

**EXPLORING INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES WITHIN SCHOOL
CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY OF MOTUPA CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

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I MOAGI DONALD declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that the researcher have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. The researcher further declare that the researcher submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that the researcher have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution. *(The dissertation will not be examined unless this statement has been submitted.)*



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29/01/2026

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study in honour of my late son Phenyo Prince Moagi. The thesis is dedicated to the teachers in Mopani-West District, Motupa Circuit, Limpopo and all the learners. Finally, the researcher dedicate this study to my sons, Pholosho and Phodisho, and my daughter, Princess, as well as to my grandchildren and future generations. To my wife, thank you for being the pillar of my strength. To my mother, the researcher know my childhood was characterised by hospital visits; you have always been by my side. Thank you so much for supporting and loving me.

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ABSTRACT

The core fundamentals of teaching and learning are attributed to the practice of various teaching strategies and skills. These skills are a pre-requisite for the strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive pedagogical practices to accommodate all learners in teaching and learning. This study employed Archer's social realist theory as a theoretical framework to underpin the exploration of inclusive pedagogies within the school curriculum. A qualitative approach was used for this study with an interpretive research paradigm and a case study design. Data for this study was collected through semi-structured individual interviews, structured observations and document analysis. The study population consisted of teachers from secondary schools in the Motupa Circuit. Purposive sampling was used to select seven schools and fourteen teachers representing the Motupa circuits. Data from the study was analysed through a thematic approach. The study's findings reveal that teachers have various misconceptions about the concept of inclusive pedagogy. In addition, the study revealed that teachers have the will to use various teaching strategies to accommodate learners, despite the challenges they face due to a lack of in-service training and insufficient resources aligned with inclusive pedagogies, among others. The study recommends a collaborative framework for the practice of inclusive pedagogy where teachers, parents, learners, School-Based Support Teams, the Department of Basic Education and curriculum planners should reconfigure and incorporate to work together to enhance the practice of inclusive pedagogy.

Key concepts: Inclusivity, pedagogy, challenges, implementation, diverse needs, learning challenges, Implementation, teaching, learning barriers,

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ACRONYMS

ACE	Advanced certificate in Education
ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
BHONS	Bachelor of honours in Education
BEDSPF	Bachelor of Education Senior Phase and FET
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CBST	Circuit based support team
IE	Inclusive Education
ICT	Information Communication Technology
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBST	District-Based Support Teams
DoE	Department of Education
EFA	Education For All
ESPS	Education Support Portfolio Committee
EWP	Education White Paper
IESA	Inclusive Education South Africa
LSP	Learner Support Portfolio
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NSNET	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training

SBST	School-Based Support Teams
SASA	South African Schools Act
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SNA	School Needs Assessment
WSD	Whole-School Development
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa, as a country, is characterised by a diverse population that uses different languages, belief systems, religions and values. In the context of education, it is common for teachers in South Africa to work in classrooms that include learners from diverse backgrounds and varying learning needs. According to Mpu and Ady (2021), teachers in South African schools appear to face challenges in teaching learners with diverse needs. Therefore, teachers often struggle to use teaching strategies and activities that are inclusive of all learners. Walton, Carrington, Saggars, Edwards and Kimani (2022) assert that in South Africa, teachers' pedagogical practices are not aligned to learners' learning needs; therefore, this results in the school curriculum not accommodating all learners. The level of diversity in South African schools means that teachers are faced with classrooms comprising diverse learners. As a result, various learners rely on different methods, resources and strategies to learn. Inclusive education enables all learners to participate in education, regardless of their learning difficulties. Omodan (2021) suggests that when the school curriculum is not aligned with the learning needs of learners, it becomes irrelevant because it fails to accommodate the needs of the learners it is intended to serve.

The fact that South Africa is a country rich in diversity raises doubts about the ability of teachers to practice inclusive education due to the differences that exist among teachers and learners. Additionally, teachers struggle to implement pedagogical practices that meet the needs of learners. Therefore, based on the above remarks, this study aims to explore inclusive pedagogical practices in the school curriculum of the Motupa Circuit, using a social realist perspective as a lens for theoretical inquiry. This study applies the concepts of structure, culture, and agency to examine inclusive pedagogical practices in Motupa Circuit schools, with the aim of recommending improved, collaborative, and inclusive models for secondary schools in Limpopo.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The exclusion of learners with special needs from schools and within the education system remains a concern. This is despite significant investment, well-drafted policies, and budget allocation for the practice of inclusive education (Department of Education [DoE], 2001). According to Donohue and Bornman (2014) there are various contributing factors to the slow pace in the successful practice of inclusive education. A noticeable body of literature suggests that several factors contribute to the slow progress in implementing inclusive education. The literature reveals that the education system of South Africa was characterised by segregation and inequality (DoE, 2001). Learners with disabilities exist across the whole world; disabilities limit their ability and access to participate in daily activities and restricts their social experiences available to individuals without disabilities. According to Matarechera (2014), the core tenet of inclusive education is that all learners should learn together in inclusive classrooms with the goal of meeting their needs, regardless of their challenges.

Several factors appear to be contributing to the global failure of inclusive education. For instance, a study by Alesech and Nayar (2020) suggests that the implementation of inclusive education in New Zealand has been slow-paced, and there is limited evidence to indicate that learners with special needs are being adequately educated in schools. Moreover, Alesech and Nayar (2020) seem to suggest that challenges regarding the implementation of inclusive education are a result of a lack of effective monitoring tools used to measure the implementation of inclusive education policies. As a result, this makes the existing policies of inclusive education inefficient and unable to achieve the objective of welcoming all learners in schools.

According to a study conducted by Mokaleng and Andrew (2020) in Namibia on the implementation of inclusive education, the lack of teacher preparation and attitude barriers hinder the successful practice of inclusive education. The above-mentioned factors are the two primary issues that require research to improve the practice of inclusive education. Mokaleng and Andrew (2020) add that one of the most crucial goals for achieving the successful practice of inclusive education is teacher training on the policy. The human right to education, as stated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is the cornerstone of inclusive education (UNESCO,

2000). The Salamanca Framework on learners with special needs asserts that to successfully implement inclusive education, educational structures and programmes must be created and implemented to address the challenges of inclusive education practice (UNESCO, 2014). Numerous national and international organisations have recognised and acknowledged education as a human right (Ministry of Education, 2013). A logical explanation for this right is that all children have the right to learn and receive an education that does not discriminate based on factors such as ethnicity, social class, economic status, gender, language or disability (UNESCO, 2000).

According to Mangope (2018), one of the biggest obstacles facing Botswana in implementing inclusive education is that many teachers are afraid and feel unprepared to work with learners with special needs. Teachers who believe that inclusive education policies and practices may lead to lower academic performance tend to exhibit signs of irritation, hostility and a negative attitude. Consequently, this led to a passive reaction towards the implementation of inclusive education. According to Mangope et al. (2016), there appears to be an increase in the number of learners categorised as having special needs, which implies that teachers should receive proper training specifically on inclusive education. Opoku (2021) asserts that one of the major challenges to implementing inclusive education in Ghana is that teachers are not adequately prepared to work with learners with special needs. The lack of preparedness among teachers to implement inclusive education leads to some teachers displaying a negative attitude towards the policy (Opoku, 2021). Consequently, this results in the quality of inclusive education practice being low.

Madlela (2022), in a study carried out in the Kingdom of Swaziland, revealed that significant development has been achieved in the practice of inclusive education in schools in recent years. Swaziland continues to face challenges such as a scarcity of teachers, overcrowded classrooms, and a lack of knowledge about the practical implementation of inclusive education (Madlela, 2022). According to the EFA policy of 2010, it is recommended that all teachers accommodate learners with diverse learning needs in regular classroom settings (Ministry of Education and Training, 2011). The Education for All policy (2010) in Swaziland catalysed the integration of inclusive education into mainstream classrooms, requiring all teachers to develop skills to support learners with diverse educational needs (Ministry of Education and

Training, 2011). In addition, it was emphasised that the need to include all learners despite their learning challenges is important to achieve inclusivity. The Constitution of Swaziland (2005) paves the way for all educational and training facilities to be upgraded to better serve the unique needs of learners who encounter obstacles to learning and engaging in the classroom (Mbabane, 2011).

In the context of the South African education system, when South Africa obtained democracy in 1994, the country pursued numerous measures to do away with the apartheid regime system of education that was characterised by exclusion and discrimination. The primary goal of the democratic education system is to ensure that all learners are treated equally by granting them equal rights and access to participate in the country's economic and educational affairs. The inclusion of all learners in education was recognised through equality. The establishment of the new democratic education system offered hope and better educational opportunities to most learners who were previously vulnerable. To include learners who were previously excluded from education during the apartheid system, South Africa adopted an inclusive education policy in 2001. According to Ainscow (2020), inclusive education refers to giving all children, regardless of their circumstances or differences, such as learning challenges or disabilities, opportunities and access to a supportive learning environment. Boyle and Anderson (2020) emphasise that effective teaching and the necessary support should be used to deliver quality education. Dally (2020) demonstrates that issues persist in the practice of inclusive education in schools, despite the policy of inclusive education encouraging quality education for all learners.

The practice of inclusive education in South Africa is guided by Special Needs Education: Education White Paper 6 (EWP6). Its core values are based on the fundamental idea that all learners can learn, emphasising the respect for individual abilities regarding how an individual learns (DoE, 2001). Therefore, appropriate measures and strategies should be implemented to ensure effective education for all, providing learners with access to a single, diversity-responsive education system that accommodates intellectual, physical, social, and language differences. As a result, all learners should have access to the curriculum that supports their needs. The issues surrounding the practice of inclusive education in South Africa have been demonstrated to impede the effective implementation of inclusive education policies,

as outlined in EWP6. For instance, as highlighted by Adewumi (2019), numerous obstacles hinder South African teachers from effectively implementing inclusive education policies in schools, ultimately leading to the policy's failures. In addition, this is even when teachers are working hard to make inclusive education successful. Training in the form of workshops is conducted to equip teachers, ensuring they are prepared to practise inclusive education and include all learners in the education system. Cologon and Merawalla (2018) state that most teachers remain unclear about how to implement inclusive education policy in the classroom environment.

EWP6 advocates for the right of all learners to be included in the education system. The white paper paves the way for learners to receive multiple opportunities to learn and not be left out of the learning process. In South Africa, despite the introduction of the EWP6 on inclusive education, little has been done to enhance the implementation of the policy and ensure quality education for all learners. Adewumi (2021) states that South African teachers encounter the following challenges regarding the practice of inclusive education:

- Policy formulation
- Lack of clear guidelines on policy and practice
- Lack of support
- Inadequate resources and infrastructure
- Inflexible curriculum

Mpu (2021) shows that even with what teachers already know about inclusive education practices, they still exhibit signs of confusion regarding how the policy should be implemented in the classroom. Donohue and Bornman (2014) suggest that the introduction of inclusive education occurred while teachers were not yet ready to implement the policy. Furthermore, Donohue and Bornman (2014) highlight the negative reaction that teachers displayed towards the policy of inclusive education. Dreyer (2017) indicates that teachers in South Africa are not prepared to practice inclusive education. He substantiates his argument when he makes the case that learners with special needs are not allowed in regular classrooms, which results in some of them dropping out of school. All these aspects raise the question of whether teachers possess the necessary knowledge and abilities to support all learners, regardless of their differences and abilities. Walton (2016) believes that

South Africa still requires frameworks that provide teachers with the relevant tools and skills necessary to implement inclusive education.

Riva and Eck (2016) are of the view that the practice of inclusive education remains a concern in South Africa, as teachers continue to struggle with implementing the policy. Considering this, this study explores the practice of inclusive education from a social realist perspective to assess the quality and effectiveness of the inclusive education policy. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the practices and quality of inclusive education in rural public secondary schools of the Motupa Circuit, Mopani-West District, in Limpopo, using the concepts of structure, culture and agency. Above all, this study aims to answer the research question: What are the practices of inclusive education in rural public secondary schools in the Motupa Circuit?

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

As a teacher who began working in 2013, the researcher encountered learners who faced learning barriers. This was a source of frustration for him, as he did not receive training to the extent that he could deal with such challenges. The researcher struggled to devise teaching and learning strategies that would effectively accommodate their needs. As a result, this posed challenges for learners with special needs. The researcher believes that learners with special needs are not less intelligent than other learners; hence, they require accommodation strategies that suit their needs. His rationale for embarking on this study is to explore the practice of inclusive education in rural public secondary schools within the Motupa Circuit of Mopani-West District. The importance of this study was drawn from his intuitive understanding of the research as a teacher in a rural public secondary school, where inclusive education is expected to be practised. The researcher believes that there is still much to be done to prepare and equip teachers to implement the successful practice of inclusive education policy.

1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEM

There are numerous and unavoidable challenges regarding the quality and effectiveness of inclusive education in South Africa. Similarly, teachers are expected to ensure the effective implementation of policies and pedagogical practices to

promote inclusivity. Teachers are faced with learners who have various learning needs in the classroom; as a result, some of the teachers seem to have challenges with relevant pedagogical practices that accommodate all learners. This leads to some learners not being accommodated in the classroom, as the teaching strategies are not aligned with their learning needs. Subsequently, this leads to learners' performance being affected, and they are not given the opportunity to unleash their full potential. Therefore, this study's primary focus is on the problem that, despite policies of inclusivity being implemented, less has been done in schools to successfully implement inclusive pedagogical models. Teachers seem not to understand their role in implementing the inclusive pedagogical model within the curriculum. Hence, most learners with learning challenges experience exclusion from mainstream schools and, as a result, are referred to special schools. These are consequences of teachers' poor implementation strategies and negative attitudes towards the policy.

Researchers such as Wesselman and Williams (2017) suggest that there are inadequate criteria for measuring the quality of inclusive education practices in schools. As a result, the unsuccessful practice of inclusive education persists in the education domain. In agreement, Adewumi (2019) highlighted the following aspects as the most common challenges facing teachers in the implementation of inclusive education: improper pedagogical models, inadequate infrastructure, fear of change, lack of training, and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The above scholars' primary focus was on the challenges teachers faced regarding the implementation of the inclusive education policy. Their findings reveal that there has been limited research on the quality of inclusive education practices in rural public secondary schools. As a result, aspects that hinder the quality of inclusive education practice remain a problem for this study to explore.

Archer's social realist theory (1993) posits that inclusive education will remain unsuccessful while schools continue to face structural and cultural constraints and teachers, as agents, misunderstand inclusivity policy. Therefore, if one intends to implement an inclusive curriculum, three theoretical lenses need to be considered, as articulated by Archer. Hence, this study aims to explore the practice of inclusive pedagogical curriculum education in schools within the Motupa Circuit, Mopani-West

District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. With a view to recommending an inclusive pedagogical model that will complement the current curriculum.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

According to Fink (2019), a study's significance lies in the value it adds to knowledge and its contribution to the wider community and society. In the context of this study, the findings will be of assistance to the Basic Department of Education in Limpopo Province for policy review and the formulation of intervention strategies in the practice of inclusive education. Moreover, this study will serve as a point of reference for most teachers on how to enhance their strategies to ensure inclusivity in their respective schools.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research questions of this study are divided into two sections: the main research question and the sub-questions that support it.

1.6.1 Main Question

- What are the inclusive pedagogical practices within the curriculum of the Motupa Circuit?

1.6.2 Sub-Questions

- What do teachers understand about the concept of inclusive pedagogical practices?
- What are the implications of inclusive pedagogical practices within the school curriculum?
- What are the challenges teachers experience in the practice of inclusive education?
- What support measures do teachers require to enhance the practice of inclusive education in schools?
- What models and practices can be put in place to enhance the inclusive pedagogical practice in the school curriculum?

1.6.3 Research Aims and Objectives

This study intends to explore inclusive pedagogical models within a school curriculum of Motupa Circuit, Mopani-West District, in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The researcher's goal is to propose potential solutions to the problem being researched. The study's objectives are to:

- To explore teachers' understanding of inclusive pedagogies within the curriculum.
- To explore implications of inclusive pedagogical practices in the curriculum.
- To explore challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices.
- To determine support measures and structures in place for the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in the curriculum.
- To recommend a model and practices that can improve inclusive pedagogical practices within the school curriculum.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Van Vyck (2015), research methodology is an overall approach to a study that is linked with the study paradigm and theoretical framework. This section outlines the research approach, design and paradigm, as well as the data collection and sampling procedures that will be followed during the study.

1.7.1 Research Approach: Qualitative

The approach of this study is qualitative. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), the qualitative approach is an approach in which the researcher is driven by an activity with a purpose that puts the researcher in a position to observe participants in their natural environment. Lanka and Lanka (2019) explain the qualitative approach as an inquiry process of understanding, where the researcher develops an overall picture, using words and detailed responses from participants in their natural setting. Mahojan (2017) describes a qualitative approach as one that enables the researcher to understand the natural setting through interpreting observed actions in the field. The researcher adopted a qualitative approach; hence, the study set out to observe teachers in their daily practice of inclusive education. Moreover, the use of this qualitative approach assisted the researcher in analysing and interpreting policies of

inclusivity (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In the context of this study, a qualitative approach is relevant because the purpose of this study is to explore teachers' practices of inclusive pedagogies within the school curriculum in rural public secondary schools.

1.7.2 Research Design: Case Study

The proposed research design for this study is a multiple case study design. According to Priya (2021), case study designs are popular methods of inquiry that enable researchers to explore an event, activity or procedure in detail with various individuals as participants. Case study design is an approach that enables the researcher to investigate a phenomenon in its real-life context. In line with the above, a case study design will be relevant for this study; hence, this study will focus on the practice of inclusive pedagogies within the school curriculum, which is an issue of interest in recent debates. Inclusive education and its standard practice are issues of interest that are discussed by many, especially in South Africa. According to Rahman (2017), a research design serves as a blueprint that guides a study from its initial research questions to the conclusions drawn from answering them.

1.7.3 Research Paradigm: Interpretive

This study will employ an interpretive paradigm as its proposed framework. According to Hussain (2023) interpretive paradigm seeks to understand the researched phenomena through the meaning that individuals assign to those phenomena. According to Leavy (2014), a research paradigm can best be understood through three categories: ontology, epistemology and axiology. Epistemology entails understanding how we understand and know the world around us, while ontology refers to the way in which we understand our world and the knowledge within it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Leavy (2017) asserts that axiology is interested in interpreting and understanding beliefs and values, as well as how the researcher is influenced by such aspects. This study will adopt an interpretive paradigm, as it will enable the researcher to engage directly with participants and explore their daily experiences of inclusive education. Studies indicate that the interpretive paradigm has proven to provide evidence-based findings, and it can produce trusted and applicable knowledge (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

According to Pervin and Mokhtar (2022) interpretive paradigm has the following advantages:

- Allows the researcher to obtain rich, in-depth data from participants.
- The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world from the subjective experiences of individuals.
- It provides an approach for understanding social context.
- The interpretive paradigm is made up of multiple paradigms.
- The interpretive paradigm focuses on the full experience of human experience.

1.7.4 Population and Sampling

This section provides a brief overview of the population and sampling methods used in the study.

1.7.4.1 Population

According to Casteel and Nancy (2021), population can be defined as the selected community from which study participants are derived. On the other hand, Shukla and Satshprakash (2020) define a population as a group of cases or elements, objects, events or instances that satisfy specific criteria, which we intend to generalise the findings of the study. The target population of this study was teachers at rural public secondary schools teaching the senior phase band. Motupa Circuit has a total of 427 teachers. The Motupa Circuit schools are in deep rural areas and are classified as Quintile 1 schools, meaning that learners do not pay school fees and also enjoy a feeding scheme provided by the DBE (White & Van Dyk, 2019).

1.7.4.2 Sampling

Sampling refers to the deliberate selection of a subset of participants from a larger population for data collection (McCombes, 2019; Sharma, 2017). This study employed intensive purposive sampling, a qualitative technique that involves the careful selection of participants who are best positioned to provide rich and relevant data (Maxwell, 2012; Yin, 2015). Patton (2015) notes that this approach is based on the assumption that meaningful insights are gained from information-rich cases. Intensive purposive sampling was considered appropriate because it enabled the deliberate selection of participants with direct experience of inclusive pedagogical

practices, thereby ensuring targeted and relevant data collection. It also facilitated high participation rates, as accessible and willing participants were selected, and supported effective administration of the research process within the study context (De Vos, Strydom & Delpont, 2011)

The study was conducted in seven rural public secondary schools in the Motupa Circuit of the Mopani-West District. The selection of the seven schools was influenced by their accessibility to the researcher.

A total of 14 educators were purposefully selected, comprising seven principals and seven School-Based Support Team (SBST) members, one from each school. The inclusion criteria for this study are:

- Teachers with relevant teaching qualifications.
- Teachers who have more than five years of teaching experience.
- Teachers who give their consent to be part of the study.

Participants were drawn from the senior phase band, as they were assumed to have relevant knowledge and experience in inclusive pedagogical practices.

