morals and quality education through educating and serving the learners and the community with loyalty.

APPENDIX 7: LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM SCHOOL (B)

SEDIKO PRIMARY SCHOOL

15756 LETLHABILE STR/ PO BOX 8007
EXTENTION 15, JOUBERTON
TEL/FAX: 018-466 0929
E-MAIL: 600101902@nwed.gov.za

ENQ: MT BOTILE (072 186 9983)

12 May 2014

TO: Mr, M Morelle

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SCHOOL

Permission is hereby granted to conduct your research at Sediko Primary School, Matlosana APO, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District and that:

* The activity should not tamper with the normal process of teaching and learning.

Regards

MRS. MT BOTILE (Principal)

NORTH WEST DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
8007, JOUBERTON 2574

2014 -06- 0 6

email: 600101902@nwed.gov.za
TELEFAX: 018 466-0929
SEDIKO PUBLIC SCHOOL
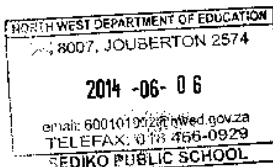
APPENDIX 8: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Principal

3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2571

03 February 2014

The Principal

Primary School 1

Address

Klerksdorp

Dear Sir/Madam

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I *Mokwena Morelle,* student at University of South Africa, College of Education, seek your voluntary consent to participate in this interview. My research title is: ***The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.***
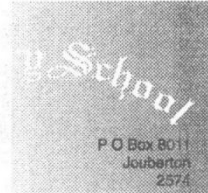
The purpose of the study is to explore the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in the mainstream school. Your participation in this study involves minimum of 30 min interview answering questions on your perception about the experience of educators in including learners with visual impairment in the mainstream school. The interviews will be audio-tape recorded with your consent. You are assured of your right to withdraw at any time should you wish to do so.

Any information which is shared with me will be completely confidential and will only be made known with your permission or as required by law. You are also assured of the confidentiality of your response through the use of pseudonyms. The participant will remain completely anonymous. The information will be kept in a safe place. Besides myself, only my supervisor will have access to the information. There will be no harm to you as participants.

The research findings will benefit teachers during colloquiums, workshops, conferences and seminars on inclusion. The research might also improve the functionality of school-based support teams in primary schools.

I …………….................................., give informed consent to participate in this study.

Signature ………………………….

Thank you for your attention

Yours sincerely...........................

Cell Number: 0789530800. Supervisor:

Student No: 47898917

Dr R. Tabane

APPENDIX 9: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Teacher

3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2571

03 March2014

The Teacher

Primary School Address

Klerksdorp

Dear Sir/Madam

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I, **Mokwena Morelle,** student at the University Of South Africa College Of Education, seek your voluntary consent to participate in this interview. My research title is: ***The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.***

The purpose of the study is to explore the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in the mainstream school. Your participation in this study involves answering interview questions on your perception about the experience of educators in including learners with visual impairment in the mainstream school. The interviews will be for maximum 30 min and will be audio recorded with your consent. You are assured of your right to withdraw at any time should you wish to do so.

Any information which is shared with me will be completely confidential and will only be made known with your permission or as required by law. You are also assured of the confidentiality of your response through the use of pseudonyms. The participant will remain completely anonymous. The information will be kept in a safe place. Besides myself, only my supervisor will have access to the information. There will be no harm to you as participants.

The educators and the learning support educators will be selected based on their experienced of teaching learners with visual impairment. Data will be collected through interviews and the use of audio-tapes will be permitted by the participants. The interviews will be conducted for the duration of 30 minutes per participant

The research findings will assist teacher during colloquiums, workshops, conferences and seminars for inclusion. The research might also improve functionality of school-based support teams in primary schools.

I …... give informed consent to participate in this study.

Signature ………………………….

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

……………………………………

Student Number: 47898917

Cell Number: 0789530800.
Student No: 47898917.
Supervisor: Dr R. Tabane.

APPENDIX 10: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Principal

<div align="right">

3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2571

03 March 2014

</div>

The Principal

Primary School Address 2

Klerksdorp

2571

Dear Sir/Madam

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I, ***Mokwena Morelle****,* student at University of South Africa College of education, seek your voluntary consent to participate in this interview. My research title is: ***The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream-primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.***

Your participation in this study involves maximum 30 minutes interview on your perception about the experience of educators in including learners with visual impairment in the mainstream school. I will try not to disrupt your daily activities and thus an appointment will be made at your convenience. Other participants that were purposefully selected due to their lived experience and expertise includes learners,

teachers, the school's principal from another selected school and one education specialist from the district.

During the research, the participants will be informed about the topic, the purpose of the study, the entire research process and how interviews will be conducted. The participants will also be informed about the duration of their participation, and that their interviews will be audio recorded. The participants will also be assured that, if they agree to participate, they have a right to withdraw at any time should any discomfort arise or should they wish to do so. The confidentiality of their response is guaranteed through the use of pseudonyms. There is no harm, and risk is anticipated.

The research findings will assist teachers during colloquiums, workshops, conferences and seminars about inclusion. The research might also improve functionality of school-based support teams in primary schools. The two school principals will be interviewed preferably in the afternoon or at time of their convenience.

I ….. give informed consent to participate in this study.

Signature ………………………….

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely.................................

Cell Number: 0789530800.
Student No: 47898917.
 Supervisor: Dr R. Tabane.

APPENDIX 11: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Parent

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT (consent to your child to participate in the study)

<div align="right">

3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2571

03 March 2014

</div>

The Parent

Primary School Address

Klerksdorp

Dear Sir/Madam

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I, ***Mokwena Morelle,*** student at University of South Africa College of education, seek your voluntary consent for your child to participate in this interview. My research title is: ***The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream-primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.***

Your child was selected to participate in the above mentioned study. Your child's participation in this study involves participating in a 30 minutes interview and maximum 20 min interview answering questions on his/her challenges and perception about his/her experience in inclusive schooling. Your child's schooling will not be disrupted as permission from the school and the district was sought. Furthermore arrangements for the interview will be done with the school. Other participants that were purposefully selected due to their lived experience and

expertise include other learners, teachers, the school's principal and one education specialist from the district.

During the research, the participants will be informed about the topic, the purpose of the study, the entire research process and how interviews will be conducted. The participants will also be informed about the expected duration their participation, and that their interviews will be audio recorded. The participants will also be assured that, if they agree to participate, they have a right to withdraw at any time should they wish to do so. The confidentiality of their response is guaranteed through the use of pseudonyms. There will be no harm, and no risk is anticipated. The interviews will be conducted under a close work relationship with the teachers and the district psychologist therefore should any discomfort arise as a result; the learners will be attended to by the district psychologist.