1.7.5 Data Collection

According to Bhandari (2023), data generation refers to the process of obtaining and assessing data on relevant variables in a predetermined, methodical manner to address research questions and assess results. Vindrola-Padros and Johnson (2020) state that various methods are used to generate data in qualitative studies, including document reviews, interviews, observations and the use of audio resources. This study made use of semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis. The researcher saw fit to use interviews as the dominant data collection method, as it enabled the researcher to be flexible and was useful in situations that involve examining a social life phenomenon. Observation entails a process in which the researcher directly observes participants as they perform their duties (Smit & Onwuezbuzie, 2018) while document analysis is a data collection technique that enables the researcher to examine, evaluate, and comprehend pertinent documents to address study questions (Tracy, 2019).

1.7.5.1 Interviews

Conducting interviews is a popular technique used in qualitative research for collecting data. Interviews enable the researcher to access data that other data collection techniques cannot (Williams, 2015). This study used semi-structured individual interviews to collect data. Williams (2018) asserts that an interview is semi-structured when the researcher chooses the sequence in which to ask questions. Additionally, semi-structured interviews enable participants in the study to provide detailed information about their experiences. The researcher used open-ended questions during the interviews with participants.

1.7.5.2 Observation

Kumar (2022) refers to observation as a technique used to collect data through observing individuals, events or physical traits as they occur in a natural setting. According to Cohen (2007), observation allows researchers to collect real-time, firsthand data within a natural setting by systematically observing specified aspects using an observation schedule. The researcher used structured observation in this study. The researcher observed teachers as they taught and interacted with learners in the classroom. Moreover, structured observations were conducted to examine how teachers applied their pedagogical practices in delivering the curriculum. The researcher established an observation schedule with guidelines on what to observe in this study.

1.7.5.3 Document analysis

Leavy (2017) defines document analysis as a systematic method of examining texts or documents, enabling researchers to uncover overlooked issues, particularly where minority groups are underrepresented or historical records are incomplete. Bowen (2009) argues that document analysis is the most reliable data collection technique, as it allows the researcher to review the documents multiple times. The researcher used document analysis of teachers' files, learner profiling files, policies on inclusivity and files of the committees on inclusive education.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

McMillan and Shumacher (2014) refer to data analysis as the process of organising data into categories to establish patterns. Maguire and Delahun (2017) describe data analysis as the process of interpreting data collected, establishing recurring themes and drawing conclusions. In this study, the researcher analysed data through thematic analysis by identifying patterns (Maguire & Delahun, 2017). This study employed Brune and Clark's (2013) thematic data analysis.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

McMillan and Schumacher (2014) assert that a credible research study requires the researcher to adhere to the ethical principles of conducting a study. When conducting a study of this nature that involves people, it is very important to uphold ethical principles (Yin, 2016). The following principles were adhered to when conducting this study:

1.9.1 Permission

The most important ethical consideration was to gain ethical clearance from the university (Appendix B). The researcher sought permission to conduct the study from the Limpopo Department of Education, Mopani-West District office, Motupa Circuit office, and from school principals (Appendices C–P) and teachers at schools of Motupa Circuit (Appendix O).

1.9.2 Informed Consent

According to Soboan et al. (2018), informed consent is an ethical obligation that requires the researcher to inform participants about all activities related to the research study. In this study, the researcher informed participants about their rights, the nature of the research, and all the risks involved in participating in the study. According to Christensen and Burke (2017), the concept of informed consent implies that an individual who is equipped with and informed about relevant information is in a good position to make informed decisions. In this study, participants will not be obligated or coerced into participating. The researcher will ensure that participants volunteer to be observed and interviewed. Consent forms were provided to all

participants, outlining key information including study risks, duration, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any time (Appendix O).

1.9.3 Anonymity

Sotuku and Duke (2015) assert that anonymity can be described as the researcher's obligation to ensure that the identities of participants are protected. Christensen and Burke (2017) state that the privacy of participants should be respected in a study, as this is a core principle of conducting ethical research. Anonymity in research can be seen as a way of protecting the privacy of participants. In this study, to protect participants' identities, codes will be given to the participants and their respective schools. The researcher ensured that the real identities of participants were not used. In addition, the identities of the participants were known only to the researcher and the supervisor.

1.9.4 Confidentiality

Christensen and Burke (2017) explain that confidentiality is used in research as a means to safeguard the privacy of participants taking part in the study. Moreover, it can be seen as a contract between the researcher and the participants on what can be done and how data can be collected in a study (Christensen & Burke, 2017). In the context of this study, the researcher had access to the identity, information and responses of participants, which must be retained securely for five years and then destroyed.

1.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Quality is a very important element in a qualitative study. When researchers discuss quality in their studies, they refer to trustworthy and credible research. Maree (2010) argues that the use of data collection methods such as observation, interviews and document analysis eventually leads to trustworthiness. In addressing issues of quality criteria in this study, the researcher adhered to the following principles:

1.10.1 Credibility

Moser and Korstjens (2018) define credibility in research as the degree of trust that can be placed in the study's findings. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), credibility in a study can be achieved when the researcher collects data from

participants who have volunteered to participate in the study. It is vital for a study to be credible; therefore, the findings of the study should accurately represent the experiences and interpretations of the participants (Morser & Korstjens, 2018). In this study, the researcher used an audio recorder to ensure accurate and reliable interpretations of participants' responses.

1.10.2 Transferability

Hatch (2023) explains transferability as the degree to which the study's findings are applicable when placed in a similar context. Transferability refers to the ability to apply the methodology in a different context. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that a thorough description of the study's process can be applied in another context (Bairagi & Munot, 2019). Transferability was enhanced by thoroughly documenting all stages of the research process, allowing others to apply the study's findings to different contexts.

1.10.3 Dependability

Creswell (2013) explains dependability as the state of the study where one can consistently obtain the same findings by using the same instruments to measure the same thing more than once. According to Hatch (2023) dependability entails participants evaluating the study's findings and recommendations, ensuring that the findings are supported by the data collected from participants.

1.10.4 Conformability

Anney (2014) states that conformability involves avoiding issues of prejudice and bias in the study. In addition, conformability occurs when the study's findings accurately reflect the participants' interpretations, rather than the researcher's manipulation of facts. In this study, the researcher ensure conformability by means of using direct quotes from the data collected from participants.

1.11 STUDY LIMITATIONS

Ross (2019) states that limitations represent weaknesses that may influence the research findings. It is essential for every researcher conducting a study to present accurate and honest information. Creswell (2014) argues that one of the flaws of qualitative studies is that they heavily rely on the skills and expertise of the

researcher while Theofanadis and Fountouki (2018) maintain that a study limitation is an imposed restriction that is out of the control of the researcher. This study was conducted during school hours, and as such, the researcher did not have control over the availability of teachers to collect data. In addition, other possible limitations of this study included the researcher's limited time for conducting interviews and the researcher's inability to control the responses of the participants, as some participants could withhold valuable information. However, data generation was collected in seven schools that the researcher identified by considering factors such as accessibility, cost effective and manage the allocated time given to complete the study.

1.12 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Theofanidis (2018) explains delimitations as restrictions purposefully imposed by researchers. These definitions were chosen by the researcher to limit the scope of the work, ensuring that the study's aims and objectives are attainable. Considering the above, it can be argued that study delimitations are within the researcher's control. In this study, the seven schools that formed part of the study were located within the Motupa Circuit. The study acknowledge that data was gathered in few selected schools and all of them are public schools. Therefore, the findings might not be generalised to some public schools, but they can be applicable to some schools.

1.13 STUDY OUTLINE

This research study is divided into six chapters:

Chapter 1: Orientation to the Study

This chapter provides a detailed introduction and background to the study, followed by its rationale, problem statement, research questions, research aims and objectives.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

This chapter presents a theoretical framework that guides the study and provides a comprehensive review of the literature. This entails comparing already published literature on the practice of inclusive education.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The chapter includes details of the research methodology, research approach, research design, population and sampling of the study, processes of data collection, methods of data analysis and data interpretation.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and interpretations

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the processes and outcomes of data analysis. The data-driven analytical themes will be presented.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings

This chapter discusses the information gleaned from the data analysis process and presents the study's findings.

Chapter 6: Summary, recommendations and conclusion

This chapter concludes the research and presents the proposed recommendations to the Department of Basic Education and school teachers.

1.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter served as an introduction to the study. It provided an overview of the study's background, including a problem statement that outlines the study's aims and objectives. A summary of the literature review was given, which is expanded further in Chapter 2. A brief presentation of the study methodology, which includes research design, research paradigm, trustworthiness in research and ethical considerations, is discussed in detail in Chapter 3. The next chapter reviews the literature related to the phenomenon under investigation.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 presented the introduction and background of the study. This chapter presents discussions on the literature reviewed concerning inclusive pedagogical practices in secondary schools. Snyder (2019) explains a literature review as a more systematic approach that involves gathering data and organising studies previously conducted on the same topic. Creswell (2013) asserts that a literature review entails summarising and locating studies on a specific topic. Reviewing the literature was critical for this study, as it enabled the researcher to examine previously conducted studies and stay informed about recent developments on the researched phenomenon, both at the national and international levels. Marshal and Rossman (2016) describe a literature review as a deeper conversation that takes place between the current researcher and the literature.

Snyder (2019) contends that evaluating and going through a literature review enables the researcher to identify a gap that needs to be explored. This study aimed to examine current inclusive pedagogical practices, using social realist perspectives as the theoretical framework. The study employed the concepts of pedagogical discourse, structure, culture and agency to analyse the current pedagogical practice of inclusive education. This was carried out to provide improved methods and models that will result in more integrated, cooperative and inclusive pedagogical models for secondary schools in Limpopo. This chapter is divided into two segments: the theoretical framework and the literature review.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Merriam (2018: 21) describes the theoretical framework as the foundation of the study. According to Maxwell (2019: 55), the theoretical framework helps legitimise the research study and guides the other design elements, which evaluate and improve research aims, and create pertinent and realistic research questions. Moreover, it assists in choosing suitable methodologies and spotting any dangers to the validity of the findings. Luft (2022) seems to suggest that a theoretical framework serves as the foundation or scaffolding of a study. Therefore, this study is grounded

in two primary theories, namely Archer's (1999) social realist theory and Vygotsky's social constructivist theory.

2.2.1 Social Realist Theory

According to Archer (1999), the theory of social realism describes how the morphogenetic framework presents, grasps and relates culture, structure and agency. The concept of morphogenesis is at the core of Archer's social realist theory. The concept of morphogenesis implies changes (genesis) in the formation of things (morpho); consequently, a change in agency, culture, or structure (Archer, 1999). In contrast to the concept of morphogenesis is the concept of "morphostasis," as its name suggests, which refers to a situation in which no change occurs. In this theory, the morphogenetic cycle implies an analytical framework that follows the course of time. Practically, the concepts of culture, structure and agency were applied as the most critical theoretical lenses for this study.

The theory of Archer (1999) illustrates the nexus among structure, culture and agency, rather than categorising them separately. According to Archer (1999), it is essential to consider the social context when interacting with people, particularly in classroom situations where inclusive education pedagogical practices are implemented. In this study, the primary focus was to explore inclusive pedagogical practices within the school curriculum of secondary schools in the Motupa Circuit. Therefore, the researcher considered that Archer's (1999) social realist theory would provide a good basis for the exploration of the phenomenon under study. In the context of inclusive classrooms, this study focused on teacher agency to explore inclusive pedagogical practices when teaching learners, ensuring that teachers are strengthened to accommodate all learners, regardless of their diverse learning needs. The knowledge and skills for practising inclusive education require training and patience.

Therefore, this implies that there is a need for a systematic change to empower the agential morphogenesis. Archer's theory (1999) informed this study by highlighting that successful inclusive pedagogical practice requires schools to address challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, poor interpretation of inclusivity policies, and limited resources. Moreover, cultural, structural and teacher agency can hinder the progress of inclusive pedagogical practices.

According to Archer's (1999) social realist theory, the concept of culture relates to the culture that exists within the school as an institution and interprets how inclusive pedagogical practice is viewed and practiced. Archer (1999) asserts that the theoretical lens of agency shows how teachers use their influence and power to implement inclusive pedagogical curricula and exercise their authority in advocating for education that is inclusive to all learners in schools.

2.2.1.1 Structure

Various scholars and philosophers explain the structure in different ways. For example, according to Gava (2019), structure refers to factors that carry influence, factors such as gender, religion, social class, customs, ethnicity, skills and abilities that may limit an agent and their choices. Meanwhile, Ricoeur (2018) defines structure as objects that are grouped from various parts and resources. In line with Ricoeur (2018), this study applies the concept of structure to inclusive education as the availability of appropriate physical spaces and policy resources that enable inclusive practices to occur. In agreement with the above, Roth (2019) states that the idea behind inclusive education involves practices that accommodate all learners in education, regardless of their diverse backgrounds, including spheres of life, customs, beliefs, ethnicity and religion.

Basic (2020) contends that inclusive education cannot exist in isolation. Tebele (2024) asserts that inclusive education strategies are effective when instructors and students have access to the necessary resources. In the context of this study, resources such as screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS), as well as White Paper 6 Special Needs Education (EWP6), are required for the practice of inclusive education. Archer (1999) highlights structure as the crucial component for the effective practice of all policy implementation. In this study, the researcher believes that schools should have classrooms that are suitable for the diverse needs of learners, and it is vital that schools accommodate learners with various learning needs. Basic (2020) states that for a school to be suitable for the practice of inclusive education, structural adjustments such as bathrooms and classrooms should be made in a way that accommodates the needs of learners with challenges.

2.2.1.2 Culture

According to Archer (1995), culture is defined as the interactions among people who share a common social framework. In addition, Archer (1995) asserts that culture encompasses the development of individuals, i.e., providing them with the ethics that guide their practical behaviour. In the context of this study, the interaction between people is determined by material advantage, which can be achieved by responding to contextual rationality. For this study, culture refers to the idea of the interaction that occurs between the teacher and the learner in the classroom. Learners and teachers contribute to the dynamics of social interactions as they engage with each other in inclusive classrooms, ensuring that the goal of improving inclusive education practices is met.

Culture influences how teachers implement inclusive pedagogical practices in classrooms and how learners respond to these practices. In the context of this study, the practice of an inclusive pedagogical curriculum requires teachers who are prepared and willing to address learners with diverse learning needs and difficulties (DoE, 2001). Therefore, the teacher must ensure that relevant and effective pedagogies are selected to meet the diverse needs of learners and accommodate all learners.

Ismael (2022) suggests that school culture comprises shared standards of action that facilitate social integration and provide categories for thinking. In addition, learners with challenges should work with teachers to ensure that their learning needs are met. In the context of this study, it would be challenging to implement inclusive pedagogy in the classroom if there were no shared principles guiding classroom practices. It is of vital importance that both teachers and learners adhere to the guidelines set forth in EWP6.

On the other hand, Idang (2015) emphasises that culture is a readily available asset in all humans. This entails that each institution has its own unique culture, which drives the consideration of implementing inclusive pedagogical practices in schools. It is significant in a school environment to have a culture of caring among teachers and learners. A positive school culture encourages teachers to accommodate all learners in their pedagogical practices, thereby promoting inclusivity within the curriculum. In addition, providing expanded opportunities for learners and using

various approaches to explain concepts is another way to promote inclusivity within the school curriculum. Therefore, it is critical in a school environment to establish a culture of caring among teachers and learners.

2.2.1.3 Agency

This theoretical lens suggests that it is within teachers' power to ensure inclusivity within curriculum implementation by incorporating an inclusive approach into their pedagogical practices. According to Archer (1999), agents refer to people in the cultural-socio system who exist for a common purpose. On the other hand, Bazzani (2023) argues that agency refers to the extent to which individuals within a sociocultural environment influence a particular situation. In concurrence, Ray (2019) states that a teacher holds significant power in the classroom regarding their pedagogical practices to ensure a successful and inclusive education. Silva (2018) emphasises the role that teachers play in inclusive classrooms, as they ensure that policies of inclusivity are successful. Therefore, it is apparent that the concepts of structure, culture and agency are interconnected and rely on one another to facilitate effective implementation (Archer, 1999).

Skae (2020) argues that teachers require adequate resources and appropriate facilities to accommodate all learners, including learners with various learning challenges. The aspects of appropriate resources and facilities are not limited to ramps and toilets that suit the needs of learners who use wheelchairs. EWP6 (DoE, 2001) emphasises that classroom teachers are central to inclusive education and must be able to meet the learning needs of all learners, including those facing barriers to learning. Engelbrecht (2015) asserts that an inclusive classroom ensures that all learners participate in learning effectively.

2.2.1.4 Application of Archer's social realist theory to the study

Archer's social realist theory (1999) appropriately guides this study by framing the exploration of inclusive pedagogical practices that accommodate all learners' diverse needs and challenges within the school curriculum. Within Archer's (1999) social realist theory, the study locates the teacher as an expert who plays a significant role in selecting pedagogical methods that are inclusive to accommodate all learners, including learners with special needs. In the context of this study, teachers should be

given adequate resources and facilities that are suitable for implementing inclusive pedagogical practices in the classroom. Moreover, the teacher establishes a certain culture that is mutually beneficial to learners. The teacher also plays a vital role in the concept of agency, as they use their professional abilities to influence both the community and learners to effectively participate in teaching and learning. Concerning the concept of structure, teachers use their influence to advocate for inclusive practices, ensuring that proper facilities and resources are made available to facilitate the effective practice of inclusive education.

Ricoeur (2018) argues that teachers are at the core of all teaching and learning activities. Therefore, all necessary support and resources should be made available for the practice of inclusive education. Archer's theory (1999) is relevant to this study as it underpins the inclusion of all learners through inclusive pedagogical practices within the school curriculum. Failure to implement such practices can have serious consequences for learners in South Africa (Cronje, 2021). Social realism therefore provides a framework for ensuring that all learners are meaningfully accommodated in teaching and learning.

2.2.1.5 The implications of social realist theory for the implementation of inclusive pedagogical practices

In this study, the social realist theory of Archer (1999) serves as the foundation for understanding how pedagogical practices employed by teachers in the classroom context influence teaching and learning. Archer's (1999) social realist theory plays a crucial role in shaping the education system, ensuring the inclusivity of all learners, regardless of their learning needs and challenges. In addition, social realist theory provides teachers with the framework to select relevant and appropriate pedagogical practices that promote inclusivity in the classroom environment. The implications of the social realist theory for the study are discussed below:

- *Establishing proximal processes*

According to Tong (2022), the idea of proximal processes involves establishing of more reciprocal relationship between the learner and the teacher. Moreover, a reciprocal relationship paves the way for a more meaningful interaction. Archer (1999) discusses the element of agency, whereby a teacher should influence the

learner by ensuring that activities of teaching and learning are directed towards accommodating learners with their various needs. In this study, the concept of reciprocity is important, as it suggests a collaborative approach between the teacher and the learner in working towards a common goal. In the context of inclusive pedagogical practice, the concept of reciprocity can be applied by teachers to help learners with challenges and ensure inclusivity.

Munna (2021) argues that the teacher, as the curriculum specialist, should ensure that pedagogical practices that are used in the classroom context are relevant and address the needs of various learners. Looking at this through the lens of Archer's (1999) social realist perspective, to ensure an inclusive pedagogical practice, a mutual relationship between teachers and learners should be established. This implies that teachers should create a learning environment that allows for the participation of all learners. In agreement, Zhang (2019) states that the role that is played by teachers in inclusive pedagogical practices also enhances positive responses by learners towards teaching and learning.

- *Enabling teachers to establish culture*

According to Archer (2003), culture plays an important role in any institution. Teachers should ensure that a culture of belonging and acceptance is practised in the school environment. As outlined in the norms and standards for educators (DoE, 2000), some of the roles that a teacher is expected to display are community, citizenship and pastoral roles. This role ensures that teachers, in their daily practice, promote commitment and critical and ethical principles. This idea is at the core of Archer's social realist theory. This is in line with the goals outlined in the (NSC) National Curriculum Statement Grade 10-12 to generate learners who can operate efficiently as individuals and be able to work in a team with others (DBE, 2021). Teachers have a critical influence on learners' social and learning development. Furthermore, teachers are entrusted with the lives and futures of learners, ensuring that they nurture and grow them into respected and responsible members of society. Therefore, teachers must always be aware that they are nurturing members of society who should, at a later stage in life, be able to contribute positively to the society of which they are part.

- *Availability of structure to support the development of learners*

It is of vital importance to provide a structure that enhances inclusive pedagogical practices within the school curriculum. This is in accordance with Archer's (1999) social realist theory, which states that for inclusive education practices to be implemented, appropriate structures, such as building facilities, should be made available. Deghaye (2021) shares the same view that relevant facilities should be put in place to support teachers in their inclusive pedagogical practices. This implies that when teachers plan their pedagogical practices, considering their impact on how various learners experience learning, they should consider the diverse learning needs of learners. Teachers must take into consideration the surrounding environment (structure) that surrounds the learner. The practice of inclusive pedagogical processes should not be determined by an isolated system. Therefore, teachers should ensure that their pedagogical processes are relevant and, most importantly, they are aligned with the learning needs of learners.

2.2.2 Social Constructivism Theory

Vygotsky's (1962) social constructivist theory serves as the supplemental theory in this study. The core principle of Vygotsky's social constructivism theory is that it emphasises social interactions between the teacher and the learner (Topciu, 2015). The concept of constructivism is thought to have originated from the period of Socrates, who discovered that social interactions are beneficial to both teachers and learners. Rossouw (2023) believes that interactions among teachers and learners play a vital role in helping learners construct and interpret concealed information and ask questions during the learning process. Kelly (1991) further develops the explanation, drawing on Piaget's (1967) view that constructivism is a description of discovery learning. There is no single, overarching definition of constructivism. Some scholars perceive constructivism as a philosophy of pedagogy, while others regard it as a theory of knowledge (Ugwolozor & Hui, 2020). According to Ugwolozor and Hui (2020), constructivism is an approach in which learners develop an awareness of the resources around them and use them effectively.

Dagar and Yadar (2016) hold the view that constructivism is a theoretical framework in education. As a result, teachers are advised to acknowledge that learners possess certain knowledge; hence, what they need is to be allowed to put it into practice.

Constructivists hold the view that learners construct meaning and understanding on their own; moreover, constructivism is seen as a process of formulating meaning and how individuals attempt to make sense of the world around them (Shah, 2019). In support, Richardson (2003) states that through the constructivist process, learners' own experiences shape their perception of education which influences how learners respond to teaching and learning. This perspective is relevant to the current study, as it facilitates desirable and appropriate inclusive pedagogical practices among teachers.

2.2.2.1 Constructivist perspective of learning

The theory of Vygotsky (1978) divides the constructivist theory of learning into two categories. The first category holds the view that learners construct and make meaning through the creation of new knowledge by applying the knowledge they already possess. Through this explanation, Vygotsky implies that prior knowledge of learners plays a significant role, thereby determining their acquisition of new knowledge (Fang & Ashley, 2004). The second category of learning involves active learner engagement, where understanding is constructed through discussion and reflection on new learning experiences rather than passive information transfer (Fang & Ashley, 2004). The constructivist perspective places the learner at the centre, recognising them as the most important individual, as they construct new knowledge and experiences. An understanding of social constructivism can be taken from the principles outlined by Dewey in Mayer's (2008) work below:

- The first principle states that learners depend on the prior knowledge of others.
- The second principle states that learners discover new perspectives as they adapt and adjust their previously held ideas.
- The third principle is that learning entails creating new ideas rather than memorising facts.
- The fourth principle states that authentic learning occurs when old concepts are used to form conclusions concerning new ideas that contradict previous ideas.

Shah (2019) holds the view that studies adopting constructivism should aim to describe how the process of constructing knowledge unfolds in the learner and how social, instructional and developmental elements influence the construction of new

knowledge. In this study, the researcher adopted the social constructivism theory as the appropriate supporting theory to explore inclusive pedagogical practices within the school curriculum. Both Archer's social realist theory and Vygotsky's social constructivist theory help the study develop an understanding of how learners construct new knowledge and attain inclusive pedagogical practices during teaching and learning. According to Kim (2001), three assumptions guide social constructivism: knowledge, reality and learning.

The concept of knowledge in social constructivism suggests that human beings can build their own knowledge using cultural and social processes (Shah, 2019). The concept of reality in the context of social constructivism implies that learners construct the reality concerning the world around them through social interaction, suggesting that reality is not predetermined. Flair (2019) suggests that learning is not passive or solely internal but, from a constructivist perspective, occurs through learners' active participation in the learning process. Meanwhile, Abacioglu (2023) suggests that learners participate in rationalising their own experiences to generate a social model that ultimately becomes a vital part of their cultural activities.

2.2.2.2 A social constructivist perspective of a learner

Njai (2021) states that social constructivism embraces learner diversity and individuality while actively encouraging, valuing and positioning learners as central to the learning process. Social constructivism views learners as capable of constructing new knowledge through building on already existing knowledge. Therefore, social constructivism encourages learners to actively participate in their learning and own their version of reality that is influenced by their culture, background and knowledge of the world around them. Learners should establish relationships with MKOs in society through social interactions to construct new knowledge. Moreover, this implies that it is essential to consider the culture, background and knowledge of learners when planning pedagogical practices.

2.2.2.3 A social constructivist perspective of the teacher

According to Misra (2020), social constructivists view the teacher as a facilitator of learning. In his view, Misra (2020) asserts that the teacher, during the learning process, gives a lecture to advance the subject matter; on the other hand, the

facilitator assists learners in grasping the content well. The facilitator and the teacher's differences can be noticed during the process of teaching and learning. When teachers act as facilitators, learners engage actively, whereas a passive teaching role results in passive learner participation.

Zajda and Zajda (2021) compare the roles of a facilitator and a teacher, highlighting that the facilitator assists learners from the back, while the teacher assists learners from the front. Moreover, they also indicate that the facilitator asks questions while the teacher provides instruction during the learning process. This implies that teachers should assume the role of the facilitator and ensure that a conducive learning environment is created for learners to receive guidance. Teachers must create a safe learning space that challenges learners and motivates them to engage in critical thinking. Teachers should select pedagogies that assist learners in becoming critical thinkers. This objective can only be realised when teachers can assume various roles and adopt multiple pedagogical practices to suit the needs of learners (Nuñez & Oliver, 2021).

2.2.2.4 A social constructivist view of the teacher's pedagogical processes

Social constructivism is a theoretical framework in sociology and communication that seeks to analyse knowledge and perceptions of the world as constructed by individuals (Mahojan & Mahojan, 2022). Teachers, as pedagogical specialists, are considered agents of change, whereby their teaching and learning activities should prioritise and centre on the needs of learners (Fuhse, 2021). Neves (2021) argues that teachers are entrusted with the responsibility to ensure that their pedagogical practices allow learners to actively construct their meaning and knowledge. Vygotsky regards the teacher as the more knowledgeable other (MKO), who should facilitate the learning process through guidance and building on what the learner already knows. The theory of social constructivism has critical implications for learning and teaching in the classroom context.

According to Werder (2023), the implications of social constructivist theory encompass the dissemination of knowledge to learners by teachers, from the unenlightened to the enlightened. Werder (2023) further argues that teachers should not only be seen as transmitters of knowledge from the known to the unknown. Moreover, he suggests that teachers should not only be seen as those who teach

new lessons daily but rather be viewed as constructivists who guide and provide opportunities for learners. Constructive teachers use relevant pedagogical practices to create a conducive learning environment and consider the prior knowledge of learners (Bovill, 2020). In addition, teachers should ensure that pedagogical practices in the classroom allow learners to display their existing knowledge at the forefront (Bovill, 2020). Thus, constructive teachers should ensure that the selection of their pedagogical practices serves the needs of the learners. Bovill (2020) further advises that constructivist teachers should allocate sufficient time to enable learners to actively construct their knowledge.

On the other hand, Trinidad (2020) emphasises the importance of teachers' preparation of classrooms and carefully selection of pedagogical practices that encourage unity and promote inclusivity. In agreement, Han (2021) shows that curriculum pedagogies should be structured to accommodate the needs of the learners they serve. It is of vital importance that teachers create a safe environment for learners to openly engage with them about the new knowledge they have acquired (Brunner, 1992). According to Asif (2020), teachers' attitudes and personal beliefs towards pedagogy play a crucial role in determining the kind of change they are prepared to make. Egitim (2021) argues that teachers are trained to practise various pedagogical processes; however, some teachers lack the mental capacity to employ pedagogical practices that are inclusive to all learners in a classroom environment. He further suggests that teachers should be more than pedagogical specialists but should also possess the technical ability to select relevant pedagogical practices that address the needs of learners (Egitim, 2021).

Within this study, social constructivism positions the teacher as a facilitator and guide responsible for selecting inclusive pedagogies that support learners in constructing knowledge with the teacher acting as the MKO.

2.2.2.5 The zone of proximal development

Vygotsky (1978) is renowned for his theory of social constructivism and his contributions to the study of semiotics and higher mental functions. Vygotsky is of the view that learning occurs when there is an MKO who facilitates and provides guidance. This process is what Vygotsky refers to as the zone of proximal development, a concept familiar in Vygotsky's theory. The zone of proximal

development is defined as the difference between what the learner can achieve independently and what the learner can achieve with the guidance of an MKO, along with motivation and guidance (Margolis, 2020). The zone of proximal development plays a vital role in Vygotsky's theory, as it paves the way for learners to construct new knowledge and meaning through the guidance of a teacher. In addition, teachers should assign tasks that allow more knowledgeable learners to assist their peers

Vygotsky (1978) asserts that social interaction is fundamental in establishing a relationship between the teacher and the learner. Therefore, it is through this interaction that the learner can deal with any intellectual confusion and construct new knowledge. . Ferguson (2022) argues that through the zone of proximal development (ZPD), teachers create enjoyable, self-directed learning environments that allow learners to learn independently. In agreement, Woolfolk (2013) states that a successful learning process is linked to established relationships and social interactions.

2.2.2.6 The concept of mediation in learning

According to Corbet (2021), the term "mediation" originates from the verb "mediate," which simply means a process that has a complex structure. Mediation can be explained in various ways: the person who mediates, what is mediated, the subject to mediation, and the context of the environment in which mediation is provided (Corbet, 2021). Mediation plays a critical role when it comes to assisting learners in grasping teaching and learning. According to Taber (2020), mediation is the process whereby the teacher assists the learner to construct new knowledge. In the context of this study, mediation helps us understand what teachers teach learners to construct new knowledge and the process of acquiring it. Moreover, it helps us understand how teachers, as facilitators, mediate the process of teaching and learning (Taber, 2020). In this study, teachers should be equipped to apply various pedagogical practices that cater to the needs of learners. Therefore, teachers must consider the choice of their pedagogical practices, as learners have diverse needs and challenges.

2.2.2.7 Vygotsky and the concept of scaffolding

According to Damanhoury (2021), scaffolding can be explained as a method of instruction used by the teacher as a strategy to assist learners in learning before allowing them to take control of their own learning. Lantolf (2021) describes the concept of scaffolding as the process of enabling an unskilled child to carry out a task or solve a problem, so that the child can develop the skills to perform the task independently without assistance. Additionally, Fisher (2023) asserts that the concept of scaffolding represents assistance provided by a teacher, peer, parent or any tool that enables one to actively perform a task independently. According to Vygotsky (1978), teachers play a critical role in ensuring that their pedagogical practices create an environment that promotes interaction.

In the context of this study, it implies that all learners, regardless of their learning needs, should be accommodated through the selection of relevant pedagogical practices that suit their needs. The researcher supports the above sentiment; therefore, for inclusive education to be successful, teachers should apply relevant pedagogical practices.

2.2.2.8 Application of Vygotsky's social constructivism theory to the study

Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism is applicable to this study, as it emphasises social interactions and ensures that teachers develop intervention strategies to assist learners in acquiring new knowledge and perceptions. The ZPD locates the teachers as more knowledgeable, more experienced, and competent mentors (Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of this study, the teacher is regarded as an adult with teaching experience and skills to assist learners in developing knowledge and perceptions as they take responsibility for their learning. The teacher, through the process of mediation, uses pedagogical practices that are relevant and accommodative of learners' learning needs. It is, therefore, crucial for this study to determine whether teachers who are responsible for delivering the curriculum possess the necessary skills and abilities in selecting appropriate pedagogical practices. The concept of the ZPD is relevant to this study, as it guides the exploration of teaching methodologies that accommodate the needs of learners and ensure the creation of a conducive environment.

Phillip and Sengupta (2021) argue that there is no dominant theory that is used for pedagogical practices in the classroom. However, social constructivist theories are most influential in assisting teachers in establishing relationships with learners and selecting pedagogical practices that suit their needs. This theory remains relevant for this study as it places the teacher as competent and skilful in facilitating the learning process.

According to Strom and Visca (2023), learners can learn when there is an MKO who assumes a facilitating role in the learning process. Therefore, in this study, an MKO, according to Vygotsky (1978), is an individual who is skilled and competent to guide learners in the learning process. Social constructivism places the teacher as an instructor during the learning process in the classroom environment. Social constructivism theory has the capacity to afford teachers an opportunity to ensure that in their pedagogical practices, they accommodate all learners.

2.2.2.9 Implications of social constructivism theory

The social constructivism theory of Vygotsky encourages active collaboration between the teacher and the learner. The inclusive education process requires all stakeholders to actively participate in the implementation process. Therefore, social constructivist theory regards the teacher as the MKO; hence, the teacher mediates the learning process. According to Seino and Foster (2021), an MKO can be someone who displays a high level of skills and a deep understanding of certain concepts and can mediate the learning process. In the context of this study, teachers, subject advisors and other relevant stakeholders should collaborate to facilitate the successful implementation of the inclusive education policy. The researcher is in support of the above view, hence, the successful practice of inclusive pedagogical practice in the school curriculum is not an isolated process since it requires collaboration between all stakeholders.

2.2.3 Summary of Theoretical Framework

Both Archer's (1999) social realist theory and Vygotsky's social constructivist theory (1962) apply to this study in the sense that they support the selection of relevant pedagogical practices and encourage a conducive learning environment that enables learners to actively participate in their learning. Failure to apply appropriate

pedagogical practices would have irreversible consequences for the effective implementation of inclusive education (Mupuniarti et al., 2020). The emphasis is on creating an environment that enables learners to take an active part in their learning process (Naidol, 2021).

Adopting these two theories in this study implies that the teacher is expected to facilitate learning and create a learning environment that encourages learners to participate in their learning. Moreover, both theories emphasise the establishment of a conducive environment and social relationships among teachers and learners. The theories apply to this study as they advocate for teachers to select appropriate pedagogical practices that ensure inclusivity. Therefore, teachers must ensure that relevant pedagogical practices are selected to accommodate all learners equally during their teaching process. In addition, teachers should be provided with the necessary support to enable them to perform their professional duties effectively. Supporting teachers will enable them to be equipped and positioned to apply relevant pedagogical teaching strategies that align with the needs of learners in the classroom.

2.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature related to the research topic is vital, national and international studies are reviewed in the following section in order to identify a study gap.

2.3.1 Overview of the Background of Inclusive Education

It is imperative to provide a concise overview of the origins of inclusive education practices and their subsequent adoption as a global priority. According to Hornby (2023), inclusive education emerged as a global priority emphasising the complete inclusion of all children into the education system, irrespective of their abilities or impairments. One of the fundamental human rights that individuals with disabilities hope to have in practice is access to equitable education. Moreover, it is equally crucial that people with disabilities should have access to institutions and quality education. According to Stiefel (2018), historically, learners with disabilities were not accommodated in the same schools as their counterparts. Buchner (2021) states that learners with special needs were put in isolated schools and often experienced discriminatory, restrictive, or inferior educational treatment.

As time passed, the mainstream approach whereby learners with disabilities have been admitted began to gain popularity in other countries (Gee et al., 2020). It was at the Salamanca conference that the needs of people with disabilities were discussed (Graham et al., 2023). The Salamanca conference was attended by 200 delegates representing 92 countries across the world (Meijer & Watkins, 2019). The main objective of the Salamanca conference was to debate about access to education for all learners especially learners with disabilities (UNESCO, 1994). The Salamanca conference deliberations became the most impactful conference as a plan of action on how to enhance access to quality education was developed.

According to Ramivez (2021), the primary goal of the Salamanca statement was to provide guidelines to governments and Ministries of Education on how to establish an inclusive education system. In agreement, Kotzmann (2022) asserts that the Salamanca conference played a vital role in advocating for the rights of people with disability with access to equal-quality education. As part of the deliberations at the conference, it was proposed that all policies of education should be structured towards the common objective of inclusivity (Kotzmann, 2022). The Salamanca Framework of Action paves the way for inclusive education that is founded on the belief that the education system should serve the needs of all learners irrespective of their challenges or disabilities. This implies that institutions should ensure that their system accommodates all learners without prejudice.

In addition, the delegates of the Salamanca conference concluded that inclusive education could be implemented successfully if the principle of the legislation can be based on quality and equal opportunities for all learners (UNESCO, 1994). It was through the Salamanca conference that it became apparent that issues around resources such as infrastructure, school culture and school ethos are contributing factors when it comes to whether schools can become inclusive institutions. Garcia (2023) argues that for inclusive education practice to be a success, it is of vital importance for the government to invest in building structures that accommodate all learners with their various learning needs. Moreover, he suggests that investment in education can be done by establishing forceful policies and equitable distributions of financial support to schools. The researcher is of the view that the Salamanca conference had a huge impact on how learners with disabilities are viewed globally.

Das (2022) emphasises that the goal of the Salamanca conference was to create measures that promote equal education that includes all learners. Lid (2024) notes that the global shift in education perspectives focuses on human development and builds a culture of advocating human rights and equal access to education for all learners. Furthermore, the Salamanca Statement paved the way for all children to be enrolled in the same school environment without discrimination (Lid, 2024). In agreement, Whalley and France (2021) concur that there is a need for policy review and restructuring of the education system to ensure inclusivity. On the other hand, El-Sabagh (2021) maintains that having systems that are restructured to ensure inclusivity will promote equal access to the education needs of all learners. The researcher is of the view that teachers must be trained on how to use various pedagogical practices that will best suit the needs of learners. Teachers in the classroom context experience learners with various abilities and learning needs so they should be equipped to deal with such situations.

2.3.2 The Concept of Inclusive Education

According to Sokal (2020), inclusive education policy in Canada emerged in the 1950s to accommodate learners previously excluded from mainstream schooling and labelled as unteachable. Salmi (2021) indicates that countries such as Canada and India were among the first to implement inclusive policies in their education systems. However, it has been revealed that teachers in those countries still face challenges when implementing policies of inclusivity. Teachers appear to be facing challenges in their pedagogical practices in the classroom as they strive to accommodate all learners. In addition, Florian (2015) concurs that, worldwide, the policy of inclusivity is a complex process.

According to Hoolohan (2020), the concept of inclusive practice entails the process of implementing a set of activities that are organised to introduce change. Scott (2020) notes that implementing inclusive education requires translating policy into practice by enabling teachers to apply their knowledge, skills, and expertise to accommodate all learners equitably, regardless of learning challenges. Hornby (2021) is of the view that there is no single definition of the concept of inclusive education. Mitchell and Sutherland (2020) describe inclusive education as a practice of strengthening the education system's capacity to accommodate all learners

through the application of inclusive education policy. On the other hand, Ainscow (2020) is of the view that inclusivity is a principle that should serve as a guiding tool for all policies and practices that view education as a basic human right accessible to all learners. The concept of inclusivity is generally interpreted as the practice and philosophy of ensuring the accommodation of all learners, regardless of their individual challenges and learning barriers.

According to Theoharis (2024), inclusive education is internationally regarded as a philosophy that promotes justice, safety, equity, and social justice, particularly for learners historically excluded due to disability, gender, ethnicity, or intellectual ability. Considering the above view, Horowitz (2023) reports that the government of South Africa, which assumed power in 1994, brought about various changes in education, among which inclusive education was introduced. The main objective of inclusive education in the education sector was to promote equal access to quality education. However, Makoelle (2020) emphasises that in developing countries such as South Africa, the practice of inclusive education is still far from achieving the desired success level; hence, the education system still faces challenges.

Serero (2021) asserts that some systems and guidelines are essential for inclusive education, outlining how teachers should implement these policies in a classroom environment. However, the policy framework and guidelines on inclusive education do not provide effective solutions to address the challenges that teachers encounter in inclusive pedagogical practices within the classroom environment. Dehaye (2023) notes that the DBE provides only guideline-level support, outlining the legislative framework for inclusive education as set out in the South African Schools Act (1996), which assigns provincial departments responsibility for accommodating learners with barriers in mainstream public schools. Dignath and Kaufman (2022) posit that the practice of inclusive education heavily depends on teachers' attitudes towards learners, professional skills, quality pre-service training and opportunities to maintain their professional development through collaboration with other stakeholders.

In agreement, Niemi (2021) contends that the efficacy of teachers in terms of their adaptability in practice requires teachers to prioritise the best interests and needs of all learners. The above view contextualises Mabulana's (2021) criticism of a one-size-fits-all approach that mandates all learners to achieve and learn through

standardised teaching and learning processes. Mabulana (2021) argues that a universal approach cannot adequately address the diverse requirements and needs of all learners, particularly those with special needs. Olesen (2023) states that the ability of teachers to adapt the classroom environment ensures that a sense of belonging is created in learners and prevents them from feeling excluded. This implies that the skills of learners are not limited to the classroom environment but include adjusting pedagogical practices and strategies to ensure that the curriculum accommodates all learners (Ayaya & Makoelle, 2023).

Shongwe (2021) reports that inclusive education practices are well monitored in Swaziland; hence, some units have been established specifically to supervise inclusive education practices by the Ministry of Education. In addition, officials are appointed to oversee and ensure that teachers receive training and support designed to enhance access to education (Shongwe, 2021). Similarly, Adewumi and Mosito (2019) hold the view that teacher training is essential in ensuring that inclusive education practices are directed towards accommodating all learners, including those with special needs. This validates Mabulana's (2021) argument that a one-size-fits-all strategy will not work; instead, establishing different bodies that monitor and control the practice of inclusive education will yield positive results, even for learners with special needs. Resch and Schritteser (2023) agree with the view that in-service training programmes for teachers will enable them to implement inclusive education practices with excellence. Moreover, Sharma (2020) concurs that in-service training of teachers on inclusive education will yield positive outcomes as teachers will be able to apply pedagogical practices that are relevant and accommodate all learners.