The research findings will assist learners, teachers during meetings, workshops, conferences and seminars for inclusion. The research might also improve functionality of school-based support teams in primary schools. All the participants will be requested to sign confidentiality agreement.

I …................................. give informed consent for my child to participate in this study.

Signature ………………………….

Thank you for your attention.

Cell Number: 0789530800.
 Student No: 47898917.
 Supervisor: Dr R. Tabane.

APPENDIX 12: LETTER OF INFORMED ASSENT

 3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2571

03 March2014

The Learner

Primary School Address

Klerksdorp

2571

Dear Learner

LETTER OF INFORMED ASSENT

I am a student at UNISA and I am interested in knowing more about visual impairment and how you as a learner in this school learn, what the problems that you meet along the way are and also what you think can be done to improve condition for learners who are visually impaired. The title of my study is: **The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream-primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.**

I would like you to assist me with this study and agree to take part. As a learner who will be helping me, your name will not be used and therefore people will not know who said what. I will use false name so that what you said cannot be linked to you. I have also asked your principal, teachers and parents for them also to help me and take part. The information that comes from this will help me understand better the how learners with visual impairment learn and also what are the suggestions that can improve their learning.

Any information which is shared with me will be completely confidential and will only be made known with your permission or as required by ethics clearance. The participant will stay completely anonymous. The information will be kept in a safe place and me and my supervisor will have access to the information. The participants will not divulge information to others outside the group.

I would like you and the other two learners from the other school that I have asked to help me as well as to sit and talk as a group and also I will like to ask those learners to have a talk with me on one-on-one so that I can understand some of the points that could have been said in a group. The group talk will last for 30 minutes and the one-on-one talks will only last for 20 minutes. We will make arrangements with the principal and your teachers so that we do not disturb you school time. I will like you to know as well that should you at any time during our like to stop, you can do that. All the participants will be requested to sign confidentiality agreement.

During the focus groups, all four participants will be asked not share or talk about information shared in the group to others outside the group. The focus group will last for 20 minutes. Transport for participating in this study will be arranged for you as well as learners.

The method of collecting data will be semi structured interviews. All four learners will be interviewed at school A and the time will preferably be at their convenience and not to interfere with their learning time.

I …... give informed assent to participate in this study.

Signature ………………………….

Yours sincerely.....................................

Cell Number: 0789530800.
Student No: 47898917.
Supervisor: Dr R. Tabane.

APPENDIX 13: LETTER OF INFORMED ASSENT

3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2571

03 March2014

The Learner

Primary School Address

Klerksdorp

2571

Learner

Dear learner as part of the group talk, I would like you to read and sign the form below so that we all know that what we talk in a group is confidential and will not talk about it outside the group.

GROUP TALK/INTERVIEW ASSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I_____ grant consent/assent that the information I share during the group discussions (focus group interviews) may be used by the researcher, Mokwena Morelle for research purposes. I am aware that the group discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent/assent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to share any information that is shared in the group discussions to any person outside the group in order to maintain confidentiality.

Participant's Name (Please print):

Participant Signature:

Researcher's Name: (Please print):

Researcher's Signature:

APPENDIX 14: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

3 Dina Street

Meiringspark

Klerksdorp

2571

03 March2014

Itinerant educator

Dear Sir/Madam

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I, **Mokwena Morelle,** student at the University Of South Africa College Of Education, seek your voluntary consent to participate in this interview. My research title is: ***The challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in mainstream primary schools in Klerksdorp, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.***

The purpose of the study is to explore the challenges experienced by learners with visual impairment in the mainstream school. Your participation in this study involves answering interview questions on your perception about the experience of educators in including learners with visual impairment in the mainstream school. The interviews will be for maximum 30 min and will be audio recorded with your consent. You are assured of your right to withdraw at any time should you wish to do so.

Any information which is shared with me will be completely confidential and will only be made known with your permission or as required by law. You are also assured of the confidentiality of your response through the use of pseudonyms. The participant will remain completely anonymous. The information will be kept in a safe

place. Besides myself, only my supervisor will have access to the information. There will be no harm to you as participants.

The educators and the learning support educators will be selected based on their experienced of teaching learners with visual impairment. Data will be collected through interviews and the use of audio-tapes will be permitted by the participants. The interviews will be conducted for the duration of 30 minutes per participant

The research findings will assist teacher during colloquiums, workshops, conferences and seminars for inclusion. The research might also improve functionality of school-based support teams in primary schools.

I …... give informed consent to participate in this study.

Signature ……………………….

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

………………………………

Student Number: <u>47898917</u>

Cell Number: 0789530800.
Student No: 47898917.
Supervisor: Dr R. Tabane.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE TO: THE PRINCIPAL

1. What is your understanding/opinion of the concept of inclusive education?

2. What is your view on the inclusion of learners with visual impairment in the mainstream?

3. Is there currently any form of training and support that teachers are receiving regarding the inclusion of learners with visual impairment? Please explain what makes you feel like that

4. What support do you receive from the Area Office regarding the inclusion of learners with visual impairment?

5. How have the following aspects been adapted to enhance true inclusion of learners with visual impairment?

   a) Curriculum

   b) School infrastructure

   c) Playing grounds

6. Do you have an ILST (institution level support team) unit in your institution? If Not what do you have for support?

7. Does your ILST complete a diagnostic profile for your learners with visual impairment?

8. Is your ILST educating other stakeholders on the way of dealing with learners with visual impairment in your school?

9. Does the school have a vision and mission statement that promotes inclusion? What does it say?

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT.

1. Did you receive any inductory session when you arrived at your school in order to familiarise yourself with the learning physical surroundings? Tell me about the entire progress.

2. Is there any assistant who helps you in the class?

3. Do you have sighted friends in school? How many? Why Not? Please explain how this makes you feel.

4. Is there any form of support provided to you in your class? Please explain what makes you feel like that.

5. Tell me more about your experiences in the mainstream school.

6. What is the attitude of your peers in classroom activities; how do they treat you?

7. Is there any form of assistance, guidance and training in the school for you? Please explain what makes you feel like that.

8. Do you get any form of assistance and guidance from your parents at home? Please explain further, why do you say that?

9. Do you participate in after-school and weekend activities? If yes, which ones and why? And if not, why not? Which activity would you like to participate in?