Norwich (2023) argues that there is a need for policy review and restructuring to address the challenges that teachers encounter. In agreement, Bansal and Kaur (2021) assert that there is a need for thorough research on the practices of inclusive education and ensuring balance in the existing imbalances within the education system. The researcher believes that including learners with special needs in the mainstream will stimulate tolerance and acceptance; furthermore, it will ensure that this acceptance extends beyond the classroom.

This implies that when learners with special needs are accommodated in mainstream schools, they will develop positive perceptions towards learners with special needs. Raina (2020) states that inclusive education practices require schools to welcome all learners from their communities, irrespective of their learning challenges. However, the practice of inclusive pedagogical approaches is hindered by a lack of in-service training and a misinterpretation of the policies surrounding inclusive education. Salovita (2020) demonstrates that inclusive education policy places a strong emphasis on the idea that teachers should understand what the policy of inclusivity entails. However, the current situation regarding the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa indicates that teachers' pedagogical practices still require support and development.

Adewumi and Mosito (2019) indicate that in the previous years, when learners were admitted to mainstream schools, there were teachers specifically appointed and trained to deal with the special needs of such learners. However, this strategy did not appear to be widely accepted as a viable mechanism for ensuring inclusivity in certain schools. Lindacher (2020) emphasises the importance of teachers possessing appropriate skills and structuring pedagogical practices to accommodate all learners, including those with special needs. Kauffman and Hornby (2020) argue that effective inclusive education requires collaboration between general and special education teachers towards a shared goal. This implies that for teachers to have a proper understanding of inclusive education policies, they should receive proper training to enhance their practice of ensuring the inclusivity of all learners.

Madiba (2021) indicates that most teachers in mainstream schools' struggle to cope with the fact that they are expected to accommodate learners with special needs. The studies reviewed above are relevant to the current study; hence, they outline various ways in which teachers' attitudes could impact their practice of inclusive education. Moreover, the studies emphasise the need for teachers to be equipped to apply appropriate pedagogical practices that address the needs of learners. The current study aims to investigate how teachers implement inclusive pedagogical practices in their classroom environments which will highlight their training needs.

According to Hollings (2021), there are various stakeholders, each of whom plays a critical role in the implementation of inclusive education. Key role players may

include policymakers, policy implementers, programme designers and learning mediators. However, even though the current study explored how teachers apply inclusive pedagogical practices in school curricula, it shares common goals with the reviewed studies. This study differs from the reviewed literature by focusing on teachers' use of inclusive pedagogical practices in classroom curriculum delivery, rather than on the challenges of implementing inclusive education policy.

2.3.3 Global Perspective of Inclusive Education Practices

According to Love and Horn (2021), achieving successful practice of inclusive education should begin with having guiding mechanisms that guide the practice of inclusive education globally. Furthermore, Love and Horn (2021) indicate that it might seem difficult to practice inclusive education, but it is possible to achieve it. Hence this is because participation and consultation process that involves both teachers and learners with disabilities is important. The primary goal of inclusive pedagogy is to ensure that learners with special needs graduate alongside their peers and are prepared to innovate, design, and participate meaningfully in society (Óskarsdóttir et al., 2020).

In addition, inclusive education should ensure that infrastructure is created to facilitate the use of the human rights model that accommodate disability. Meanwhile, Materechera (2020) emphasises that achieving good practice in inclusive education will entail that mainstream schools are structured in such a way that learners with special needs are acquainted with fourth industrial revolution devices. Amor et al. (2019) argue that there is currently no effective measure used to assess inclusive education practice. This implies that there is no set of standards prescribed to measure the quality of the practice of inclusive education. Amor et al. (2019) further highlight that currently the models used to measure the practice of inclusive education should also be studied.

The researcher is of the view that this will provide an opportunity for effective measurement strategies to assess the practice of inclusive education from various levels. Nilholm (2021) argues that high-quality inclusive education depends on learning environments that address learners' educational as well as social, economic and geographical needs. Furthermore, Nilholm (2021) reiterates that to achieve successful practice in inclusive education, it is crucial to do away with any form of

discrimination such as sending learners with disabilities in certain schools and isolating them. Tanaka and Zegwaard (2018) report that evaluations of inclusive education in countries such as Japan, China, New Zealand, Indonesia, and Malaysia reveal a clear gap between policy and practice in schools. Amor et al. (2019) are of the view that countries should agree on a common operating standard procedure that will guide the implementation of inclusive education.

According to Ewing et al. (2018), when a common standards procedure is employed with the best practice, they can enhance the creative thinking of teachers and ensure that the best common ideas are shared among teachers. Moreover, they can help teachers to disseminate common instructional knowledge throughout the whole country. The researcher is of the view that if countries could use common standard practice of implementing inclusive education, this would ensure that common goal and commitment towards inclusivity by countries. Aktan (2020) notes that teachers in Istanbul face challenges in inclusive pedagogy, struggle to address them effectively, and consequently develop negative attitudes towards inclusivity policy.

According to Spektor-Levy and Yifrach (2019), teachers claim that there is insufficient training to prepare them for the practice of inclusive education. As a result, teachers struggle to determine if their approach to the practice of inclusive education is right or wrong. The researcher is of the view that inference could be made from such claims that challenges by teachers can be solved through in-depth training and workshops. McDonald et al. (2022) seem to suggest that there is a need for policy review concerning inclusive education policies as this will enable measurable and understandable quality inclusive education.

Furthermore, McDonald et al. (2022) suggest that teachers should receive appropriate training on how to develop inclusive pedagogical practice to ensure that teaching and learning accommodate all learners. This could enable teachers to select various methods of pedagogy that suit the needs of all learners in the classroom environment. Taylor (2020) asserts that if teachers are provided with relevant training, it will enable them to possess knowledge and guidance on how they are expected to implement the policy of inclusivity. The studies reviewed above appear to concur with the current study because it address the gaps that exist among teachers to practise inclusive pedagogical practice in their teaching.

However, the current study intends to explore inclusive pedagogical practices in the curriculum of secondary schools of the Motupa Circuit.

Kuper et al. (2020) carried out a study to assess the quality and impact of the practice of inclusive education. The findings of the study revealed that there are no indicative standards for measuring the quality of inclusive education. Kuper et al. (2020) note that countries' failure to reach the successful practice of inclusive education is caused by a lack of information and is propelled by attitudes of discrimination from society. In addition, Carew et al. (2020) indicate that learners with disabilities from developing countries seem to be denied opportunities for quality education as compared to learners who are regarded as normal.

Slee and Tait (2022) argue that teachers are confused about what should be done as part of the standard operating procedure for the practice of inclusive education. In addition, Slee and Tait (2022) suggest that to establish a standard operating procedure for inclusive education practice countries worldwide must develop a common understanding of the concept of inclusivity. In line with the above views, one may conclude that there is an extensive need for research on how appropriate measures can be made to equip teachers on how to apply inclusive pedagogical practice to accommodate all learners. Ainscow (2020) observes that although many developed countries have inclusive education models and frameworks, limited attention is given to pedagogical practices that ensure classroom accommodation of all learners. The challenges of implementing inclusive education persist in be educational crisis in many countries across the world.

According to Grime and Southgate (2021), there are still many learners with disabilities who are failed by the education system because there seems to be too much focus on the assessment and performance of learners. According to Lin and Lin (2019), measuring the practice of inclusive education, assessment of teaching and learning of inclusive pedagogy in the classroom, removing barriers to learning and financing inclusive education provide a structure for discussion. In line with the above argument, one can deduce that there should be international indicators for assessing the practice of inclusive education. Reflecting on the above studies, there is a need for strategies that will guide quality standards for the practice of inclusive education.

2.3.4 The Practice of Inclusive Education in the South African Context

Walton and Engelbrecht (2024) argue that the South African standard of inclusive education cannot be traced. However, before 1994, it was a known fact that in South Africa learners with special needs were denied the opportunity to be admitted to the mainstream schools. The introduction of inclusive education brought hope for learners with special needs and also ensured that they also enjoy the right and access to equal education. Mckenzie (2021) asserts that the practice of inclusive education is a process of ensuring a traditional culture and reproduces the value of ubuntu. Nikula (2024) states that the practice of inclusive education has since taken on different forms and is now seen as an ideology, policy, vision and field of knowledge.

The global initiative of inclusive education brought changes in the system of education worldwide. Inclusive education paved the way for the equal education for all (EFA) movement to receive recognition. According to Kefallinou and Symeonidou (2020), the introduction of inclusive education brought opportunities for learners with disabilities to participate and have access to equal-quality education. Pirtle (2022) highlights that before 1994, the education system of South Africa was characterised by racial discrimination. This implies that quality education was accessed only by a particular section of the society. The researcher is of the view that race and colour cannot be the basis for one to get access to equal education. Therefore, restructuring of the system of education was needed to have an education system that is inclusive and does not discriminate against any learner.

Additionally, Langa et al. (2021) assert that the introduction of inclusive education in South Africa ensured that the education system of the apartheid era was eradicated. Moorosi and Heystek (2021) note that inclusive education policy reflects democratic values by affirming equal access to education and recognising that all learners can learn with appropriate support. According to Clark (2017), the practice of inclusive education does not merely entail having learners in inclusive schools but is based on a well-structured system that is designed to accommodate learners with various learning needs. Venter (2018) states that the South African Constitution requires that there should be a transformation of the education system to align it with the values of human dignity, equality and human rights. The researcher is of the view that

inclusive education is based on the values of acceptance and ensuring that all learners get access to equal-quality education.

In South Africa, the education system of inclusivity is based on the principle of acceptance and diversity (Albertyn, 2019). Lim (2020) asserts that the principle of inclusive education in South Africa entails that learners with special needs should not be placed in isolated areas that restrict their nature to facilitate mutual acceptance and social cohesion. Therefore, this entails that the South African education system was introduced to address the imbalances of the past that were caused by the system of discrimination. The researcher is of the view that inclusive education is most effective when it comes to addressing matters emanating from discrimination and building a society that practices inclusivity and acceptance.

2.3.5 Standard of Inclusive Pedagogical Practices in Schools

Yang (2022) argues that the standard of education is a clear description written on how learning and teaching should be done to achieve curriculum goals. However, Weiss (2022) indicates that the standard of education does not entirely mean that curriculum, but it entails a process of learning and teaching that focuses on all expectations of education which includes grading and assessment. In the context of inclusive education, Conogue (2020) suggests that educational quality lies in the knowledge and practices used to address classroom challenges and to ensure learners with special needs have equal access to education.

2.4 POLICY GUIDELINES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION SYSTEMS TO ENFORCE INCLUSIVITY

The changes in the political sphere in South Africa also brought changes in the system of education. The principle of the changes in the education system has since been laid in the constitution of South Africa. The constitution of South Africa advocates for equal access to education. The following policies are at the foundation of the concept of inclusive education:

2.4.1 Constitution of South Africa

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa ensures all citizens, including learners with special needs, equal access to fundamental rights such as human

dignity, access to information, equality before the law, and equal-quality education. The Constitution advocates for the basic principles of the basic rights to education, rights to equality and the right not to be discriminated against. The core principle of these rights is to redress the imbalances of the past and establish a society that practises acceptance and tolerance. Moreover, this ensures that the policy of inclusive education is accepted and seen as an optimum principle that strengthen the inclusion of various educational needs of all learners in a single educational system. The responsibility for learners with special needs is no longer seen as the responsibility of one person; rather, it is seen as the responsibility of all members of the society (Nilsen, 2020).

According to Dell'Anna and Pellegrini (2021), it is of vital importance that when structuring an education system, it should be done in a way that is accommodative of all learners, embraces their diversity and respects all fundamental rights.

2.9.2 The South Africa Schools Act of 1996

The South African Schools Act (SASA) was promulgated in 1996. Section 84 was aimed at eradicating and dealing with discrimination in schools and ensuring that the rights of all children are protected with regard to access to education. Molina (2021) indicates that in the majority of schools, learners with special needs experience discrimination. Section 5(1) dictates that public schools must admit all learners and serve their educational needs without any form of discrimination. In addressing discrimination, the Act requires schools to provide accessible and accommodating facilities and, where necessary, to make appropriate arrangements to meet the needs of learners with special needs. The SASA makes provision for the following:

- A public school should admit learners and serve their needs without discrimination.
- No learner may be refused admission on the basis that the learner does not conform to the mission and vision of the school.
- No form of any racial discrimination may be practised when implementing language policy.
- Under no circumstances should a learner be denied admission to a public school.

The SASA facilitates and regulates a common system for school governance. The core principle of this act is to establish an education system that accommodates various needs of learners (Malunga, 2023). The SASA further facilitates the procedure for admission of learners to both private and public schools. Additionally, Mompei (2021) states that the SASA is sensitive to learners with special needs and ensures that their right to equal and quality education is realised.

2.9.3 The White Paper on Integrated Disability Strategy

Mckenzie (2021) states that the White Paper on Integrated National Disability Strategy (1997) emphasises access to the curriculum for all learners including learners with disability. According to Makwela (2022), this policy advocates for the basic rights of all learners to access quality education. Engelbrecht (2020) argues that the White Paper on Integrated Disability Strategy signals a paradigm shift from a medical model of disability to a socio-critical model, emphasising societal acceptance of diversity and the responsibility to accommodate the needs of all people.

2.9.4 Guideline for Full-service/Inclusive Schools

This policy guideline was established to underline the vital role played by schools in establishing inclusive systems. The guideline was driven by the DBE Schooling Plan of 2025 in ensuring the implementation of inclusive education. The establishment of the guidelines is a step in the right direction of ensuring that schools become inclusive schools. According to the Salamanca Statement (1994), inclusive schools offer an education system that is effective for the majority of learners and improves cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the whole system of education. The DoE (2005) defines inclusive education as colleges or institutions that provide quality education to all learners by supporting the full range of their learning needs. The following are the ethos and principles of inclusive schools:

- Inclusive schools should strive to obtain equity, access and social justice in education
- Promote a sense of belonging for children and families to experience self-worth
- Have means to respond to diversity by offering education that caters to individual needs irrespective of their challenges or disabilities

- To establish methods to assist institutional transformation to enhance awareness of diversity
- To embrace the vision of society for all, driven by the declaration of human rights
- To adapt flexible, holistic and inclusive approaches to education
- Everyone in the school is responsible for the education of each learner despite their educational needs

The establishment of the guideline policy for full-service schools was a step in the right direction in the sense that it aimed at strengthening all schools to be inclusive and accommodate learners with their various learning needs. Full-service schools play a critical role in ensuring that equity and acceptance are practised in schools. This is critical as it enables teachers to practice care and acceptance of learners and subsequently, learners also have to respect and practice tolerance towards other learners in a school environment.

2.9.5 The White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education; Building an Inclusive Education and Training System

The DOE introduced a policy framework document called White Paper 6 Special Needs Education (EWP6): Building an Inclusive Education Training System (DoE, 2001). The policy framework was introduced to address imbalances of the past concerning education. The document was issued when it was found that only certain groups of learners with disabilities were given specialised education and support and that the system of education had failed to provide support services to learners with special needs.

This means that, in most cases, learners with special needs were not admitted in mainstream schools. The overall number of learners with disabilities who were not in school at that time was shocking (DoE, 2001). To deal with the challenge, it was then recommended that the education system be changed to an inclusive education system to accommodate all learners and ensure that there is equal access to quality education. This change was aimed at ensuring that all learners, especially learners with disabilities, are allowed to participate and display their potential. EWP6 has introduced new concepts such as District-Based Support Teams (DBSTs) and full-service schools. A full-service school is an institution that is equipped to offer support

for a wide range of learning needs in mainstream schools (DBE, 2010). DBSTs make provision for intervention strategies that will help teachers to cope with diverse needs of learners.

With the introduction of EWP6 (DoE, 2001), the government's intentions regarding inclusive education were clear. As of 2001, the government had already begun with teacher development and training. In the South African education system, the implementation of the EWP6 (2001) entails the following:

- To transform education in order to accommodate all learners in the mainstream schools as it was previously marred by discriminations
- Establishing and empowering DBSTs
- To empower special schools to provide quality education to all learners
- Establishing, identifying, and designating full-service schools
- Establishing a standard operating procedure for early identification of learning challenges using the SIAS policy
- Enhancing the professional capacity of teachers through teacher development
- Mobilising societal support and establishing a funding strategy

The inception of EWP6 brought in a new perspective when it comes to the practice of inclusive education in the South African system of education. The system of education of the past was characterised by elements of discrimination. Therefore, the EWP6 was established to pave the way for an education system that is accommodative of all learners and ensures that equal education is not meant for certain groups of society. The researcher is of the view that effective implementation of inclusive education is needed to ensure that learners with disabilities can access education and training.

2.9.6 Guidelines to Ensure Quality Education and Support Special Schools and Special Schools Resource Centres

Historically, equality in education was not extended to the special needs sector (Tefera & Fischman, 2020). According to the Human Rights Commission's 2004 report, learners with special needs, particularly those in rural villages, experienced the most forms of exclusion concerning access to education. The exclusion of learners with special needs in education was further highlighted in the Department of

Education's 2007 report (DoE, 2007). The DOE (2007) report highlights that there were 408 special schools across the country, expected to serve approximately 92 000 learners with special needs.

Moreover, the report indicates that among the schools, those in urban areas were better-resourced (DOE, 2007). It was then, in 2001, that the policy outlined in White Paper 6 was introduced, aiming to make all schools inclusive. Guidelines to ensure quality education and support special schools. The white paper is a document that ensures schools are fully functional and provide quality education to all learners, especially those with special needs. Additionally, the policy provides guidelines on ensuring that special schools meet the minimum requirements to operate effectively as special schools. The policy entails the following.

- Schools that are classified as special schools resource centres must provide support under the DBST
- Special schools should ensure that families of learners enrolled are given support
- Schools should not deny admission to learners who require a high level of support
- Schools should admit learners according to an area of specialisation
- No learner should be denied admission based on the severity of the support they need
- A decision to exempt a learner should be referred and approved by the head of department (HOD)
- Special schools should introduce exit strategies and programmes for learners who are older than 18 years
- Special schools should offer planned individual support.

Previously, quality education was enjoyed by certain groups of people in society. The new education system has been structured in such a way that every learner has equal opportunities for quality education. Moreover, there are policies such as the inclusive education policy, the SIAS policy, and other related policies that ensure that every learner is accommodated in the education system despite their learning challenges. Teachers are equipped with the necessary resources to make interventions that meet the learning needs of learners.

2.9.7 Children's Act No 38 of 2005

The Children's Act was established to give certain rights as contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Government Gazette, 2006). The act provides for various rights of children, aiming to ensure that their rights are protected as minors. The Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 provides provisions regarding the children's court, the adoption of children, the protection of children's social, cultural and religious practices and information on healthcare and education. However, in the context of this study, the researcher will focus on the act specifically in the context of education, as the principles of the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 state that all proceedings concerning the child must be conducted in a manner that protects and promotes the rights of children. In the context of this study, the Children Act is relevant; hence, all children should be afforded the right to equal education without discrimination. The school environment should enhance the development of a child and ensure that teaching pedagogies are designed in such a way that suits the needs of the learners.

It is a fact that the school environment comprises a diverse group of learners. Therefore, teachers are confronted with various needs of learners, and they must also ensure that the curriculum is accommodating to all learners. This implies that the intellectual abilities of all learners should be respected. If there are learners with challenges and barriers to learning, it is the teachers' responsibility to ensure that, through their pedagogies, those learners are accommodated in the teaching and learning process. Teachers are also entrusted with the responsibility of implementing intervention strategies to mitigate the learning challenges of learners. It is critical that the school community, as well as teachers, should recognise learners' challenges, learning barriers and any form of disability that might hinder the child from learning properly. Moreover, teachers should create an enabling environment through pedagogical practices in their classroom and also ensure that all learners are treated fairly.

2.9.8 The National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET) and National Committee on Education and Support (NCESS)

Both the National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training and the National Committee on Education and Support Services were appointed in 1996

October to look into matters of special needs education and training to make recommendations (DOE, 1997). The objective of the commission of NCESS and NCSNET was to ensure that the education system is structured in such a way that accommodate all learners and ensure equal participation in all matters of education. Moreover, the commission's goal was to ensure that schools are equipped to accept and support the development of all learners (DOE, 1997). The final report of NCSNET and NCESS was published in November 1997 (Siebrecht, 2020).