10. Do you find the external environment (sports ground and assembly) of your school user-friendly for learners with visual impairment? Please explain what makes you feel like that.

11. Do you feel included and accepted? Please explain what makes you feel like that.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: PARENTS OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT.

1. Have you heard of the word 'Inclusive education'*? Then if they don't know I will explain to them in detail.*

2. Do you think there would be improvement in your child's education progress if support were provided in school? Please explain what makes you feel like that.

3. What form of assistance do you give to your child when homework is given?

4. Do you think your child will improve academically if there is more support from the school? Please explain what makes you feel like that.

5. How do you think the school can be more supportive to help your child to cope with his/her studies?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: TEACHERS

1. Explain how you understand the term inclusive education?

2. What is your attitude towards the concept of inclusive education? Why?

3. Have you received any form of assistance from the Educator Assistant Programme (EAP), or any training with regard to working with learners with visual impairment (LVI)?

4. If yes, what form of support do you receive?

5. If no, what form of support would you like to receive?

6. Do you have an itinerant teacher in your district that assists with support to LVI? If yes, what kind of support do you receive. If not what do you do for support?

7. What are the challenges, in the classroom and on the sports field or with extra-curricular activities, with which you are faced, teaching LVI?

8. What do you think of other teachers' attitudes towards working with LVI? Expatiate.

9. How has the content of the curriculum been adapted for LVI?

10. Is your teaching and learning physical environment conducive for the placement of LVI? Elaborate.

11. We all know that LVI are learners who need more time during assessment. How do you accommodate this?

12. Do you have any specific method or approach in place to assist their assessment? Please explain if yes or no.

13. Do you have any specialised equipment for LVI in your classroom? What type of specialised equipment do they use if you have any and if now what do you use?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: SENIOR EDUCATION SPECIALIST (SES).

1. Do you think teachers and learners really understand the concept "inclusive education" and its implications? Please explain what makes you say that.

2. Had learners already attended induction programmes when they were admitted in school?

3. What was your initial attitude towards learners with visual impairments (LVI)? Why?

4. What specialised equipment is available? Name and describe each.

5. Do teachers teaching LVI know how to use the special equipment available in school? Please explain what makes you feel like that.

6. Is there any form of Educator Support Service (ESS) from the department of education in your district? Please explain.

7. What adaptations have been made to the curriculum in order to accommodate LVI?

8. Do you see any real inclusion in your environment, or just a mere placement of learners with learning barriers? Please explain what makes you feel like that.

9. Is there any form of professional support, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), involved in the inclusion of LVI? For example occupational therapists, educator's assistant programme (EAP), counsellors, etc. Please explain what makes you feel like that.

APPENDIX B: A SECTION OF A TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW

LEARNER 1 SCHOOL 1

RESEARCHER: Did you receive any introductory session when you arrived at your school in order to familiarise yourself with the learning physical surroundings? And tell me about the entire progress.

SCHOOL 1 LEARNER 1: Not really, sir, because some of the learners felt like we were ignored at school. But then some of the learners, yah, they were just fine with us.

RESEARCHER: Is there any form of assistance or any assistant who helps you in the class? Like when you are in the classroom, is there any form of assistance that you normally receive?

SCHOOL 1 LEARNER 1: It might be, it might not be all the learners in the class but some of the learners try to help but still you feel like you are a bit ignored in the class.

RESEARCHER: Oh, you mean, a bit ignored. Okay. Alright. Now tell me, do you have sighted friends in school, meaning that the learners with a little bit of problem with the eyes, visually impaired, like you?

SCHOOL 1 LEARNER 1: It's a few of them at school.

RESEARCHER: Okay. Are they in the same class as you?

SCHOOL 1 LEARNER 1: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Is there any form of support provided to you in class?

SCHOOL 1 LEARNER 1: There is a bit of support from…provided but not really because sometimes some of the learners would make fun of us, sir.

RESEARCHER: Can you tell me what they do? What do they do to you?

SCHOOL 1 LEARNER 1: They tease us and make fun of us in class because sometimes we cannot see far in papers, we wear glasses mostly.

RESEARCHER: Okay. Do you normally wear…use magnifying glasses like when you read or when you are unable to read from the chalkboard?

SCHOOL1 LEARNER 1: Yes, magnifying glasses, sir, when we are unable to read from the chalkboard.

RESEARCHER: What is the attitude of your peers in classroom activities, and how do they treat you?

S1L1: They treat, some of us treat us very good and some of us would make fun of us and make jokes which really make us very uncomfortable because we have problems with our eyes.

RESEARCHER: Alright. Is there any form of assistance, guidance and training in the school for you?

S1L1: Well, there is some form of assistance but not guidance and training in the school.

RESEARCHER: Oh, can you tell me what form of assistance you get?

S1L1: Some of the learners would assist us in reading, sitting with us in the same table and teaching us how to read properly in the books.

RESEARCHER: Oh, yah. As you are in Grade 7 now, do you get any form of assistance and guidance from your parents at home?

S1L1: No, no, sir.

RESEARCHER: So you don't have any form of assistance from home. Do you participate in after school and weekend activities? If yes, which ones and why, and if not, why not? Which activities would you like to participate in?

S1L1: We sometimes at the weekend participate in activities such as netball, because at home sometimes you feel a bit ignored. So as we see some of the learners who are at school, we go there and be together to play the activity.

RESEARCHER: Alright. And last but not least, do you find the external environment that is the sports ground, where you play your netball and assembly of your school, user-friendly for learners with visual impairment?

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S1L1: No, not.   Because some of the learners with visual impairment, who…like some of my friends, broke her leg and cannot walk properly at school as there is a lot of stairs, and cannot walk down the stairs.

RESEARCHER: Okay.   The last question, do you feel included and accepted?

S1L1: Partly.   Not all the time, sometimes but not always.

RESEARCHER: Okay.   Thank you for this interview, thank you very much.

S1L1: Thank you, sir.

LEARNER 2 SCHOOL 1

RESEARCHER: Leaner 2 school 1, did you receive any introductory session when you arrived at your school, in order to familiarise yourself with the learning physical surroundings?   Tell me about the entire progress.

S1L2: No, I was assisted by classmates.

RESEARCHER: Is there any assistant who helps you in your class?

S1L2: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Alright. Do you have sighted friends in your school?

S1L2: Yes, but we have few of them.

RESEARCHER: Is there any form of support provided to you in your class?

S1L2: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Tell me more about your experience in the mainstream school.

S1L2: Ignorance with [inaudible 00:10:16.3].