Panda (2021) indicates that the appropriate support for children with disabilities in learning was proposed by the recommendations of the NCSNET and NCESS reports. Moreover, the reports of the commissions aimed to establish an inclusive education system that ensures equal access to education, particularly for learners with special needs. Bless (2022) and Mazibuko (2022) agree that the NCSNET and NCESS reports advanced understanding of learning barriers in South Africa and promoted the use of respectful, inclusive terminology for learners with disabilities. Additionally, the NCSNET and NCESS reports highlighted the following:

- During apartheid, the education system for learners who experienced challenges and learners with disabilities were called learners with special needs
- Special support and education services were offered on a racial basis, with the best services offered to white learners
- The report indicated that learners with special needs were not enrolled in special schools, and some were not even at school at all
- During most learners with special needs were in schools that did not address their learning needs properly
- The report in general indicated that the system of education did not properly meet the needs of learners with special needs.

Both the NCSNET and NCESS commissions remain relevant in today's education system. The researcher of the study believes that the commissions made a significant contribution to inclusive education policy and ensured that children with disabilities or special needs also have access to equal-quality education. The education system of the past, during apartheid, was only serving the interests of a minority section of society. Learners with special needs were isolated and put in different schools that were far away from the mainstream schools, as they were

labelled to be different from normal learners due to their disability (Walton & Engelbrecht, 2024). According to McKenzie (2021), the commissions of NSCNET and NCESS played a significant role in the lives of learners with disabilities and ensured that the education system also catered to their unique learning needs.

2.9.9 National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) Report

According to Meier and West (2020), the NEPI report recommended a shift in the education system, which was previously dominated by inequality and discrimination, to a more inclusive and accommodating system. The report further suggested guidelines for white papers on education; subsequently, this ensured that room for the inclusion of all learners in education is opened. On the other hand, Ainscow (2020) is of the view that the reports introduced new values of a non-sexist society and ensured that there is democracy in education, so that the process of redressing past imbalances might take place. The researcher believes that the recommendations in the above report remain relevant to the practice of inclusive education. Furthermore, the recommendations of the report remain critical for realising a democratic system of education in South Africa.

2.9.10 Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

The establishment of EWP6 in 2001 introduced systems to support inclusive education, one of which is the SIAS policy. Government commitment to inclusivity was further reinforced through the draft national strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) (DBE, 2014). The SIAS policy provides clear guidelines for identifying, assessing, and supporting learners with special needs, particularly those who have been historically marginalised, with the aim of enhancing their participation and opportunities in learning (DBE, 2014; Zhou, 2021).

The education system of South Africa has since implemented various support structures at the circuit and district levels. The goal of the circuit and district support team is to provide support services to teachers, ultimately meeting the diverse learning needs of learners. However, in most cases, the teams are not receiving the necessary support (Paseka, 2020).

According to Paseka (2020), teachers appear to be confused by the various messages surrounding the practice of inclusive education. This is because education

officials appear to lack a clear understanding of the interpretation of inclusive education policy, which ultimately worsens the situation (Paseka, 2020). Francisco (2020) indicates that various strategies have been developed by the DBE; however, teachers seem to struggle with putting these strategies into practice. On the other hand, Melane (2022) alludes that the SIAS policy is seen by most teachers as a burden. It is of vital importance that there should be teachers with proper training, appropriate support and the skills to deliver inclusive, quality education to all children (DBE, 2010). Therefore, the SIAS policy remains relevant in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices as it advocates for equality in access to quality education. Furthermore, this complements the development of schools to accommodate learners with various needs as outlined by the government (DOE, 2001). Scholars such as Maree (2023) and Matolo (2021) further support the course to institutions that serve various needs of learners.

2.10 INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

According to Ollivier (2022), inclusive classrooms can be defined as a common value that promotes a single education system committed to fostering caring and contributing citizens within an inclusive classroom. This implies that various teaching methodologies and learning styles should be applied in the classroom to accommodate the diverse needs of learners, including those with special needs. Education White Paper 6 emphasises that all learners can learn if given relevant support. Moreover, schools need to create more conducive conditions for learners to display their full potential in learning activities. Felder (2018) argues that in developing inclusive classrooms, teachers should understand the needs of learners, including those with special needs. Winston (2022) asserts that teachers should develop efforts and create an encouraging atmosphere that propels learners to have an interest in learning. In a classroom situation, teachers should ensure that learners with disabilities are given extra time during assessment to complete their tasks. On the other hand, Chung (2021) suggests that teachers require adequate support to effectively support learners, particularly those with special needs. This will help teachers select relevant teaching methods for learners when teaching in the classroom. In the context of this study, teachers must ensure that their teaching methods are inclusive of all learners, as learning needs vary.

2.10.1 The Principles and Ethos of Inclusive Classrooms

The principles and ethos of inclusive education embody the core vision of a society for all, as outlined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Alfredsson, 2023). The realisation of a society for all requires a holistic approach that is flexible and inclusive of development, fostering a spirit of collaboration among community members and influencing other community structures. Inclusive classrooms ensure that everyone practices acceptance and tolerance towards learners with disabilities and celebrate individual learners for who they are. The philosophy of an inclusive classroom is based on the following ethos (DOE, 2005):

- Everyone in the school has the responsibility for the education of each learner irrespective of their learning needs;
- There is a unified system in the school that focuses on meeting the needs of learners;
- All teachers are equipped and skilled to support the success and inclusion of all learners;
- All learners should be accommodated in mainstream schools and be respected for their uniqueness;
- Respect and acknowledge the differences in learners;
- Changes behaviour, attitudes, curricula, teaching methods, and the school environment to meet the needs of learners;
- Increase participation of learners with disabilities in learning activities and
- Motivate learners through the development of their strengths and empower them to participate critically in learning.

Inclusive classrooms play a vital role in the school environment, ensuring that learners feel free to express their uniqueness. It is critical for the classroom environment to be inclusive, given the diversity of learners found in schools. Inclusive classrooms foster inclusivity and cultivate a culture of respect and acceptance in schools. Olesen (2023) asserts that teachers have the responsibility to ensure that their classrooms promote inclusivity and tolerance, as the school environment comprises a diverse group of learners. McGuire and Meadan (2022) emphasise the importance of social inclusion in schools, highlighting that it is vital for

teachers to foster a culture of social inclusion among learners both inside and outside the classroom.

2.10.2 Inclusive Pedagogy

According to Freire (2020), the concept of pedagogy encompasses the process of teaching, including the transmission of values, ideas and beliefs. Shah (2021) defines pedagogy as the teaching methods used by teachers in the classroom. In addition, inclusive pedagogy is based on the belief that learners should be taught in a manner that suits their individual needs. Giroux (2024) highlights that inclusive pedagogy aims to apply teaching practices that focus on attending to individual differences in the classroom. The teacher takes responsibility and is committed to the education and learning of all learners. Through inclusive pedagogical practices, the teacher puts skills into practice using differentiating learners' resources, materials, teaching methods, and curriculum to meet the needs of all learners (Demchenko & Bilan, 2021).

The Education White Paper 6 document (2001) places the teacher as the primary resource for the successful practice of inclusive education, and teachers should be able to serve learners according to the level of their diverse learning needs. Nilholm (2021) states that the practice and all processes directed towards inclusivity occur within the classroom environment. Meanwhile, Graham (2020) argues that teachers are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring inclusivity in the classroom through the application of inclusive pedagogical practices. An inclusive classroom empowers learners to take an active role in their own learning (Graham, 2020). Inclusive pedagogy in the classroom is not only about the inclusion of all learners, but it also presents an opportunity to practice tolerance and acceptance of all learners, regardless of their diverse intellectual abilities, cultures, ethnicities and languages (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). Byrd and Alexander (2020) emphasise that the classroom must provide a safe space for learners to develop an understanding and tolerance towards individuals from different racial, gender, linguistic and intellectual backgrounds.

Florian (2018) highlights that inclusive pedagogy is an approach to selecting teaching and learning strategies that respond to the various individual needs of learners. Stentiford (2021) suggests that teachers should incorporate pedagogical

practices in the classroom that address learners' needs and provide appropriate support. Fornauf and Erickson (2020) indicate that all learners have certain individual learning needs. However, it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that individual needs are recognised and accommodated. Therefore, the inclusive pedagogical practice should focus on minimising barriers to learning in the classroom. The researcher believes that the role teachers play in selecting teaching strategies is crucial for ensuring inclusivity in the classroom.

Maher (2020) suggests that to become an inclusive practitioner, it is vital to develop an understanding of policy, theory, and legislation, enabling one to put knowledge into practice. Leithwood (2021) holds the view that achieving the goal of inclusion requires strong leadership from the school management team (SMT) and the development of a whole-school policy on inclusion. Scholars such as Shields (2020) and Aronin (2020) have since emphasised the importance of teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion. In establishing inclusive classrooms, Shields (2020) and Azor (2020) emphasise the importance of teachers developing a sense of shared responsibility with other teachers, parents, community members and relevant stakeholders regarding the practice of inclusive education.

2.10.3 Teachers' Training on Inclusive Pedagogical Practices

Mangope and Mukhupadhyay (2015) emphasise that continuous training of teachers on inclusive education policy is crucial, as it ensures that the curriculum meets the needs of learners. In support, Paseka and Schwab (2020) allude that a responsive curriculum is essential as it will ensure that teachers are flexible, adaptable and responsive to various learning needs of learners in their teaching and learning practices. On the other hand, Salovita (2020) argues that training teachers is vital, as it helps them support and practice inclusion in their classrooms.

According to Lin and Wu (2021), teacher training refers to the process of utilising policies and guidelines to provide newly hired teachers with the knowledge, behaviours, attitudes and expertise necessary to effectively perform their responsibilities in the classroom. This can be accomplished by conducting in-service training or workshops. In the context of this study, the researcher's view is that teachers should be provided with adequate training to possess the relevant skills, knowledge and materials necessary to implement inclusive pedagogical practices.

Lim and Wu (2021) argue that teachers continue to employ traditional pedagogical approaches in the classroom.

Most teachers are used to the traditional method of teaching and learning. However, not all teachers have the skills to ensure the inclusion of all learners during their teaching. Therefore, ongoing teacher training is essential, and schools should provide a supportive, safe environment with adequate time and resources for teachers to develop inclusive pedagogical practices. In other words, the entire school should be arranged to support the teacher, as this will enable teachers to be prepared to practice and apply relevant pedagogical practices that will suit the needs of learners.

Zang (2020) highlights that modern classrooms are complex, and teachers face various demands in ensuring that effective education takes place, even though they often have little or specialised knowledge on dealing with learners with special needs. Cheon and Reeve (2020) suggest that appropriate structures should be put in place to guide and help teachers for the effective practice of inclusivity in classrooms. In concurrence, Jarodzka (2021) recommends that in-service training for teachers focus on producing teachers who can effectively address the challenges of diversity and promote inclusivity in the classroom. Ladson-Billings (2021) shares the same sentiment as Cheon and Reeve (2020) that there is a need for changes in the processes of in-service training for teachers, including both special and regular educators.

Furthermore, Ladson-Billings (2021) asserts that changes introduced should focus on making the most important stakeholders in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices; consequently, teachers will develop positive attitudes towards inclusive pedagogical practices. Mutuku (2023) conducted a study on the in-service training of teachers and their level of preparedness for inclusive education practice in Botswana. One of the main objectives of the study was to explore the level of preparedness and teacher attitudes toward inclusivity in the classroom. The study found that the Botswana education ministry has since realised the effect of isolating learners with special needs. Mutuku (2023) further indicates that the Botswana government has established a consultancy commission to review the provision of

special education. The government of Botswana has since reaffirmed its commitment to providing equal access to quality education (Mutuku, 2023).

Tufue (2023) argues that opportunities for all in education can be achieved through teachers receiving effective in-service training on inclusive pedagogical practice and also motivating teachers to develop positive attitudes and perceptions toward inclusivity. In one's view, teachers are the primary practitioners of teaching and learning activities, and they are not provided with relevant training to implement policies of inclusivity. The above-reviewed studies and the current study share similar characteristics; therefore, both studies employed a qualitative approach. However, the current study aimed to explore the inclusive pedagogical practices used by teachers to deliver the school curriculum.

2.10.4 Infrastructure

Penuel, Riedy and Barber (2020) assert that the infrastructural needs of any school differ from those of other and are aligned with policies and procedures as dictated by the environment within the school. According to Archer (1999), resources play a crucial role in ensuring that inclusivity is practiced in schools. Thus, Education White Paper 6 emphasises that every mainstream school should have resources to provide necessary support to learners with learning barriers, ensuring that the school environment is user-friendly. Moreover, the EWP 6 further declares that all barriers should be removed to ensure that learners with disabilities can receive the necessary support and that appropriate learning materials are accessible to them. Therefore, this implies that schools have convenient resources and infrastructure, such as learning devices, that suit the needs of learners.

2.10.5 Curriculum

Curriculum development within an inclusive education system is a social space in which meaning is constructed, as opposed to the powers of a broader society (Soudien, 2018). Therefore, an inclusive curriculum in South Africa should be aware of how exclusion is still practiced and maintained, and it should be infused with principles of equality (Andrews et al., 2021). There are certain areas of the curriculum and assessment policy (CAPS) that support the practice of inclusive

education (DBE, 2017). However, Andrews et al. (2021) state that the CAPS policy has been criticised for its fast-paced content demands.

The curriculum of inclusive education should serve the needs of the learners it is designed for. According to McKenzie (2020), the curriculum should support inclusive teaching as this will ensure that learners' special needs are accommodated in the education system. Inclusive education is vital as it ensures that individual learners' needs are recognised and addressed. In line with the above, it is evident that achieving inclusive pedagogical practice requires a vital inclusive curriculum system, allowing teachers to be flexible and accommodate all learners.

2.11 TEACHER UNDERSTANDING OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

According to Ioannidi and Malafantis (2022), teachers should have a relevant understanding of teaching pedagogies so that appropriate teaching strategies can be implemented in the classroom. On that note, it is fair to express that a teacher's expertise, professionalism, and pedagogy are key to the practice of inclusive education in the classroom (Byrd & Alexander, 2020). Moreover, Byrd and Alexander (2020) argue that research on programmes for teacher pedagogy is essential, as it will enable teachers to select inclusive pedagogical practices. It has been noted that research on pedagogical practices has been limited, particularly in the area of inclusive pedagogical practices. Walton and Rusznyak (2020) assert that teachers' understanding of teaching methodologies is attributed to multiple factors, including a lack of pedagogical practice resulting from inadequate training. A qualitative study conducted by Mmasa and Anney (2016) on literacy challenges faced by teachers revealed that teachers still experience a lack of skills regarding inclusive pedagogical practices.

According to Makwara (2022), most teachers in rural areas are untrained or semi-trained, as they did not receive specialised training on how to implement a policy of inclusivity during their initial training. Furthermore, teachers are often confused by the various teaching methods they must apply in the classroom during teaching and learning. Marloth (2022) is of the view that structured pedagogical approaches should be the way of teaching, as this will assist teachers in acquiring knowledge for teaching and learning. Structured pedagogy has since been proven effective in both learning outcomes and instructional change (Hoadley, 2024). According to Hilton

(2020), structured pedagogy offers various benefits, including helping teachers develop the necessary skills for effective teaching in the classroom. Structured pedagogy assists teachers by consistently providing on-site support that ultimately assists them to reflect on their practices (Seabela & Ncanywa, 2024).

Seabela and Ncanywa (2024) express concern that teachers often lack support and training, particularly in implementing inclusive education policies. Although teachers face multiple challenges, there are also positive reports that external intervention and support provided to teachers in schools have led to improvements in teacher-inclusive pedagogical practices (Prinsloo & Taylor, 2019). In trying to mitigate the challenges that teachers face in practicing inclusive pedagogy. Seabela and Ncanywa (202) recommend that reflective practice should be incorporated into teaching and learning, meaning that teachers will be equipped to reflect on their practices and critically evaluate their pedagogical approaches.

2.12 POSSIBLE TEACHING STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE ADOPTED FOR INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Mitchell and Sutherland (2020) assert that for classrooms to practice inclusivity, teachers should equally adopt inclusive pedagogical practices in their teaching and learning. Furthermore, teachers should identify and provide intervention strategies in their pedagogical practice. The early identification of barriers in the classroom enables teachers to select appropriate teaching strategies that address the challenges faced by learners. The following are possible teaching strategies that can be adopted in inclusive classrooms.

2.12.1 Whole-Class Discussion Method

According to Bovill (2020), the whole-class teaching method is described as an active teaching model that seeks to promote high-quality dialogue among learners and teachers. The general belief about whole-class teaching methods is that learners receive the same content at the same time, with the teacher as the facilitator. This is a teaching strategy that allows learners to practice choral reading, where all learners read aloud in unison, and the teacher provides guidance. Whole-class teaching is effective as it allows the teacher to ensure that all learners benefit from this strategy. A whole-class strategy is not a passive teaching approach but an

interactive model that promotes active learner participation through two-way engagement.

Bovill (2020) defines whole-class teaching strategy as a process of teaching that enables learners to co-create knowledge in an inclusive environment and it also allows learners to contribute and participate positively and build strong relationships between teachers and learners. Co-creation of knowledge as described by Mitchel and Sutherland (2020) is a pedagogical idea that strongly empowers learners. Bovill (2020) states that in the process of whole-class teaching learners assume three typological roles which are co-researcher, representative and pedagogical designer. In addition, whole-class teaching is the process of teaching which involves learners attending face-to-face together and sharing learning experiences (Bovill, 2020).

Chen (2022) indicates that the advantage of using whole-class teaching is that it facilitates changes in power dynamics relationships among learners and teachers, whereby learners feel empowered to take responsibility for their learning. Although the whole-class teaching strategy has positive impacts, it also has negative impacts associated with this method of teaching (Bovill, 2020). The challenges associated with the whole-class teaching strategy include overcrowding, time constraints, and sustainability (Bovill, 2020).

2.12.2 Cooperative Learning

According to Ravshanovna (2023), cooperative learning is a process that involves learners working together to complete the educational activity and build relationships amongst themselves such as respect, decision-making skills, tolerance, listening skills and acceptance of individual differences. Malatjie (2016) seems to suggest that the total number of cooperative groups can be between two to five positively interdependent learners. Furthermore, Malatjie (2016) describes the element of interdependence as cooperative group members who share common goals and understanding that is directed towards benefiting all members equally, i.e. may include buddy systems and peer tutoring where learners tutor each other during teaching and learning (Skae, 2020). Cooperative teaching requires teachers to use flexible instruction and accommodations to address diverse learning needs, with cooperative learning occurring when key role players collaborate, share responsibilities, and support one another (Møogelvang, 2023).

A study conducted by Malatji (2016) in rural area institutions of higher learning on cooperative learning revealed that cooperative learning encourages learners to develop ability for critical thinking and increased participation. Moreover, cooperative learning strategy has since been recommended as a suitable pedagogy in rural universities. Anderson (2019) suggests the following principles when using cooperative pedagogy:

- Cooperative learning provides face-to-face interaction that takes place in an active instead of a passive environment;
- It promotes positive interdependence – It allows learners to develop a sense that they need each other to complete a task;
- Personal accountability – this principle requires learners to feel that everyone must be accountable for playing their part in completing a task;
- Interpersonal skills – this principle requires learners to work together, be committed to the task, and support each other;
- Reflection- teachers give learners an opportunity to reflect and analyse how well the groups are functioning (Anderson, 2019).

Cooperative learning plays an important role in the learning process of the learner. It is through the application of cooperative learning that learners develop interpersonal skills on how to effectively work in a group with other learners. In addition, learners are presented with an opportunity to analyse and reflect on how well they do when they are working in groups with other learners. Cooperative learning does not only equip learners with skills in learning but also enhances the principle in life that at times we need each other to complete certain tasks and responsibilities.

2.12.3 Reciprocal Teaching

According to Lenchuk (2020) reciprocal teaching refers to a systematic approach to literacy development. The reciprocal teaching (RT) strategy is a method that encourages learners to play an active role in their learning. Bale (2020) asserts that RT allows learners to gradually transition from a guided environment to being independent and empowered to take charge of their learning. According to Mawlood and Abbas (2022), RT should be practiced in such a way that themes that learners are familiar with are used. The role of the teacher in RT is for the teacher to give

instruction and practice. In addition, RT is used as a vehicle to promote inclusivity in the classroom (Mawlood & Abbas, 2022).

2.12.4 Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is a flexible teaching approach that enables teachers to tailor practices to learners' diverse abilities, needs, and experiences within the classroom (Sefotho, 2020). According to Tomlinson (2023), classes include learners with various learning needs. Therefore, teachers should prioritise differentiated instruction to cater to such learning needs.

Skae (2020) asserts that teachers are responsible for using varied teaching strategies and content to accommodate all learners, particularly those with special needs. Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) cited in Sefotho (2020) indicate the following benefits of using differentiated instruction in an inclusive classroom:

- Learners approach to learning are matched with the relevant pedagogy;
- Differentiated instruction gives learners various options to learn;
- It enables teachers to strategically plan on how to meet the needs of learners;
- It allows teachers to craft structured lesson plans in such a way that accommodates various learning needs of learners;
- It enables teachers to observe and understand individual learners learning needs;
- Differentiated instruction provides learners with multiple alternatives, options and methods on how they can learn.