RESEARCHER: What is the attitude of your peers in classroom activities and how do they treat you?

S1L2: Some are good but they tease me because I can't see well.

RESEARCHER: Is there any form of assistance, guidance and training in the school for you?

S1L2: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Do you get any form of assistance and guidance from your parents at home?

S1L2: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Do you participate in after school and weekend activities? If yes, which ones and why? And if not, why not? Which activities would you like to participate in?

S1L2: No, but I like, I like soccer but I can't play well.

RESEARCHER: Oh, you can't play soccer well. Do you find the external environment, that is sports ground and assembly for your school user friendly for learners with visual impairment?

S1L2: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: The last question, do you feel included and accepted? Not at all? Alright. Thank you very much, learner, for availing yourself in this interview. I do thank you very much for that. Thank you so much.

LEARNER 3 SCHOOL 2

RESEARCHER: Did you receive any introductory session when you arrived at your school in order to familiarise yourself with the learning physical surroundings? Tell me about the entire process.

S2L3: No, I was assisted by classmates.

RESEARCHER: Is there any assistant who helps you in class?

S2L3: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Do you have sighted friends here in your school?

S2L3: Yes, sir, but few.

RESEARCHER: Okay. There are a few...And then, is there any form of support provided to you in your class?

S2L3: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Tell me about your experience in the mainstream school.

S2L3: Ignorance, bullying, teasing. Ba bang ba go tshwenya and like selo seo se nkutlwisa botlhoko (some harass you and such hurts me)...

RESEARCHER: What is the attitude of your peers in the classroom activities and how do they treat you?

S2L3: Some are good but they tease me because I can't see well.

RESEARCHER: Is there any form of assistance, guidance and training in the school for you?

S2L3: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Do you get any form of assistance and guidance from your parents at home?

S2L3: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Do you participate in after school and weekend activities? If yes, which ones and why? And if not, why not? And which activities would you like to participate in?

S2L3: No, I like to play netball but I can't play well.

RESEARCHER: Good. If you…did you find any external environment like sports ground, netball court for your school user friendly for learners with seeing or problems with your eyes?

S2L3: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: The external environment is not user friendly. Do you feel included and accepted in your school for learners with visual impairment?

S2L3: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Thank you very much for availing yourself into this interview. And then I appreciate your presence, thank you very much.

LEARNER 4 SCHOOL 2

RESEARCHER: Did you receive any introductory session when you arrived at your school in order to familiarise yourself with the learning physical surroundings?

S2L4: There are no introductory sessions, there are only signs and directors to the toilets and admin blocks.

RESEARCHER: Is there any assistant who helps you in the class?

S2L4: No. Some assist us at break times, during break times.

RESEARCHER: During break times. Alright. Number 3, do you have sighted friends in school?

S2L4: There are few in the class.

RESEARCHER: There are a few of you in your class. Is there any form of support provided to you in your class?

S2L4: No, no support. Actually a few teachers will try to assist us.

RESEARCHER: Okay. Will that be during break or during your normal class, in your classroom?

S2L4: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Tell me more about your experience in the mainstream school.

S2L4: Some learners laugh at us, tease and some make fun of us.
RESEARCHER: What is the attitude of your peers in the classroom activities and how do they treat you?

S2L4: As I said, they will make fun of us and tease us.

RESEARCHER: The next question, is there any form of assistance, guidance

and training in the school for you?

S2L4: No, sir.

RESEARCHER: Not at all?

S2L4: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Do you get any form of assistance and guidance from your parents at   home?

S2L4: Sometimes mommy will help me to do my homework.

RESEARCHER: Okay. It's only your mommy who helps you with doing your homework?

S2L4: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Okay. Will that probably happen in the afternoon, in the evening when you are at home?

S2L4: Sometimes.

RESEARCHER: Good, thank you. Number 9, do you participate in after school and weekend activities? If yes, which ones and why?
S2L4: Sometimes I would play netball but because some girls will make fun of me, I feel out.

RESEARCHER: Okay. That makes you feel bad?

S2L4: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Alright. Number 10, do you find the external environment like sports ground and assembly for your school user friendly for learners with eyes challenges?

S2L4: Not so much.

RESEARCHER: Not so much. This brings us to the last question. Do you feel included and accepted in your school?

S2L4: No. *Ga ke re ka gore ba ntshega and ga gona…ga go nne monate*

(the thing is, because they laugh at me and there is no…it's not nice).

RESEARCHER: Yes.

S2L4: Ee (yes) *so ke fila out, ga ke (feel accepted) ka gore ba tlabe ba tshega* (I feel like the odd one out, I do not feel accepted because they would be laughing at me). So, most of the times, no.

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL NO 1.

RESEARCHER: Madam, thanks for availing yourself to come to these interview sessions. Now we're going to start with question number 1. As a school Principal what is your understanding or opinion of the concept of Inclusive Education?

S1P1: Okay, Inclusive Education, as I see it, is the education that includes all learners with barriers, being maybe visual impairment or hearing impairment or even the slow learners, that is my opinion of...

RESEARCHER: What is your view on the inclusion of learners with visual impairment in the mainstream? Your own view, how do you view the inclusion of those learners?

S1P1: If one can have classes that are really small, and you can have maybe the resources to also include those learners, but in a big school with big classes those learners will definitely fall by the wayside.

RESEARCHER: Is there currently any form of training and support that teachers are receiving regarding the inclusion of learners with visual impairment?

*S1P1:*Yes, I think there are some workshops here and there given but not really anything that I can think of, that we have had that training with learners.

RESEARCHER: Thank you, madam. Let's go to the other one. What support do you receive from the area office regarding the inclusion of learners with visual impairment?

S1P1: Like I said, there are some workshops in a very short way. It's not really, really equipping us to understand the learner with visual impairment.

RESEARCHER: How have the following aspects been adapted to enhance

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the true inclusion of learners with visual impairment? Curriculum, school infrastructure, playing grounds. You can start with the first one and then come to the other one, that's school infrastructure and playing grounds.

S1P1: Okay, the curriculum is standard. We are doing the CAPS so there is no real difference, they don't differentiate between the normal learners and the learners with visual impairment. So then according to the curriculum it's the same. School infrastructure, again, our school is really not really geared toward the learner with visual impairment. Playing grounds, unfortunately the learner with visual impairment is not really catered for. So in a sense then, no, we…there is no real accommodation for the leaner with visual impairment.