According to Valcke and Godwin (2017) differentiated teaching is used by teachers in the classroom to match learners' approach to learning with the most relevant pedagogy. The application of differentiated instruction ensures that every learner is taught in a teaching pedagogy that is aligned with his/her learning needs. Differentiated instruction enables teachers to prepare, and structure their lesson plans and teaching strategies in a manner that accommodates a diversity of learners and their needs. It is a fact that teachers are faced with learners who come from various backgrounds and ultimately this implies that a teacher is presented with the diverse needs of learners. Therefore, the researcher of the current study is of the view that differentiated instruction remains relevant in delivering school curriculum hence it promotes inclusivity in teaching and learning.

2.12.5 Collaborative Learning

According to Warsah and Jarvis (2021), collaborative learning is a teaching strategy that encourages learners to collaborate in small manageable groups. Collaborative learning can be done by a total of two to five learners to optimise their learning and that of their fellow learners. Studies indicate that the use of CL can enhance academic and social education outcomes among learners. On the contrary, Zubiri and Vidu (2020) argue that collaborative learning strategy cannot be used as an ideal strategy in the daily practice of the classroom. For example, if learners are to be grouped in their different abilities, or based on their gender, the groups are not always structured appropriately.

The advantages of collaborative learning were found by Janssen and Wubbles (2018) and they assert that some learners in the collaborative learning strategy do not have the necessary collaborative skills. A study conducted by Dyson and Hordey (2021) on collaborative teaching of primary school learners has revealed that some learners have low-quality cooperation among groups when they are working with others. The findings of the study further revealed that some learners were struggling to be attentive to others and they rejected others' opinions in the groups. This kind of behaviour was labelled by Janssen and Wubbles (2018) as inappropriate behaviour that impacted the overall functioning of the group. According to Sagner (2018) teachers also experienced challenges in their inclusive pedagogical practices in the classroom.

2.12.6 Problem-Solving Strategy

According to Martz and Hughes (2017), problem-solving is described as the process of finding appropriate methods to close gaps. Kgwete and Malatji (2021) indicate that problem-solving is one of the most important skills that one needs to survive in the world. Kgwete and Malatji (2021) are one of the most important skills that one needs to survive in the world. Kgwete and Malatji (2021) highlight five phases of problem-solving of John Dewey which are as follows.

- Students have a genuine situation of experience that there be continuous activity in which they are interested in;
- That a problem is developed in this circumstance to be a stimulus of thought;

- Students are capable of possessing information and doing observation that is required to deal with it;
- That a recommended solution occurs to him which will be used to develop in an orderly manner;
- The student has an opportunity to test his ideas and applications to develop meaning and make discoveries of himself.

Kgwete and Malatji (2021) found that problem-solving is a critical teaching strategy in higher education, given its importance in both academic contexts and the real world. Furthermore, it is useful for dealing with societal challenges. According to Alsaleh (2020), problem-solving is a teaching method that can be used to develop learners' critical skills that will assist them to adapt and to be competent internationally. Chrisiana and Mandasari (2022) indicate that a problem-solving teaching strategy has its advantages which may include assisting learners to understand content better and to help learners to gain knowledge that will help develop problem-solving skills.

Problem-solving teaching strategy can be used during teaching when the teacher wants to encourage learners to take ownership of their learning. This teaching strategy can also be adopted in the classroom when the teacher wants to encourage learners to develop reasoning and thinking skills that will be useful in the real world. Teachers can also use problem-solving strategies to ensure that teaching and learning are enjoyable, and fun and to differentiate learning experiences (Kgwete & Malatji, 2021). The curriculum assessment policy statement (CAPS) does pave the way for the use of problem-solving teaching strategies in subjects such as languages and mathematics (DBE, 2011).

2.12.7 Problem-Based Learning

According to Li (2021), problem-based learning (PBL) is a teaching strategy that is learner-orientated in its approach. Moreover, Li (2021) believes that PBL enables teachers to have various ways to incorporate literacy and guide learners to be actively engaged in finding a solution to a problem. The following are the aspects of PBL according to Sari and Utomo (2021):

- Learner-centred – this teaching strategy gives learners more power to take responsibility for their learning.
- Critical thinking – it promotes learners to develop critical thinking skills through open-ended questions that have various answers.
- Problem-solving – it enables learners to develop abilities to solve real-life problems.
- Self-directed learning – it promotes the development of metacognitive abilities such as creativity and innovation.
- It encourages student voice – students are given the power to work with what they create.

According to Newman (2005), teachers during teaching should ensure that they give learners activities that are aligned with real-life situations that learners can relate to. The primary objective of PBL is to ensure that learners fully participate in the tasks given. According to Nair et al. (2020), the adoption of PBL encourages lifelong learning by equipping learners from memorisation of facts risks to learning how to learn. In addition, a sense of independence as they take part in constructing their knowledge (Alt & Raichel, 2022). According to Heytek (2021), PBL is a critical approach that can be used to improve the confidence of learners as it enhances their problem-solving skills and to be self-directed learners.

2.12.7.1 Capabilities that learner develop through PBL

According to Newman (2005), there are various capabilities that learners can develop using this approach, however, for this study; I have only chosen those that are applicable for this study. Inclusive pedagogical practice is important hence teachers should select teaching strategies that suit the needs of learners. The PBL approach assists learners to acquire problem-solving skills and develop a sense of interest in learning as they are actively involved. Moreover, this approach encourages learners to reason creatively and critically as during learning and teaching they collaborate productively.

- ***Teaching strategy for the PBL teacher***

The use of PBL places teachers as mediators in the process of learning. The PBL approach focuses much on learners as they have to construct knowledge and

develop problem-solving skills. Learners have various learning needs and as such there is no single teaching approach that accommodate all learners hence the use of PBL approach is essential will ensure that other learners are catered for by this approach. PBL approach is vital as it enables learners to take responsibility for their own learning. This is supported by the theory the theory of constructivism by Vygotsky (1962) when he encourages that knowledge should be constructed by learners while teachers assume the role of the mediator in the learning process. It is important that during the use of PBL teachers emphasise the aspect of collaboration. Heystek (2021) indicates that there are two weaknesses associated with PBL approach, which include time constraints. Secondly, the PBL approach is intended to be used in situation where there is a small group of learners.

2.13 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

Teachers play a vital role both inside the classroom and in the lives of learners. The roles of teachers can be attributed to various parts that teachers play both in teaching and learning. For inclusion of all learners to be successful, it entirely depends on the teacher and how they conduct themselves through pedagogical practices. In recognition of the vital role played by teachers, the DOE (2000) identifies the following seven roles of teachers:

- Learning mediator;
- Interpreter and designer of learning programmes;
- Leader, administrator and manager;
- Community, citizenship and pastoral role;
- Assessor of learning;
- Learning area, subject, discipline, and pastoral role; and
- Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher has explored the inclusive pedagogical practices of teachers in the curriculum. The current study only focused on four selected roles of teachers of the seven, namely, the teacher as the assessor of learning; the teacher as the learning mediator; the teacher as a member of the community; citizenship and pastoral role; and lastly the teacher as the interpreter and designer of learning programmes.

Kulkami and Banerjee (2022) assert that classrooms are made of various learners with different learning needs. Therefore, teachers are confronted with multiple challenges in trying to ensure that all learners are accommodated in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, various learning needs of learners pose as a challenge to teachers as they have to select suitable pedagogical practices that suit the needs of all learners and also to ensure inclusivity. Thus, the role played by teachers is very critical in facilitating curriculum adaptation and the selection of teaching strategies that meet the different learning needs of learners (DOE, 2001).

2.13.1 The Teacher as a Mediator of Learning

According to the Department of Basic Education (2011), the teacher is expected to demonstrate a role of mediation in the learning process and also act in a manner in that displays sensitivity towards the diverse needs of learners. In addition, teachers are expected to create a safe environment, accommodate learners with barriers to learning, and communicate effectively in a manner that shows respect, and recognition of learners and their differences through this recognition of learners and their differences. Through this role the teacher will demonstrate sound knowledge about subject matter and make use of various strategies during teaching and learning to promote inclusion.

According to Chauke and Tabane (2021), the role of the teacher been a mediator in the learning process requires one to understand clearly the various diverse needs of learners to adapt teaching methods to address shortcomings and differences of learners. Moreover, the teacher establishes a warm, friendly, and welcoming atmosphere in the classroom to ensure inclusion of all learners during teaching (Chauke & Tabane, 2021). In the context of this study, the teacher plays a critical role in ensuring that learners receive necessary support during their learning as they have various learning needs. Learning context as provided among others, educational level, culture, different abilities and disabilities bring forth into one environment learners with various learning needs. Therefore, a teacher is expected to display sound knowledge and adopt his teaching strategies to best suit the needs of such learners.

According to the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications (MRTEQ) (DBE, 2011) teachers as mediators in the learning process are expected

to know how to teach their subject, select the best teaching strategies, and determine the pace of the content coverage. Therefore, it is of vital importance for teachers to know the learners they are teaching and how best they learn and this will ensure that they know their individual needs. Furthermore, this will ensure that teachers will tailor their teaching strategies to meet diverse needs of learners.

According to Vygotsky (1978), teaching can occur successfully thus the process of mediation during teaching. This implies the process of assisting the learner through guided questioning and feedback. Mutekwe (2018) notes that mediation is not limited to teachers but can also involve tools that support learners in understanding concepts during the teaching process. Therefore, the role of mediation in this context is to transform the skills of learners from lower to higher (Donald et al., 2011).

2.13.2 the Teacher As an Assessor of Learning

According to Hanesworth et al. (2019), teachers are entrusted with the responsibility to assess learners and offer the necessary support, and also offer remedial support to learners. The MRTEQ (DBE, 2011) declares the teacher as an assessor who should demonstrate understanding of what assessment entails and also has knowledge and skills on how to use assessment processes. Moreover, the teacher is expected to display a high level of understanding of the assessment purpose, processes, and methods of assessment to be able to give feedback to learners (Hanesworth et al., 2019). Ketonen and Nieminen (2024) assert that it is critical for teachers to understand and to be in a position to interpret assessment processes. Leonardsen et al. (2022) define assessment as a process of gathering, recording, interpreting and using learner's information about an educational task.

According to Chan (2023), assessment is seen as an integral and vital part of the learning process. In this study, assessment extends beyond academic achievement to include learners' barriers to learning, ensuring inclusive and needs-sensitive evaluation. It is of vital importance that teachers in their assessment process should ensure that various assessment strategies are used to accommodate various needs of learners (Irons & Elkington, 2021). Donald et al. (2011) argue that teachers should always be intentional with assessment processes in such a way that they should know why they are assessing learners and the purpose of such assessment. In addition, it will assist teachers in knowing as to which area learners struggle with and

be able to use different methods of assessment to accommodate such needs (Donald et al., 2011).

Tovani (2023) emphasises that the purpose of assessment is to assist learners in proceeding with their learning. Therefore, assessment should be built into activities of learning that ensure a link between what is taught and what is assessed. Boltz et al. (2021) state that it is important for teachers to use various methods of assessment as a support mechanism that is used to support learners with learning barriers. In support of the above, Yan and Boud (2021) have highlighted that baseline assessment serves as a guideline tool for the teacher to select relevant and suitable teaching approaches that will ensure the inclusion of all learners.

Diagnostic assessment is used to determine as to which barriers learners experience. Blaschke (2021) explains that formative assessment takes place during the learning process and is meant to influence the learning process. On the other hand, Lombard (2010) describes summative assessment as an assessment that occurs at the end of the learning experience. The purpose of summative assessment is to determine the overall performance of the learner (DBE, 2014). According to the DBE (2014), it is vital for parents and other stakeholders to be part of the assessment strategies to ensure inclusive pedagogical practice in their curriculum practice.

2.13.3 The Teacher in a Pastoral Role

According to Sekhu (2019), one of the vital roles a teacher is expected to display is the pastoral role towards the learners. The pastoral role goes beyond just teaching learners in the classroom to being concerned with the well-being of the learners in and outside the school environment. The minimum requirement for teacher education qualifications recognises a well-defined pastoral role of the teacher as one of the roles a qualified and competent teacher should have to practice both in school and the community (DBE, 2011). Milton (2022) argues that teachers are expected to promote ethical attitudes toward developing values of responsibility and respect toward others.

The teacher will practice values of respect and treating others with dignity as part of upholding the principles of the constitution and democratic values (DBE, 2011).

Therefore, this implies that the teacher is expected to instil values of acceptance and tolerance in the school environment. The school community is made up of learners with various needs and it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that tolerance and respect are practised towards every learner despite their disabilities and intellectual abilities. Therefore, education should prepare learners to be active members of society who take responsibility; and respect themselves and the rights of others.

In the context of this study, the teacher will establish a sense of acceptance of individual learners and their abilities as well as disabilities to create a supportive environment. Therefore, this will ensure that a positive contribution is made towards building appropriate values in education, creating a better nation built on respect, and empowering the needs of learners (Constitution of Republic of South Africa, 1996). In addition, through the pastoral role, teachers will develop active and supportive relations with parents and other relevant stakeholders and key organisations based on a clear understanding of society and developmental factors. Skovdal and Campbell (2015) view the teacher's pastoral role as merely instrumental that is dealing with societal problems as they arise. However, Seavy and Willans (2020) are of the view that the majority of the challenges learners face might not be noticed as the curriculum might not have room to address such challenges.

According to Hove (2023), all matters of schooling involve teachers they are providing a pastoral role in the sense that explicit support is given to learners alongside the curriculum support for moral development. In the context of this study, the researcher agrees with the above as it emphasises the vital role of the pastoral role illustrated by the teacher. The teacher is an active member of the community; therefore, it is important to practice values of acceptance, tolerance and respect and also ensure that other members of the society practice the same. Consequently, this will ensure that the teachers in their teaching make use of appropriate pedagogical practice to ensure inclusion of all learners. The pastoral role of teachers can be attributed to Archer's (1999) element of culture. This implies that teachers at school should see to it that they show care towards the learners. Moreover, teachers should also ensure that learners practice care towards one another. This is important as it will ensure that there is respect and acceptance in the school environment and ultimately this will promote inclusivity.

2.13.4 The Teacher as an Interpreter and Designer of Learning Programmes

According to Sekhu (2019), the teacher is expected to develop learning materials and also assume the responsibility to interpret them to be in a position to practice them appropriately. Moreover, this role ensures that the teacher will understand, interpret, and provide direction on learning programmes, and design and identify specific contexts and requirements relevant to learning (Sekhu, 2019). Milton (2022) asserts that this role enables the teacher to select relevant teaching strategies and learning pace in a manner that is sensitive to the various needs of learners. Tovani (2023) indicates that teachers through this role are expected to select relevant resources that allow teaching to occur in a conducive environment that promotes inclusivity. On the other hand, Kem (2022) highlights that teachers should demonstrate a high level of understanding on curriculum-related matters to implement programmes appropriately. In the context of this study, the researcher is of the view that the teacher should be in a position to use different programmes and adapt the curriculum in a manner that constructs a flexible and individualised learning process.

Christopoulos and Sprangers (2021) assert that teachers should be in a position to design and interpret curriculum programmes that meet various learning needs of learners while bearing in mind their different learning styles. Bellibas and Gumus (2023) note that resource disparities mean teachers in well-resourced schools receive support and time for programme design, while others work under poor conditions and heavy workloads. Meanwhile, Sekhu (2019) asserts that school conditions such as overcrowding, under-resourced schools and lack of finance are common challenges that teachers face in South Africa. The researcher believes that it is vital for teachers to continuously develop themselves professionally and stay updated with relevant educational knowledge so that they can be flexible in their curriculum designs to meet various learning needs of learners.

2.14 GENERAL CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED DURING INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

According to Alhaobi (2021), challenges in the classrooms describe the internal and external factors encountered by teachers and learners that impede the effectiveness of teaching and learning practices. Such obstacles frequently revolve around issues

related to lack of teacher training, inadequate parent participation, time constraints and teacher attitudes.

2.14.1 Lack of Teacher Training

Dalim et al. (2022) define teacher training as the use of policies and procedures to develop teachers' skills, knowledge, behaviours, and attitudes for effective teaching and learning. Teacher training can be acquired through in-service training or workshops. In the context of the current study, it was the view of the researcher that teachers' training plays a vital role in enhancing their training. Therefore, teachers must be equipped with appropriate pedagogical knowledge, materials and skills that will enable them to practice inclusive pedagogical practices in the classroom.

Dalim et al. (2022) assert that teachers appear to persist in using traditional teaching methods such as instructing learners to read and record from books. Although, many learners are capable of doing so, nevertheless, not all teachers have abilities to make sure that all learners are accommodated. Hence, it is necessary and relevant for teachers to continuously be trained to be good in their pedagogical practices in the classrooms. Meanwhile, schools should play a role in motivating teachers and enabling the school environment to be supportive to teachers.

Bergmark (2023) contends that access to equal educational opportunities for all learners can be attained if teachers are given relevant training to develop interest and a positive attitude towards inclusivity. Lo (2021) indicates that classrooms are complex. Therefore, teachers are faced with multiple challenges in their practice of inclusive education. Rashidova (2021) suggests that appropriate structures must be put in place to provide teachers with relevant training and guidance for enhancing their teaching skills and also dealing with diversity in the classroom. In concurrence with McChesney and Aldridge (2021), Crispel and Kasperski (2021) recommend that teacher training programmes must focus on increasing teachers who will competently respond to the challenges of learners in the classroom using practicing inclusive pedagogical practices. Furthermore, Alhaobi (2021) indicates that a better way of dealing with diversity in the classroom is through providing teachers with effective training on pedagogical practices. Drawing from the above submissions on teacher training, it is evident that teachers are not receiving adequate training; hence the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices is not successful.

2.14.2 Inadequate Parent Participation

Wilder (2023) highlights that for teachers to fully attain inclusivity in the classroom, adequate parent participation and involvement are crucial. Moreover, parents are regarded as the primary caregivers of the learners. Therefore, their minimum participation in the education of their children will negatively impact on the efforts of teachers to practice inclusivity in schools. Panaoura (2021) is of the view that teaching learners without the involvement of their parents will result in a negative impact on teaching and learning. In addition, Reay (2023) indicates that parents of learners must give a helping hand where teachers need help in school, especially with learners who are experiencing barriers to learning. The above-reviewed studies make sense especially since the researcher has experience with learners with challenges such as epilepsy. Hence in situations such as this when the learner experiencing challenges often it would be difficult to reach the parent.

Therefore, in this context, parental involvement in this situation would imply that parents since they know the situation of their child should work together with the school to ensure that their children's challenges are attended to effectively. In addition, it is equally important that parents should be accessible at all times to be informed about any crucial information about their child. Parental involvement plays a vital role in the process of teaching and learning. Teachers and parents should work together thus parents should also be honest about any condition or barrier that their child has. This will mean that teachers will be in a position to make means to come up with intervention strategies to assist the learner.

2.14.3 Infrastructure

According to Ramrathan (2021), infrastructure plays a critical role in each an every school for effective teaching and learning. The infrastructural needs of every school differ from one school to another and often are aligned with procedures, departmental policies and the location in which the school is located. Archer (1992) emphasises the vital role that is played by the availability of adequate resources in the process of policy implementation. According to Walton and Engelbrecht (2024), education is a fundamental right of every child, therefore relevant and adequate resources should be in place to support learning and teaching. In addition, the EWP6 notes that all mainstream schools must have adequate resources that will

accommodate the diverse needs of both learners with and learners without learning challenges.

Furthermore, the EWP6 states that all barriers should be removed in schools and ensure that the school environment is friendly, accessible and sensitive to learners with special needs (Walton & Engelbrecht, 2024). The implication of the EWP6 as stipulated above, in Pillay's (2021) words, is that learners who are living with disabilities such as learners who are using walking devices and wheelchairs also have the right to be admitted to mainstream schools. Therefore, this is a call for all schools to have infrastructure that will accommodate learners living with disabilities such as ramps and all other relevant devices that will suit the needs of physically impaired learners.

2.14.4 Inflexible Curriculum

According to Mpu and Adu (2021), there is no clear curriculum that is used as a standard for the practice of inclusive education. In addition, teachers are still using a rigid curriculum that does not present them with an opportunity for universal learning design. The researcher concurs that limited teacher time constrains the development of strategies to support learners with diverse challenges and learning paces. This implies that some learners might grasp the lesson quicker while others might be slow to understand. Therefore, learners who are experiencing learning challenges will need attention as per their different learning needs.

Learning and teaching are aligned with the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) and it strictly dictates that teachers to adhere to the time frames as stated. As much as teachers might be willing to accommodate all learners in their pedagogical practice, time constraints do not fully allow them to do so. In concurrence, Andrews et al. (2021) highlight that the majority of curriculum materials that are utilised in schools do not regard learners with challenges. According to Lin and Ruppap (2021), the curriculum needs to be aligned with the pace, sequence and needs of the learners it is serving. The current researcher is of the view that the curriculum should be aligned with the needs of the learners it is serving. Moreover, the curriculum should not be rigid but should provide for flexibility to ensure that every learner is accommodated.