RESEARCHER: Okay, thank you, ma'am. Shall we go on? Do you have ILST that is Institution Level Support Team unit in your institution? This is a group of people who specialise in engaging learners with visual impairment. Do you have that team in your school?

*S1P1:*No. We don't have that team, no.

RESEARCHER: Does ILST, that is Institution Level Support Team, complete that diagnostic profile for your learners with visual impairment?

*SP1:*No. As we don't have kind of a structure, no, we don't have a diagnostic profile.

RESEARCHER: Is your ILST that is Institution Level Support Team, educating other stakeholders on the way of dealing with those learners with visual impairment in our school?

S1P1: That would also be no.

RESEARCHER: Does the school have vision and mission statement that promotes inclusion? What does it says?

S1P1: We do have kind of a vision that we would like to promote inclusion but in reality executing it.

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL 2

RESEARCHER: What do you understand or what is your opinion about the concept of Inclusive Education?

S2P2: According to me, Inclusive Education is about acknowledging that all children can learn and they also need support. And again, that all learners are different and have different learning needs. In that way I mean they must be helped in all respects. The learners with barriers should also be included, irrespective of their level of understanding.

RESEARCHER: Oh, thank you, madam. What is your view on the inclusion of learners with visual impairment in mainstream?

S2P2: It is not real and cannot be, because there are no resources available in our schools. For example, if the teacher writes on the board, there is no font that can be, that the font…that can be adjusted. Again, when the question papers are set they are not…they cannot accommodate the learners with visual impairment.

RESEARCHER: Is there currently any form of training and support that teachers are receiving regarding the inclusion of learners with visual impairment?

S2P2: Up to so far there is no support sir.

RESEARCHER: What support do you receive from your Area Office regarding the inclusion of learners with visual impairment?

S2P2: As a school principal I requested a support from our Area Office and there is no positive response since I was told the Senior Education Specialist is only is one in our area and has to cater plus minus thirty six schools.

RESEARCHER: How have the following aspects adapted to enhance true inclusion of learners with visual impairment?
- a) Curriculum
- b) School infrastructure
- c) Playing grounds

2P2: Under curriculum sir, there is no curriculum adaptation. In terms of the school infrastructure since we have new building in our school there is provision for the wheel chair and there are also stairs in case of the play grounds there is no adaptation that has been made up to so far.

RESEARCHER: Do you have ILST (Institution Level Support Team) unit in your institution?

S2P2: In our school yes we do have although is not functional.

RESEARCHER: Does your (ILST) complete diagnostic profile for your learners with visual impairment?

S2P2: Yes they complete it, sometimes it doesn't work because we use call nurses to come and screen the children but the problem lies with us as teachers because the parent gives us enough learner's information.

RESEARCHER: Is your (ILST) educating other stakeholders on the way of dealing with learners with visual impairment in your school?

S2P2:   Yes, they do my (ILST) in my school are doing their best it's just that they don't get support from above meaning Area Office and District Office.

RESEARCHER: Does the school have vision mission statement that promotes inclusion and what does it says?

S2P2: Up to so far in my school sir we don't have.

RESEARCHER: But do you have vision and mission statement?

S2P2:   Yes we have but it doesn't cater inclusion at all.

RESEARCHER: Thank you madam and this brings us to the end of our interview session protocol and thanks.

SENIOR EDUCATION SPECIALIST

RESEARCHER: Do you think teachers and learners really understand the concept of Inclusive Education and its implications?

SES: Thank you, sir. Yes, I only think that teachers are the only people who understand this concept of Inclusive Education. Learners are learners are really not very clear about what Inclusive Education is.

RESEARCHER: Thank you, madam. We will go to question number 2. Had learners already attended an induction programme when they were admitted in school?

SES: No, Learners are not inducted, actually. Learners who go to special

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schools are the ones who are evaluated by specialists but they are not actually inducted to get into…inducted with those programmes to get to the schools.

RESEARCHER: What was your initial attitude towards learners with visual impairment, and why?

SES: My attitude about learners with visual impairment is that I'm very concerned about them because they are actually not taken into consideration. Learners do, are actually admitted in schools but it is very, very serious that all educators do not know how to tackle such learners. They are only given a test, an eye test, but eventually it just ends up there. But in classrooms at least they can be taken forward, to sit in the front of the class, but later there are no such treatments to help them in classes, rather than to apply for concessions.

RESEARCHER: Okay, thank you, madam, for your response. Question number 4, what specialised equipment is available? Name and describe it.

SES: Actually there are no specialised equipment in classes, especially in classrooms where there are learners with such impairment, But at least what can help them is to help them for…maybe for concessions so that their question papers can be… the report of their question papers can be enlarged. And otherwise they can be taken to an eye specialist so that maybe they get spectacles. That's all that can help them.

RESEARCHER: Do teachers teaching learners with visual impairment know how to use the special equipment that is available in schools?

SES: As I've mentioned before, there are no specialised equipment for learners with a visual impairment.

RESEARCHER: Thank you, madam, for that. Question number 6, is there any form of educator support service from the Department of Education in your district?

SES: Yes, we have the District Based Support Team whereby wherever there is a problem or a learner with a learning barrier like such, we do call them in. We have a physiotherapist and other… and psychologists, but most of them don't help with this kind of an impairment, the visual one.

RESEARCHER: What adaptations have been made to the curriculum in order

to accommodate these learners with visual impairment?

SES: Only what I can talk about is the concessions. Only concessions, so that learners can be given enough time, so that learners can be given question papers with enlarged font.

RESEARCHER: Oh, thank you, madam. The last…the other question, do you see any real inclusivity in your environment or just a mere placement of learners with learning barriers?

SES: Yes. I do see real inclusion in my environment because most of the learners who are being included, learners then with different learning barriers are actually having progress, they are having progression. Those we see them later in life, they can do things for a living.

RESEARCHER: Is there any form of professional support, including non-governmental organisations, involved in inclusion of learners with visual impairment?   For example, occupational therapist, educator assistant programme, counsellors and so on.

SES: Yes. We have a formal professional support. I'm going to give you the one that is not mentioned here. There is a non-governmental organisation called Spec-Savers. Those people do help us with learners with this visual impairment. They test them for free, they do, they give them eye tests for free and they give them spectacles where needed, for free. Thank you, sir.

SCHOOL1 TEACHER1

RESEARCHER: As a school teacher, explain how do you understand the term Inclusive Education.

S1T1: Okay, Inclusive Education is including learners with special needs into the curriculum of kids who are normal, or maybe who don't have a problem with either seeing or hearing.