2.14.5 Overcrowded Classrooms

Although inclusive pedagogical practices promote learner inclusion, overcrowding in South African schools remains a significant challenge (Meier & West, 2020). According to Matsepe et al. (2019) an average class size in South African schools is at the average of 50: 1 teacher. In addition, overcrowding in South African schools impacts teachers' efforts to practice inclusive pedagogy in the classroom hence the class size makes it difficult to reach out to all learners as time constraints also serve as a disadvantage. According to Meier and West (2020), a classroom that has more than 50 learners is considered abnormal and needs reduction.

Mankgele (2023) notes that overcrowding has become normalised in South African schools, contributing to a slow response by the DBE to address the problem. Furthermore, he maintains that South African schools are characterised by disparities about the provision of resources and infrastructure. This is because certain schools are well resourced while other schools are under-resourced which in the end raise concerning questions as to how the distribution of resources and infrastructure is done in schools. In the context of the current study, overcrowding has a negative impact on teachers' application of inclusive pedagogical practices hence time constraints and issues associated with discipline in the classroom will impact on teaching and learning (Matsepe & Maluleke, 2019). According to Biyela (2019), resources and infrastructure are at the core of enabling teachers to practice inclusive pedagogical practices in their curriculum delivery in schools. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to ensure that teachers have manageable class sizes to be able to reach out to all learners in the teaching pedagogies.

2.14.6 Attitudes of Teachers

According to Holmqvist and Lelinge (2021) attitude is defined as the representations of our internal feelings towards various aspects of the physical, social or any issue that we face. However, the ideology of "representation" implies reactions towards a wide range of objects and cognitions about beliefs, thoughts and judgements. In the context of inclusive pedagogical practice, Leonard and Smith (2022) allude that most teachers are sceptical with regards to working with learners with disabilities. Meanwhile, Wray et al. (2022) claim that teachers at times are overwhelmed by implementing policies such as inclusive education policy while they feel that they

were not consulted on policy development. As such, teachers appear not to have a clear understanding of the policy they are expected to implement and as a result, they do not have enough time to plan for the implementation of the policy.

The researcher is of the view that this kind of attitude in the end creates problems that impact teaching and learning. Savolainen and Malinen (2022) argue that the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices depends heavily on what teachers believe (perception) and what they think (attitude). Leonard and Smith (2022) emphasise that teachers should be given the necessary support and resources to be able to practice inclusive pedagogical practice.

2.15 INTERVENTION STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS CURRICULUM

2.15.1 Curriculum Differentiation

According to Tomlinson and Jarvis (2023), curriculum differentiation is the process that involves teachers adapting their teaching methods to offer support to learners who have various learning needs. However, learners do not experience learning at the same time. Therefore, it remains the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that different teaching strategies are used to accommodate learners with various learning needs. Kettler (2021) alludes that a rigid curriculum does not open a room for teachers to be flexible instead it enforces them to adhere to time frames and guidelines as prescribed by the ATP. In agreement, Jolly (2021) asserts that a planned curriculum does not serve the different learning needs of learners as it does not give teachers an opportunity for adaptation. The researcher of the current study concurs with the above submissions. Therefore, curriculum differentiation would be relevant as it will enable teachers to practice inclusive pedagogical practices.

In addition, Kettler (2021) indicates the importance of teachers being afforded with the opportunity and support to employ various pedagogical practices that are aligned with the needs of learners. Jolly (2021) explains teaching strategy as a certain technique a teacher employ in the classroom in order to deliver content matter to the learners. The DoE (2005) promotes the use of curriculum differentiation and encourages teachers to use various teaching strategies in their teaching. Curriculum

differentiation is relevant as it enables teachers to practice inclusive pedagogical practices that promote inclusivity in schools.

2.15.2 Differentiated Instruction

According to Roberts and Inman (2023) differentiated instruction refers to the process of modifying teaching pedagogies to the learning needs of learners. Onyishi and Sefotho (2020) are of the view that differentiated instruction involves teachers adapting content, learning resources, materials and assessment in order to meet individual learning needs of learners. Meanwhile, Celik (2019) explains differentiated instruction as the process of giving learners various options of learning in the classroom. The teacher is entrusted with the responsibility to ensure that all learners are included in the learning process. However, the curriculum in most cases does not allow teachers to deviate from the already prescribed content. As a result, it remains the discretion of the teacher to ensure that content is presented in a differentiated manner to ensure that various learning needs of learners are accommodated. In support of this approach, Roberts and Inman (2023) assert that the differentiated instruction approach allows teachers to strategically plan on how to meet the learning needs of all learners. The researcher is of the view that the use of the approach of differentiated instruction in the classroom will enable inclusive pedagogical practice as classrooms are made of learners with multiple learning needs.

Therefore, differentiated instruction is individual-based in a sense that the interest and ability of a learner are made a priority. Celik (2019) argues that without differentiated instruction, teachers reach only a portion of the class, as classrooms comprise learners with diverse abilities, personalities, and needs. Thus, the implementation of differentiated instruction in the classroom enables teachers to reach out to the individual needs of every learner in their different levels and skills (Somantri & Maburur, 2024). Furthermore, differentiation implies that teachers are at liberty to craft lessons that create an opportunity to tap into various learning needs of learners (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2023).

The application of differentiated instruction allows the teacher to understand and observe individual needs that exist among learners and make use of the understanding to plan teaching instruction (Lavania & Nor, 2020). Therefore,

differentiation is an approach that provides learners with various alternatives, options in terms of what they can learn and how they can learn. Blaz (2023) alludes that differentiated instruction contributes to high performance of learners in learning. On the other hand, Ginja and Chen (2020) contend that the approach of differentiated instruction stimulates the interest of learners and provides an experience that is gratifying to learners. Differentiated instruction can be relevant in the classroom context hence some scholars such as Walton and Engelbrecht (2024) and Roberts and Inman (2023) indicate that learners do well when they learn through their preferred learning approach. Moreover, through the use of differentiated instruction teachers present various learning methods for learners to learn from.

2.15.3 Parental Involvement

According to Paseka and Schwab (2020) collaboration between teachers and parents is key in the practice of inclusive education. Parents are seen as the most recognised key stakeholders in the education of learners (DBE, 2013). Parental involvement does not only play a critical role in the life of a learner but also plays a significant role in the education of the child (Wilder, 2023). According to Stepaniuk (2019) parents are the primary guardians of learners. Therefore, they have to be informed of every relevant information pertaining to the child. Moreover, this implies that parents must be involved in the educational processes of the child.

Otani (2020) is of the view that schools should make all vital information available to parents with regard to how the learner is doing at school and the intellectual abilities of the learner. Subsequently, this will enable the school to also inform parents about any barriers or learning challenges that the learner is facing (Otani, 2020). Walton and Engelbrecht (2024) assert that inclusive schools have a way of turning communities to be inclusive as the culture of inclusivity spreads among the society. Meanwhile, this might be true; the current researcher of this study is of the view that much still needs to be done to promote parental involvement in education. In agreement with the above sentiment are Mpu and Adu (2021) who indicated that there is still much that needs to be done by the DBE to foster and encouraging parental involvement in education.

Mpu and Adu (2021) seem to have a notion that policy goals of ensuring that there is inclusivity in education are well on paper; however they would even be more

meaningful if they were implemented properly. This implies that having good and well-established policies on paper will amount to nothing if the policies are not put into practice. Meanwhile, Numisi et al. (2020) highlight that some parents still have fear and attitude when they are informed about their children especially parents with learners living with disabilities and learning barriers. The researcher of this current study is of the view that parents should be involved in all spheres of education of their children. Moreover, proper involvement of parents in education will alleviate their attitudes and fears.

2.15.4 Teacher Support in Inclusive Pedagogical Practice

Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) describe teacher support as a process of providing all activities that promote the capacity of a school environment to respond to diversity. Moreover, Adewumi and Mosito (2019) highlight that in an environment that support teachers, there should be collaboration among parents, teachers, circuit officials, district officials and communities. Meanwhile, Ferguson et al. (2019) are of the view that support cannot only involve teachers but it should also focus on providing adequate resources that will help learners. According to Landa et al. (2021), educational support services should be made available at all times and also ensure that all role players are in position and know clearly what is expected of them.

Burnett (2021) seems to suggest that there are loopholes when it comes to supporting programmes that are in place to support teachers. Mabotja (2023) alludes that for inclusivity to become a reality in school environment, teachers must be equipped and given necessary support. There is not enough investment on the side of the Department of Basic Education as teachers do not receive adequate support that will enable them to practice inclusive pedagogical practices in their teaching (Mpu & Adu, 2021). Walton and Engelbrecht (2024) note that when teachers receive adequate support and resources, they are more likely to act as facilitators, administrators, and leaders who actively promote inclusive practice.

Khosa and Mukonza (2021) reiterate that one of the most powerful tools to empower teachers for them to practice inclusivity is to ensure clear policy guidelines and support at the school level. In addition, Mabena et al. (2021) report that teachers are demoralised when efforts to improve inclusive pedagogy require personal financial

sacrifice. Lack of support to teachers leads to a change in attitude concerning the policy of inclusivity (Khosa & Mukonza, 2021).

2.16 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The literature reviewed in this study on exploring inclusive pedagogical practice in the school curriculum seems to connote that indeed there are few studies conducted with regard to the current topic especially in schools around Limpopo. Some studies were carried out in the same topic but in other provinces hence the explanations given were not relevant to address challenges in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices by teachers in the curriculum. As a result, this current study intended to gather perceptions and experiences from teachers with regard to exploring of practising inclusive pedagogical practices in the curriculum in schools.

This current study outlined literature related to exploring inclusive pedagogical practice within the school curriculum in line with the identified sub-topics such as the role of teachers in inclusive pedagogical practices; teachers' training in inclusive pedagogy; infrastructure; curriculum; inadequate parental involvement; and attitudes. The literature of the current study was obtained from national and international sources. Theoretical framework that guided this study was formulated and discussed. The chapter that follows will discuss research methodology.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter (Chapter 2) discussed the theoretical framework and review of literature related to the study, where both national and international literature were reviewed on exploring inclusive pedagogical practice in the curriculum in the schools of Motupa Circuit. The current chapter focuses on the chosen research methodology of the study.

The chapter will present the research approach, research design and research paradigm. This chapter details the study's methodology, including data collection procedures, population and sampling, data analysis and management, quality assurance measures, and ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH: QUALITATIVE

This study adopted a qualitative approach as a research approach. According to Creswell and Poth (2016) qualitative approach is an activity that is purposed to identify and position the research study for the researcher to observe the intended context of the study. Myers (2009) defines the qualitative approach as a method of inquiry that intends to move the research study from the underlying assumptions to research design and data collection techniques. On the other hand, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) explain it as the method that the researcher can adopt to make sense of the natural settings of the study through the interpretation of the observed actions in the field. According to Schoonenboom (2017), there are three main research approaches, namely, the quantitative research approach, qualitative research approach and mixed method research approach. This study adopted a qualitative approach to explore inclusive pedagogical practices of the curriculum of schools in the Motupa Circuit.

The researcher adopted a qualitative approach due to its suitability and applicability in what the study sought in terms of exploring inclusive pedagogical practices in delivering the curriculum. Moreover, the use of a qualitative approach enabled the researcher to produce detailed information concerning teachers' teaching methods, attitudes, challenges and intervention strategies that promote inclusivity in schools. Sutton (2015) is of the view that the use of a qualitative approach enables the

researcher to understand and interpret the viewpoints of the participants of the study on issues related to the phenomena of the study. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), the adoption of qualitative research approach is used by researchers who want to bring changes into the world.

The qualitative research approach is concerned with how individuals interpret, make sense of their experiences, understand their realities, and assign meaning to their experiences (Austin, 2014). The qualitative research approach is relevant for this study; hence it allowed participants to describe their lived experiences and to develop meaning and understanding about inclusive pedagogical practices. In support, Lincoln (2003) states that the qualitative research approach is naturalistic and attempts to study people's daily lives and societies in their natural settings, which in the end is helpful when exploring educational environments and practices.

Leavy (2014) indicates that the qualitative research approach is a way of learning about social reality, and it can be used through various disciplines to study different topics. However, in the behavioural and social sciences, the qualitative research approach can be used to describe and explore social phenomenon, to explain meanings of individuals' activities that they conform to, for different situations and events. Researchers can adopt a qualitative research approach to build a deeper understanding of certain factors of social life (Leavy, 2014).

Collins (2018) indicates that qualitative studies adopt the inductive approach, and it is founded on the perception that arises from realistic data rather than on previous predefined assumptions. In this study the researcher employed the same approach of inductive strategy to minimise bias. Moreover, the researcher employed a qualitative approach hence which enabled participants to express themselves fully concerning their thoughts and experiences on the researched phenomenon. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to have an opportunity to understand in depth other important issues that are related and connected to and contribute to the researched phenomenon (Nevenglosky, 2019). In addition, Tenny (2022) suggests that the qualitative research approach enables researchers to be part of and understand the environment of the participants they are investigating. In support of the above view, the researcher is a teacher at Motupa Circuit. This means that the researcher is part of the world he is investigating.

According to Leavy (2014) qualitative research approach is an umbrella concept representing a wide range of research practices and products. Qualitative approach is a continually and important methodological field that evolves with multiple range of research approaches, as well as various perspectives of the nature of the research study itself. A qualitative approach is unique due to its methodological diversity and philosophical nature, as well as being the value system of guiding research processes (Leavy, 2014).

3.3 CHOICE OF RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Gihar (2022) defines a research paradigm as a pattern or method for executing research as well as accumulation of beliefs, ideas or perceptions within which practice and theories may function. According to Kivunja and Kiyuni (2017: 26) research paradigm is described as a frame through which the researcher views the world, a philosophical approach of thought that the study is founded on. Rahi (2017) explains a research paradigm as a basic of beliefs that directs the research under investigation. A paradigm holds a view that true knowledge can only be obtained through deeper interpretation (Rahi, 2017).

The essence of a paradigm in a study is that it assists in the formation of the framework of the study and its methodologies. According to Rehman (2016), paradigm of the study plays a significant role as it serves as the philosophical foundation of the study.

The table below summarises the key philosophical approaches and paradigms that inform educational research, highlighting their defining characteristics, primary focus, and key scholars.

Table 3.1 Summary of Research Approaches and Paradigms

Approach / Paradigm	Key Features	Primary Focus	Key Scholars
Pragmatic Approach	Flexible, non-dogmatic, method-driven; allows mixed methods	Selecting methods that best address the research problem and produce practical outcomes	Leavy (2014); Morgan (2013); Rahi (2017)
Transformative Approach	Democratic, inclusive, participatory; grounded	Social justice, human rights, emancipation,	Matias (2021); Lange (2018); Martino (2022)

	in critical and indigenous perspectives	and social change	
Critical Research Approach	Politically conscious, interdisciplinary; challenges power relations and dominant discourses	Empowerment of marginalised groups and critique of inequality	Chilisa (2019); Mollinga (2020)
Interpretive Paradigm	Subjective, context-bound, meaning-focused; reality is socially constructed	Understanding participants' lived experiences and meanings	Creswell (2014); Schwandt (2015)

There are various paradigms that researchers can use to conduct their studies. Researchers are free to choose the one that best suits their needs. The first is the pragmatic research design, the second is critical research design, and the third is known as the transformative research design.

3.3.1 Pragmatic approach

According to Leavy (2014), the pragmatic approach indicates that different instruments may be helpful in different study circumstances but does not adhere to any one set of rules or beliefs. Rahi (2017) shares the same sentiments with Leavy that no system or philosophy is associated with pragmatism. Morgan (2013) asserts that pragmatics stresses much on the results of action, arguing that any theory that is applicable in a given situation ought to be taken into account. Therefore, the researcher is at liberty to make use of both the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach.

3.3.2 Transformative approach

According to Matias (2021) philosophical belief system known as the transformative method arose from trans disciplinary contexts and incorporates feminist, critical race, critical pedagogy, critical theory, and indigenous views. It advocates for social justice, human rights, and viewpoints that are focused on social action (Martino, 2022). The transformative approach is founded on the principle that research should be democratic, inclusive, participatory, and non-academic stakeholders should be part of the research process.

3.3.3 Critical research approach

According to Chilisa (2019) critical research approach is created to encompass interdisciplinary settings like power-rich settings, social justice issues matters and dominant discourse. According to the critical approach, research is a political force that has the capacity to liberate and empower people. The critical philosophical approach aims to foreground the experiences and viewpoints of those obligated in the periphery of the hierarchical social order. The critical approach incorporated a wide range of viewpoints, including feminist, critical race, queer, indigenous, postmodernist, and post-structuralism theories (Mollinga, 2020).

3.4 RESEARCH PARADIGM: INTERPRETIVIST PARADIGM

This study has employed interpretive as a research paradigm of the study. The interpretivist paradigm was chosen because it enables an in-depth understanding of participants' lived experiences and meanings attached to inclusive pedagogical practices within their specific school contexts

The interpretive paradigm is embedded in the qualitative study. Considering this, it has been demonstrated that the interpretive approach not only generates knowledge based on evidence but also generates credible applicable knowledge (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Leavy, 2017). The researcher selected this paradigm as it enabled him to engage with and address daily experiences by revealing fresh knowledge that can be used effectively in the future. The study explored inclusive pedagogical practices employed by teachers in the Motupa Circuit to practice delivering the curriculum. The observed practices were analysed based on teachers' inclusive pedagogical practices used during teaching and learning.

According to Pham (2018), the interpretivist paradigm embraces relativist ontology, positing that a single phenomenon may provide various interpretations rather than one truth ascertainable through measurement. Hammersley (2013) emphasises that interpretivist researchers should attempt to comprehend the various ways people view and experience the world in different cultures and contexts. This paradigm is relevant to the study because it explores inclusive pedagogical practices used by teachers in the classroom, and interpretivism's primary goal is to understand people's subjective perceptions of the world (Ryan, 2018).

Furthermore, the interpretivist paradigm emphasises understanding the social context and meanings underlying human actions, rather than merely describing people, objects, or events. Second, by using important approaches like grounded theory, ethnography and case studies, the researcher may carry out research in real settings and obtain a firsthand understanding of the things under study (Hatch, 2023). Third, it enables the researcher to prompt and investigate issues that are not easy to observe, thus, the researcher can seek further clarity through probing the participants' views, feelings, values, perspectives, and perceptions (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). The above benefits made the study authentic since they are well aligned with the study. The interpretivist paradigm was adopted to explore inclusive pedagogical practices used by teachers in the classroom environment to achieve inclusivity. Moreover, the interpretivism approach was used in this study to describe teachers' reasons for selecting certain teaching strategies during teaching and learning.

3.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERPRETIVE PARADIGM

Leavy (2014) asserts that research paradigms can best be understood through the three lenses, namely, epistemology, ontology and axiology. Ontology refers to how we understand knowledge and the world around us, while epistemology deals with how we understand how we know and understand the world around us (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Axiology is mainly concerned with understanding and interpreting beliefs, values, and how these attributes influence the researcher (Leavy, 2014).

3.5.1 Epistemology

According to Cooksey and McDonald (2019), epistemology is used to describe knowledge. Epistemology is a term used in research to explain how we learn things and how we know what is true. Kienhues et al. (2020) describe epistemology as the study of the nature of knowledge and justification. Epistemology covers the very foundations of knowledge, how it may be obtained, and how it can be shared with other people. It emphasises the type of human knowledge and understanding that the researcher can potentially get to expand, deepen, and broaden her field of study (Lonka et al., 2021). Four sources of knowledge are identified in epistemology namely, empirical, logical, authoritative and intuitive. Beliefs, faith and intuition are all linked to intuition.

If this is true, the researchers' work is epistemologically grounded and is referred to as intuitive knowledge. Nonetheless, epistemology is based on authoritative knowledge if the researcher uses information obtained from books, experts and organisation leaders. On the other hand, your research is known as logical or rationalist epistemology if it emphasises reason as the means of discovering the truth. However, if your focus is on the realisation that knowledge is best acquired through encounters with common sense, and demonstrable objective facts, then it means your approach is grounded on empirical epistemology (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It is crucial to inform readers of this study that this study aimed to comprehend knowledge from an empirical epistemological perspective by using observable actions and common-sense experiences. Epistemology is crucial. After all, it enables the researcher to develop faith and trust in their facts because it influences how the researcher approaches learning in the social setting they have studied (Mulisa, 2022). Van Der Walt (2020) claims that interpretive scholars create new knowledge by observing natural environments or everyday activities. In the context of this study, the inclusive pedagogical practice of teachers was observed and evaluated, which enabled the researcher to construct new knowledge.

3.5.2 Ontology

Ontology is the philosophical field that examines the presumptions that a researcher makes to accept the reality of the social phenomenon they are studying (Khatri, 2020). This school of thought is the philosophical investigation of the essence of being and existence, as well as the fundamental types of objects that exist and their connections (Otoo, 2020). Ontology assesses the researchers' fundamental views and lifestyles. It aids in the researcher's conceptualisation of the kind and nature of reality as well as what the researcher claims ought to be understood about reality. It is critical when researching to comprehend the philosophical nature of truth when collecting data.