RESEARCHER: What is your attitude towards the concept of Inclusive Education and why?

S1T1: I think this is a good concept, to include learners, not for them to be…to feel left out or maybe to be taught outside the normal school, as normal schooling. So it's better for them to be taught together with all the learners. And it's a good thing but at least they should be given a chance also, or

maybe to be given the provision for them to be able to learn properly also.

RESEARCHER: Have you received any form of assistance, from Educator Assistance Programme, that is EAP, or any form of training with regard to working with learners with visual impairment? Have you received any form of assistance from Educator Assistance Programme? Or any form of training?

S1T1: No, not at all. I haven't received any except for the workshops that we got from the Department, from a White Paper thing in the workshops.

RESEARCHER: A follow-up question on that. If yes, what form of support have you received]?

S1T1: No, I haven't received any. I just, it was just the workshop.

RESEARCHER: Oh, just a workshop, as you said.

S1T1: Yah.

RESEARCHER: If no, what form of support would you like to receive?

S1T1: The support that I would like to receive is maybe to know exactly what is the problem with the learners, what happens with them, what is it that is happening when they can't see properly or maybe they can't hear properly in the classroom. If I know exactly what is happening it will be easier for me to help them.

RESEARCHER: Thank you, madam, for your response. Do you have any itinerant teacher in your district that assists you with the support for learners with visual impairment?

S1T1: No, sir, I don't have any.

RESEARCHER: You don't have itinerant teachers. Thank you for that, madam. Shall we move to question number 7? What are the challenges in the classroom and on the sports field or which extra-curricular activities, with which you are faced, that is teaching learners with visual impairment?

S1T1: The problem is that the learners are unable to write properly. You can see by omissions in their writing, some words you find they have omitted some words because they can't see properly. Even their handwriting is not

clear. That's the challenge.

RESEARCHER: Alright, thank you, madam, for your response. The next question, what do you think of other teachers' attitude towards working with learners with visual impairment? Expatiate.
S1T1: Okay. I think the attitudes of other teachers think sometimes that the learners are not clever enough but it's not proper, only that the learners are unable to see properly. And they are as intelligent as all the other learners, they just need to be assisted.

RESEARCHER: How is the content of the curriculum being adapted for learners with visual impairment?

S1T1: Just come again?

RESEARCHER: How has the content of the curriculum been adapted for learners with visual impairment? The content of curriculum, how has it been changed?   How has it been adapted to include learners with visual impairment?

S1T1: Okay, they have been given…or we must know, if you have them you must know about them. And you must know where to place them in the classroom so that they can see properly and also even the format of writing, if it's small format you can increase it to a larger format, if you're using handouts.

RESEARCHER: Thank you, madam.   The other question, as a school teacher, is your teaching and learning physical environment conducive for the placement of learners with visual impairment? Just elaborate a little bit on that.

S1T1: No, it's not because actually there are no…the environment is not conducive at all because they are no fields, even for the learners who are able. So for the disabled ones it's worse. So they can maybe be involved in accidents, where it's not conducive at all.

RESEARCHER: Thank you, madam, once more. We all know that the learners with visual impairment are those who need more time during assessment. Do you have any specific method or approach in place to assist with the assessment?

S1T1:Okay, what I normally do with them, we take sessions first and

thereafter it's then that I would be taking marks out, I would be allocating marks, not for the first time allocate marks, I just give them a lot of time to practice, then allocate marks later on.

RESEARCHER: Do you have any specialised equipment for learners with visual impairment in your classroom? And what type of specialised equipment do you have? Or do they use?

S1T1: No, I do not have any special…not even magnifying glasses, not anything. Only the handout that I have, I use a bigger font for the learners to read properly.

TEACHER 2 SCHOOL 1

RESEARCHER: As a school teacher, explain how you understand the term Inclusive Education.

S1T2: Yah, Inclusive Education has to be understood against the backdrop of the previous education system where two separate systems were created. And to some extent they are still operational where learners with certain disabilities were put in a different school and those who were at less normal levels were put in other forms of school. So Inclusive Education seeks to put together learners with minimal disabilities, include them. The orthodox school system, that's the mainstream school system that is what it seeks to do, to achieve, because if I may, I may go on with that. You know, in the past when learners were referred to special schools there wasn't actually thorough examination as to whether they actually wouldn't fit in the mainstream school. It was done willy-nilly, where they just sent there because some could not deal with special learners, not necessarily those who had disabilities but special learners.

RESEARCHER: What is your attitude towards the concept of Inclusive Education and why?

S1T2: I am for Inclusive Education because what it will minimise the resources that could have been, you know, spread over a large scale area where learners will then be put under one roof. But then on condition that they can just also prepare to deal with such learners. So it somehow normalises the situation and avoid the creation of a twofold kind of, you know, learning environment.

RESEARCHER: Thank you very much, sir. Question number 3, have you

received any form of assistance from educator system programmes or any training with regard to learners with visual impairment?

S1T2: No, assistance in terms of the EAP, I would say yes because I never had this programme that they required me to interact you know. Unless that perhaps if it?] deals with Inclusive Education itself. On one occasion, yes, through my years and experience as an educator, we didn't mind them to come to school but they never showed up, you know. It's like they always start to the limit in terms of being able to cover all the areas but they never showed up. So I even doubt that they exist.

RESEARCHER: Alright, thank you very much, sir. I think question number 4 is answered already, which says, if yes, what form of support would you receive? Shall we just move straight to number 5? If no, what form of support would you like to receive?

S1T2: Yes. You know, we need to understand that our training as teachers did not necessarily include Inclusive Education. That's a new concept which came in the new democracy and so forth. So for that reason there has to be a comprehensive course for me as an educator, to be able to deal with because those are that relate to other, sometimes it has a psychological aspects of, you know, disabilities and that needs special training and skills to deal with that. So for that reason I would like to receive, not a crash course in Inclusive Education, but an actual training in how to handle learners with such disabilities.

RESEARCHER: Thank you for your response once more sir. The other question, do you have an itinerant teacher in your distract that assists you with support to learners with visual impairment?

S1T2: Yah, but I've never come across them. I've never really seen them or interacted with them. I don't know.

RESEARCHER: Okay, thank you so much. The other question, what are the challenges in the classroom and on the sports field or with extra-curricular activities with which you are faced, that is teaching learners with visual impairment?

S1T2: The challenges may not necessarily speak to bringing them up to the level of the so-called, in inverted commas, "normal" learners so that at the end of the day you are confident as a teacher that you are moving at the same pace and with the same understanding. So when also it comes to… coming

to the extra-curricular activities, it is also hard to then do that, because then you are faced with the situation that is basically new to you as a teacher, so it's very frustrating and you never know how to handle such situations.

RESEARCHER: What do you think of other teachers' attitude toward working with learners with visual impairment?

S1T2: You see, the attitude of other teacher is just that kind of nonchalant attitude. It's like indifferent and they just want to brush it away. It's one of those things that require too much focused attention and straining and it's time consuming so they just push it aside and, you know, go on business as usual. So it's unfortunate.

RESEARCHER: How has the content of the curriculum been adapted for learners with visual impairment?

S1T2: You see, one cannot specifically say there is any form of adaptation because normally what I've been seeing personally, it's just my personal opinion, the curriculum is designed for the so-called, in inverted comma, "normal;" students in normal schooling systems. So there isn't any form of curriculum designed for that particular…those particular learners.

RESEARCHER: Is your teaching and learning physical environment conducive for the placement of learners with visual impairment? And elaborate on that.

S1T2: No, absolutely no. Nothing, nothing can, you know, pinpoint in that direction that anything, the physical environment has been actually modified toward, to accommodate learners with special needs or inclusive learners. No, not at all, more especially in my situation as a teacher in the rural areas, you know, the one thing…are a challenge, so there is no special provision for such learners.

RESEARCHER: Thank you for your response, sir. The other question, we all know that learners with visual impairment are learners who need more time during assessment. Do you have any specific method or approach in place to assist their assessment?

S1T2: Not at all. There is no such. Of course, when you do remedial assessment and re-assessment, let me just put it correctly, it is meant for every learner, it's not for learners with special needs. So every assessment is for every learner and even though we are not, you know, day-to-day

interaction with learners, there isn't any provision for assisting special learners, you know, learners with special needs. So in that way, even the assessment programmes, some do not specifically single out learners to say, this type of learner with this type of disability needs to be assessed this way and so on. And this is how we need to, they will still learn it [inaudible 00:34:30.2] in that area. So then we don't have that kind of arrangement, to assess learners with special needs in a particular way.

RESEARCHER: Do you have any specialised equipment for learners with visual impairment in your classroom?   And what type of specialised equipment do they use?

S1T2: None, none whatsoever. There is nothing. It is just a normal, ordinary classroom with no special provision for learners with special needs.

RESEARCHER: Thank you so much. This brings us to the end of our interview. Sir, once more, thank you very much for availing yourself. Thank you very much, sir.

SCHOOL 2 TEACHER 3

RESEARCHER: Explain how you understand the term Inclusive Education.

S2T3: To include learners with learning barriers in a mainstream school.

RESEARCHER: What is your attitude towards the concept of Inclusive Education and why?

S2T3: Inclusive Education is not real as the environment is not user friendly to learners with barriers.

RESEARCHER: Have you received any form of assistance from Educator Assistance Programme or any training with regard to working with learners with visual impairment?

S2T3: Not at all.

RESEARCHER: What form of support do you receive?

S2T3: No support.

RESEARCHER: No support. And number 5, if not, what form of support would you like to have?

S2T3: Ke nagaga gore nka kereya sapoto ko District le Area office (I think I can receive support from a district office and area office.

RESEARCHER: Ke a leboga mma (thank you madam)]. Do you have do you have an itinerant teacher in your district that assists with support to learners with visual impairment?

S2T3: No assistant teacher.

RESEARCHER: What are the challenges in the classroom and on the sports field or with extra-curricular activities with which you are faced teaching learners with visual impairment?

S2T3: Sports fields are not user friendly for learners with barriers.

RESEARCHER: Thank you, madam. What do you think of other teachers' attitude towards working with learners with visual impairment?

S2T3: Teachers are negative because they haven't gone for any in-service training.

RESEARCHER: How has the content of the curriculum been adapted for learners with visual impairment?

S2T3: No curriculum adjustment.

RESEARCHER: Is your teaching and learning physical environment conducive for placement of learners with barriers?

S2T3: Not at all.

RESEARCHER: We all know that the learners with visual impairment need more time during assessment. Do you have a specific method or approach in place to assist these learners in assessment?

S2T3: No specific assessment methods.

RESEARCHER: Do you have specialized equipment for learners with visual impairment in your classroom?

S2T3: Not at all.

SCHOOL 2 TEACHER4

RESEARCHER: Explain how you understand the term Inclusive Education.

S2T4: Inclusive Education entails that all learners with any form of disabilities must be accommodated.

RESEARCHER: Okay, thank you, sir. What is your attitude towards the concept of Inclusive Education and why?

S2T4: It's not the way it's supposed to be in practice, especially in other communities which are still disadvantaged. There are communities which are disadvantaged and they are under-resourced as well.

RESEARCHER: Oh, thank you so much. Have you received any form of assistance from Educator Assistance Programmes or any training with regard to working with learners with visual impairment?

S2T4: Yes, but not so much.

RESEARCHER: Alright. If yes, what form of support do you receive?

S2T4: Sometimes we do receive assistance, for example from nurses who do visit some schools. They do come to our schools but they do not come regularly to our schools.

RESEARCHER: What form of support would you like to receive?

S2T4: All stakeholders concerned must visit institutions on a regular basis.

RESEARCHER: Do you have an itinerant teacher in your district that assists with support to learners with visual impairment?

S2T4: No, no, we don't have, we do not have those teachers who give us that support.

RESEARCHER: Okay, sir, thank you so much. What are the challenges in the classroom and on the sports field or with extra-curricular activities with which you are faced teaching learners with visual impairment?

S2T4: According to me, they are not user friendly, not even standardized or accommodative.

RESEARCHER: Alright. And then the other question, what do you think of other teachers' attitude towards working with learners with visual impairment?

S2T4: Ga ba kgone. Ga ba na di thusa-thuto tse di maleba (Translated: they are unable, they do not have the appropriate education assisting tools OR teaching and learning support materials.

RESEARCHER: Alright, What do think of other teachers' attitude towards working with learners with visual impairment?

S2T4: Visual impairment?

RESEARCHER: Yes.

S2T4: Again, come up with the question.

RESEARCHER: What do you think of other teachers' attitude? What this your colleague's attitude towards working with learners with visual impairment? How do you...

S2T4: The attitude of the teacher would always be negative because these teachers are not trained for learners with visual impairment.

RESEARCHER: Okay.

S2T4: They are not up to date with that…of learners with visual impairment. They are not trained to work with such. So their attitude would always be negative towards that.

RESEARCHER: How has the content of the curriculum been adapted for learners with visual impairment?

S2T4: I think there is no form of adaptation whatsoever. You mean writing materials, question papers, the font is the same. And learners do not… are not given the special form to do that form of the materials that they are using.

RESEARCHER: Is your teaching and learning physical environment conducive for the placement of learners with visual impairment?

S2T4: No, no, because it only accommodates learners without special educational needs. And therefore classrooms are also not designed for learners with special educational needs.

RESEARCHER: Alright, let's go to the other question. This is a statement. We all know that the learners with visual impairment are learners who need more time, especially during assessment. Now do you have any specific method or approach in place to assist these learners with barriers especially those with visual challenges?

S2T4: No, no, we do not have that. We do not have that. That one, I earlier indicated that we are not trained for that…those learners. But it doesn't mean that they can just be left out, but we are not trained for that.

RESEARCHER: Okay. And then the last question, sir, do you have specialised equipment for learners with visual impairment? And if there are, what type of special equipment do they use?

S2T4: We do not have them, especially we people who are under-resourced and from…who are coming from the disadvantaged community schools.

RESEARCHER: Oh, you are from the marginalized community. Sir, this brings us to the end of this interview. As a teacher from the school we appreciate your presence. It makes me feel delighted to have you in this interview. I will take this opportunity once more to thank you so much, sir.

S2T4: Thank you so much.

RESEARCHER: You're welcome.

PARENT NO.1

RESEARCHER: A o kile wa utlwa ka lefoko inclusive education kgotsa o tlhaloganyang ka lefoko le inclusive education?

(Translated: Have you heard of the word inclusive education before?).

PARENT 1: Ee rra, ga se yona thuto e go tweng bana bakopakopanngwa le bana ba bangwe ba ba nang le bolwetse bo ba go wa le malwetsenyana a mangwe.

(Translated: Yes sir, is it not that type of education where learners are been mixed or incorporated in one class with learners with epilepsy or other related deseases).

RESEARCHER: A o nagana gore go ka nna le tswelelopele kana kgolo mo thutong ya ngwana wa gago ga go ka nna le thuso e o ka e bonang kgotsa wa e newa ke sekolo.

(Translated: Do you think would there be improvement in your child's education progress if support were provided in schools?).

PARENT1: Ee Thitshere.

(Translated: Yes teacher).

RESEARCHER: Ke mokgwa ofe wa thuso o o onayang ngwana wa gago fa ba neetswe ditiro-gae?)

(Translated: What forms of assistance do give to your child when home-work is given?).

PARENT1:Ke tla leka go mo tlhalosetsa fa a sa tlhaloganyeng teng mme e ne a itirele tiro a ikwalle.

(Translated: I will try to explain where my child does not understand.

RESEARCHER: A o nagana gore ngwana wa gago a ka ithuta ka dithuto ga gona le thuso e e rileng go tswa ko sekolong?

(Translated: Do you think your child will improve academically if there is more support from the school?

PARENT1: Ee Thichere.

(Translated: Yes teacher.)

RESEARCHER: O nagana gore sekolo se ka thusa jang ngwana wa gago go tsweletsa dithuto tsa gagwe?

*(*Translated: How do you think the school can be more supportive to help your child to cope with his studies?)

PAREN1T: *A sekolo se thuse bana akere le gona ke lona le tshentshang dilo la fetolafetola jaanong dithuto tse tsa lona tse ga re di itse ba thuseng.*

(Translated: Let the school assist those learners because your education system is dynamic that's why we can't assist them, please assist them.)

PARENT 2

RESEARCHER: A o kile wa utlwa kgotsa o tlhaloganyang ka lefoko 'inclusive education'?

(Translated: Have you heard of the word 'inclusive education'?)

PARENT 2: Ee ke mokgwa wa thuto o akaretsang bana botlhe ba ba nang le bokgoni le ba ba bokoa ka kakaretso ke raya gore ngwana a agiwa (in totality).

(Translated: Yes, this is the type of education that incorporates all learners with ability and those with learning barriers.)

RESEARCHER: A o nagana gore go ka nna le kgolo mo thutong ya ngwana wa gago ga go ka nna le tshegetso mo sekolong

(Translated: Do you think there would be improvement in your child's education progress   if support were provided in school?

PARENT 2: Yes sir.

REARCHER: Ke mokgwa ofe wa tshegetso o o o nayang ngwana wag ago fa a neetswe tiro-gae?

(Translated: What form of assistance do you give to your child when home work is given?

PARENTS: *Ke thusa ngwana fa ke kgonang teng ka gona ke sena lesedi le lekalo mme keletso ke gore ngwana fa a na le bokoa a ka thusiwa ka go newa diborele go kgona go bona sentle e nngwe gape bana ba rekelwa white board gore ba kgone go bona ditlhaka tse dintsho mo mokwalong o mosweu.*

(Translated: I will assist where I can and the wish is when the child has learning barriers he/she may be assisted by supplying him with eye glasses and the usage of white board is vital as they will see black words in white board).

RESEARCHER: *A o nagana gore thuto ya ngwana wa gago e ka tokafala fa go ka nna le tshegetso mo sekolong?*

(Translated: Do you think your child will improve academically if there is more support from the school)

PARENT: *Yes sir.*

RESEARCHER: *O nagana gore sekolo se ka thusa jang go thusa ngwana wa gago go tswelela pele ka dithuto tsa gagwe?*

(Translated: How do you think the school can be of more supportive to help your child to cope with his/her studies?

PARENT: *Ka go thapa morutabana yo o maleba yo o ka kgonang go re thusa bana ka dithuto tsa bona.*

(Translated: By employing the teacher with more knowledge to assist learners with their daily school work.

APPENDIX C: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE OF THE LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN THEIR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Date:	21 August 2014
Observer:	Mr Mokwena Morelle
Name of the School	(A) Sediko PrimarySchool
	(B) Thea-Morafe Primary School
Physical Environment:	Physical classroom layout. Availability of teaching and learning support materials (LTSM).
Number of learners in the class-room:	Learner classroom enrolment. Learner teacher ratio.
Number of people taking part in the classroom:	Learners, educator and the researcher.
Grouping of learners in the classroom:	The learners might be grouped according to their level of intellectuality.
Learners activity:	Learners will be responding by answering question from their teacher.
Learners' participation and responses:	Learners responding to educators questions and performing experiments, giving feedback
Learners' sitting position in the classroom:	Learners might be sitting in a row, semi-circle manner.