Moreover, it also aids the researcher in focusing their thoughts on the study problems, their applicability, and the methods they employ to tackle the issue to contribute and find a solution (Saliya, 2023). Meanwhile, Moroi (2021) asserts that researchers who employ the interpretivism paradigm provide insight into how people make sense of the world through studying people in their natural settings, going

about their daily lives, and interacting with others. Therefore, in the context of this study, realities regarding inclusive pedagogical practices were explored and evaluated through observations and interviews of participants.

3.5.3 Axiology

According to Pretorius (2024), axiology is the ethical considerations that the researcher must make while creating a research proposal. It is the philosophical perspective that the researcher should consider making prudent decisions (Rooney, 2016). In axiology, conceptions of moral and immoral behaviours related to the research are defined, assessed, and understood (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It gives top priority to the most crucial elements of the study, including the participants of the study, the data, and the intended audience for the findings (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). According to Mele (2024), there are four pillars of ethical behaviour, namely, deontology, morality, teleology and fairness.

Deontology is the belief that every choice has repercussions that are intended to be advantageous to all parties involved. The term “morality” refers to the internal moral principles that will be maintained throughout the research process. For instance, the researcher must be truthful in their reporting and interpretation of the collected data. Teleology is the theory of morality that says that doing what is essentially good is a moral requirement that ought to be sought in every human endeavour. Fairness requires that the researcher treats each research participant equally and ensures that each person’s rights are upheld. This involves activities by the researcher such as treating each person fairly such as preventing any instances of participant discrimination (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN: CASE STUDY

Moser and Korstjens (2018) state that research design is an overarching strategy that demonstrates how data is collected to answer the research questions and the methods that will be used to analyse data. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), research design is the procedure for gathering, evaluating, interpreting and summarising data for a study. Blaikie and Priest (2019) describe research design as a strategic framework that the researcher uses to anticipate how to implement their study ideas into action. Case study design was adopted in this study as a research

design. Case studies are popular for their systematic inquiries in which the researcher aims to deeply investigate an event, activity, programme, and processes with one or more individual participants (Yin, 2009). This study explored pedagogical practices that teachers employed in the classroom environment in delivering the school curriculum. The case could not be taken into account without context, so the classroom where teachers teach was deemed significant. Hence, the pedagogical teaching strategies that teachers adopt are used in the classroom during teaching and learning to practice inclusivity.

A case study is defined by Taherdoost (2021) as a phenomenon that occurs in a restricted context. Blaikie and Priest (2019) concur that a case constitutes the researcher's unit of analysis. Hennink et al. (2020) describe a case study as a written account of an issue or circumstance. A case study has the advantage of allowing collaboration among the researcher and the participants, while also allowing participants to tell their story (Ignatow & Mihalcea, 2017). The current study selected a case study design to explore pedagogical practices used by teachers to ensure inclusivity in education. It is for this reason that the case study approach was chosen above other designs, as it is generally acceptable for pure qualitative studies.

Yin (2009) suggests that a case study design is appropriate when a study seeks to answer "how" and "why" questions, emphasises context and setting, and does not involve manipulating participants' behaviour. In the context of this study, the researcher needed to choose an appropriate case study design that directed the overall objective of the study. In addition, it was also critical for the researcher to ensure that the case was aligned with the study research questions. In this context, the researcher must establish whether the study seeks to describe the case, making comparisons among two cases or to explore the case (Yin, 2009). Moreover, it was going to be difficult for the researcher to have a true picture of teachers' practice of inclusive pedagogical practice in the classroom to ensure inclusivity without considering the real context and the environment in which teaching strategies are used.

Yin (2009) categorises case studies as exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive; on the other hand, Mauck (2022) indicates case studies as instrumental, intrinsic or collective. Yin (2009) defines an explanatory case study as a design used to explain

causal relationships in complex real-life contexts that cannot be examined through surveys or experiments. An exploratory case study is used to investigate those situations when there is no distinct set of results from the intervention under evaluation. On the other hand, a descriptive case study describes an intervention in the actual setting in which it took place (Yin, 2009).

According to Mauck (2022), case studies can be distinguished into three categories which are: intrinsic, instrumental case studies and multiple-case studies. Using multiple-case studies, the researcher can examine variations both within and across cases. The ultimate objective is to replicate results across investigated cases. The concept “intrinsic case study” implies that the researcher should use this method if they are genuinely interested in the case and when the goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the case. An instrumental case study is used to accomplish something other than comprehending a specific circumstance. The nature and description of collective case studies are comparable to those of numerous case studies (Mauck, 2022). This study adopted instrumental case study

According to Scattergood (2024), case study design enables the researcher to analyse and evaluate the behaviours of a single subject group to comprehend the experiences of individuals in their social context. Participants in the current study included teachers, department heads, deputy principals and principals. These individuals work in a variety of settings that facilitate social interactions between students and other social partners who are impacted by the practice of inclusive pedagogies to enhance inclusivity in education. Yazan (2015) states that a case study design uses a variety of evidence from case scenarios to try and answer specific issues.

3.7 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Lohr (2021) defines the study’s population as the particular community that is selected and from which study participants are drawn. According to Casteel and Bridier (2021), population refers to the sum of all the items and individuals that satisfy the necessary set of requirements. Rahman (2023) asserts that a population is described as a collection of cases or items, including things and humans that meet specific criteria to which the findings of a research study can be generalised. The present study involved secondary in the rural communities of the Motupa Circuit of

Mopani-West District. This study targeted the population of teachers employed at secondary schools within the Motupa Circuit, Mopani-West District of Limpopo Province. There are a total of 11 secondary schools in the Motupa Circuit, with a total population of 427 teachers across the circuit. Schools in this category fall under Quintile 1 and are considered underprivileged; learners are not required to pay tuition and are also eligible for the school feeding programme. Sampling of the study environment is an essential part of data collection that frames the entire study methodology (Campbell et al., 2020).

3.8 SAMPLING: PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

Lohr (2021) describes sampling as a process used by a researcher to systematically select a specified number of people from a larger population to be employed as subjects for the study. According to Lakens (2022), the term “sampling” describes a certain group of individuals that the researcher has chosen to gather data from. Mohajan (2020) describes sampling as the procedure for choosing a subset of the population to study for investigation. A sample is a subset of the population chosen to take part in the study; it is a portion of the entire population chosen to take part in the investigation (Mishra & Alok, 2022). Intensive purposive sampling was used in this study, and the sample consisted of 14 educators from secondary schools of Motupa Circuit.

According to Campbell et al. (2020), the foundation of purposeful sampling is that it looks for the best cases so that the study may get the best data. It is the practice of choosing a sample of units from a data collection to gauge the traits, convictions, and perspectives of participants (Schreier, 2018). Intensive purposeful sampling was the most suitable method for this investigation, given that it allowed the researcher to address the study’s goals and questions (Lakens, 2022).

This study employed intensive purposive sampling to select two educators from each of the seven schools sampled. In each of the seven schools, the principal and one SMT member were selected, making a total of 14 participants. The 14 sampled educators represented the seven schools sampled out of the 21 schools in Motupa Circuit. The 14 participants were purposefully sampled to be part of the study based on the experience and the depth of the knowledge they possess in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices. The sampling procedure enabled the researcher to

get pertinent information on inclusive education policies and practices. In addition, Purposive sampling was employed for this study to gain access to teachers who were proficient in the inclusive pedagogies for ensuring inclusivity in the classrooms.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION

Tikito and Souissi (2020) describe data collection as the systematic acquiring of information pertinent to the study issues. Data collection allows the researcher to gather information to address research questions. Alam (2021) indicates that numerous techniques can be used to generate data in studies that are qualitative such as document analysis, interviews and observations. The current study adopted individual semi-structured interviews, structured observations and document analysis as part of data generation. Data generation techniques are discussed in detail below.

3.9.1 Individual Semi-Structured Interviews

In qualitative research, one of the most prominent methods for data generation is the interview. Elliott (2020) describes an interview as a one-on-one discussion with a single respondent in which the participants are allowed to share their narratives and experiences. According to Brinkmann (2022), an interview is an in-person conversation where the interviewer poses questions to generate responses that can be examined in a qualitative study. McCombes (2019) explains that one advantage of interviews is that they provide participants the freedom to answer open-ended questions, which might result in more intriguing and detailed information regarding the topic under study. Qualitative interviewing is adaptable, dynamic, and the interviewer acts as a delighted data collector whose job is to persuade participants to relax sufficiently to answer the pre-planned questions (Tavory, 2020).

According to Tavory (2022), in-depth interviews are in-person, one-on-one meetings between the interviewer and the interviewee in which the interviewer seeks to understand the interviewee's thoughts about their lives and experiences as they are articulated in their own words. Moreover, Tavory (2022) indicates that interviews are most appropriate in studies where researchers have a reasonably clear idea of their interests and the types of questions they want to ask.

This current study employed semi-structured interviews. Brinkmann (2022) states that semi-structured interviews employ pre-planned questions that enable more in-

depth questioning. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to seek clarification to gather additional insight from participants' responses. Lim (2024) contends that the motivation for in-depth interviews stems from a desire to understand participants' lived experiences and the meaning they derive from them. Taherdoost (2022) asserts that semi-structured interviews yield fascinating, reliable and trustworthy firsthand data by taking turns conversing with participants of the study.

3.9.1.1 Advantages of using semi-structured interviews

- Flexibility permits the researcher to investigate more for additional in-depth clarity to understand properly the phenomenon under examination.
- Interviews aid researchers in capturing behaviour and feelings. In this study, during the interview session, the researcher examined participants' feelings and opinions toward inclusive pedagogical practice.
- The interview enables personal contact with participants. In this study, direct encounters with participants allowed the researcher to obtain high-quality data.
- Interviews enable the researcher to involve a wide variety of participants. In the context of this study, the use of interviews allowed the researcher to gain insight into the different sorts of participants and their personalities.

According to Dahlin (2021), one-on-one interaction with participants is beneficial to the study as it allows the researcher space for follow-up inquiries when needed.

3.9.1.2 Disadvantages of using semi-structured interviews

- Interviews are a time-consuming update.
- They cause a lot of anxiety for participants who find direct contact uncomfortable.
- At times, the interview process can be costly, as the researcher has to travel to access the participants.

To address concerns related to interviews, the researcher developed pre-planned core questions in alignment with the objectives of the study and to improve time efficiency.

3.9.2 Document Analysis

Fink (2019) describes document analysis as a methodical process for examining or assessing both electronic and printed documents for a study. Document analysis is a strategy used by academics to carefully investigate texts or documents. This approach may be used to unearth hidden topics when minority groups are overlooked or their historical material is poorly documented in textbooks or curricula (Dalglish et al., 2020). In qualitative studies, document analysis refers to examining and interpreting material to extract meaning, acquire insight, and build empirical knowledge (Carcary, 2020). Documents such as lesson preparations, sbst files and learner profiling were analysed in this study. The documents that were analysed played a critical role in providing a foundational context for the study and also enhancing the credibility of the findings.

Goyal and Kumar (2021) maintain that all types of study documentation may help researchers get insight into the research topic, gain comprehension and find significance concerning the researched problem. The study analysed lesson plans and teaching strategies used by teachers when teaching learners in the classroom. Documents such as lesson plans and the curriculum assessment policy statement (CAPS) were analysed. Document analysis is an exceptionally appropriate research method for qualitative case studies that provide detailed descriptions of a single phenomenon, event, organization, or program (Verma & Yadav, 2021).

All forms of documents can help the researcher discover meaning, build knowledge, and find insights related to the study subject (Carcary, 2020). In the context of this study, document analysis was performed to determine if the evidence gathered from classroom observation and individual interviews matched what was found while studying the contents of the documents. A comparison of the teacher's actions, viewpoints and the data in the documents was done during the classroom observation and teacher interviews, in particular, the teaching strategies employed by teachers during their teaching and learning. Stirling and Takarangi (2024) advocate the use of documents as a tool to validate the opinions and voices of participants.

3.9.2.1 Advantages of using document analysis

Document analysis is more methodical and efficient since it takes less time compared to other research approaches. Document analysis involves a process of data selection instead of the collection of data (Liebenberg et al., 2020). Secondly, data is readily accessible, which means that the researcher may access the materials without the authors' consent. Document analysis is cost-effective, which implies it costs less than other techniques.

3.9.2.2 Disadvantages of using document analysis

Some disadvantages associated with document analysis are that document analysis might produce insufficient data, the reason being that available documents are produced for certain reasons but not specifically for the study (Bowen, 2009). Verma and Yadav (2021) emphasise that they might lead the researcher to select incomplete information because of researcher biased.

3.9.3 Structured Observation

An observation is a tool that gives the researcher the chance to gather data in real time from real-time environments to obtain firsthand knowledge by acting as an observer of what is taking place in a designated setting (Lofland et al., 2022). Tracy (2024) describes observation as the process of seeing people, events and physical traits in their natural environments to obtain knowledge. Observation advances the study of social processes by offering descriptions that support the progression of the phenomenon under investigation. The current study adopted structured observations to observe lesson preparations of teachers and their choice of teaching strategies that enhanced inclusivity in the classroom, moreover, the classroom environment, teaching resources, attitudes and overall conditions of learning were observed. While conducting observations, the researcher adopted a non-intrusive role, documenting notes by the observation plan (Tracy, 2024).

According to Lofland et al. (2022), in alignment with the qualitative method, researchers should monitor participants, their behaviours and their environments. The purpose of doing observations is to collect data about groups and individuals in their daily activities. An observer engages in daily activities within a specific environment and subsequently generates written reports of on-going interactions

(Lofland et al., 2022). Ford et al. (2017) emphasises the human and physical nature of observations, asserting, “data is obtained by subjecting oneself, one’s body, personality and social circumstances to the contingencies affecting a group of individuals.”

3.9.3.1 Types of observations

Mittag and Pappu (2022) have highlighted three categories of observation that offer a structure for comprehending this procedure, which are participants’ observation, non-participants observation and indirect observation. The goal of participant observation is to gain insight into a particular culture over an extended period, either as a member or as an outsider (Harvey, 2021). Researchers use non-participant observation to gain an objective perspective on settings, relationships and interactions (Harvey, 2021). Indirect observation, on the other hand, relies solely on the observation made by other researchers, whether through auto-observation, documentation or recordings (Harvey, 2021).

3.9.3.2 Observation techniques

According to Nelson (2017), there are two categories of observation which are direct and indirect observation. Direct observation is a traditional research technique that is still widely used in ethnography and other qualitative studies (Dignath & Veenman, 2021). Direct observation is used to collect data regarding a variety of experiences in culture for both local and international contexts. This sort of observation enables a researcher to obtain data concerning social practices regarding what respondents are doing and the way they do such activities in a naturally occurring context (Dignath & Veenman, 2021). Another sub-dimension of direct observation is direct non-participant observation. By using direct non-participating observation, the researcher can gain a deeper understanding of the topic of study while maintaining the role of an outsider or visitor (Taherdoost, 2021). In the context of this study, the researcher assumed the role of non-direct participant observer to observe teachers’ practice of pedagogical strategies during teaching and learning.

The second technique of observation is called indirect observation. Indirect observation is known as using a one-sided mirror, a covert camera or a voice recorder or watching events without the researcher present. It is a supported

strategy that allows the researcher to collect knowledge about the past and current experiences that the researcher did not have access to previously (Mishra & Alok, 2022). The researcher did not use this approach.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Kent (2020), data analysis is the process of preserving order, meaning and organisation in a large volume of data acquired during a study. Pandey and Pandey (2021) explain that data analysis is the procedure by which researchers combine and interpret data, leading to the creation of categories and patterns from particular data. Data analysis is both dynamic and innovative. Qualitative data analysis involves organising textual data, coding and condensing it into themes, and presenting findings through tables, figures, or narrative discussion (Dogan & Birant, 2021). This study adopted a thematic data approach to analyse the data of the study. Data analysis in this study entailed creating open-ended data in response to the research questions posed and then creating an analysis using the information provided by the participants.

The qualitative method enables the researcher to gather information, examine it, and organise it into themes where common answers and trends are described to compare the concerns brought up by each participant (Hennink et al., 2020). During the analysis process, the researcher strives to better understand the material they have examined and continuously improve their interpretations (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009). According to Dogan and Birant (2021), data collection and analysis are carried out simultaneously in qualitative research. They suggest that it is a good idea to start coding as soon as you have finished gathering data. Moreover, they urge researchers to capture any significant insights that arise when they analyse their data. In the present study, data was collected and coded simultaneously. Themes were evaluated and elaborated by detailing each participant within the context.

3.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Hayre (2021), trustworthiness is the researcher's capacity to convince the audience that the findings of the study are significant and of high quality. Cypress (2017) further explains that trustworthiness refers to the degree to which the study's findings accurately reflect the true value of the collected data. The trustworthiness of

a research study is vital to determine its value and trustworthiness, which includes methods of building credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability (Rose & Johnson, 2020). In the current study, data obtained from multiple sources was used interchangeably and supported by citations to preserve reliability. To assure the trustworthiness of the study, the researcher took the following measures.

3.11.1 Credibility

Yilmaz and Liu (2022) indicate that credibility is the trust that one may have in the outcomes of the research investigation. Coleman (2022) adds that credibility refers to the level of confidence that may be placed in study findings. To ensure the credibility of the research data, the researcher evaluated the data collecting instruments in schools other than those sampled. According to Hancock et al. (2021), it is the researcher's responsibility to follow the guidelines and protocols specified in the study in question and to justify any deviations. Participants of the study were consulted to engage them in assuring the reliability of the data obtained by enabling them to assess the correctness of the findings and provide input. Harrison, Birks et al. (2017) believe that lengthier involvement with participants, debriefings, and enabling participants to reflect on journals can improve the study's credibility.

3.11.2 Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which the results can be applied in a different context, allowing readers to assess how relevant the results are to their situation (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Carminati (2018) demonstrates that transferability is the extent to which the researcher's working hypothesis can be applied in different situations. Hays and McKibben (2021) assert that it is the researcher's responsibility to provide the reader with sufficient information about the study's methodology and subjects so that they may assess if the study's findings apply to their conditions. The findings of this current study are transferable to other schools that are practicing inclusive education. As a means of ensuring transferability in the current study, the researcher ensured that the data collected from the interviewed participants represented the inclusive pedagogical practices used by teachers of Motupa Circuit. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that all proceedings of the study were documented leading up to

the final report to give the reader enough information to determine whether the study applies to other contexts.

3.11.3 Dependability

Janis (2022) defines dependability as the consistency of the data gathered over time under a research context. According to Anney (2014), dependability is achieved when the researcher can determine whether the research process is rational, well-documented and audited. Anney (2014) recommends that the researcher preserve transcribed notes of all actions conducted during the study. Such evidence may include all participants that were interviewed as well as to who was observed and what was observed. In the context of this study, the researcher adopted semi-structured interviews and observations to explore the inclusive pedagogical practices that teachers employ in the classroom. Mohajan (2017) suggests that for a study to be reliable, all procedures should be described in a way that readers and auditors of the results will find them credible. In light of the above, the researcher ensured that all proceedings of the study were recorded. Moreover, in this study, the researcher used transparency and coherence to organise data in a way that other researchers could access and comprehend.

3.11.4 Confirmability

Janis (2022) states that research is considered confirmable when the results represent the participant's versions rather than the researcher's influence. Confirmability refers to the extent to which the study's findings are consistent and replicable (Lim, 2024). According to Prosek and Gibson (2021), confirmability denotes the extent to which the results of a research study can be corroborated by others. Furthermore, Prosek and Gibson (2021) seem to suggest that confirmability deals with aspects of the neutrality of a study. In ensuring confirmability in this study, the researcher made sure that the findings of this study are strictly a reflection of the versions of the participants' responses.

Moreover, the researcher also took it upon himself to involve other fellow researchers for a review of the study. The researcher also had continuous engagements with the supervisor and held briefings to get experienced feedback. Farrugia (2019) claims that another method to assure confirmability is by auditing, in

which the researcher presents a methodologically self-critical description of how the study was conducted. The compliance with the specified criteria was confirmed through the chosen data collection methods, which included individual semi-structured interviews, document analysis and classroom observations.

3.11.5 Triangulation

According to Donkoh and Mensah (2023), triangulation is the process of gathering and using data from multiple sources to validate the study's findings using multiple sets of evidence. In adherence to triangulation for this study, the researcher made use of various data collection techniques such as semi-individual interviews, document analysis and structured observations. The use of various data collection techniques enabled the researcher to collect and test data from different sources.

3.11.6 Member Checking

The study adopted the criteria of member checking to ensure trustworthiness and credibility. Member checking, as explained by Candela (2019), is the process that involves the researcher having informal conversations with participants involved in the study to validate the obtained data and interpretations. McGrath et al. (2019) describe member checking as a process in which the researcher takes back collected data to participants to confirm and validate the data collected. In this study, member checking involved returning audio recordings, observation notes, and other collected data to participants to verify accuracy and confirm interpretations.

According to Thompson et al. (2021), the researcher is allowed to provide participants access to summarised or transcribed data so they can make any necessary revisions and gain additional insights before writing the final report. Member checking is aligned with the concept that understanding and meaning are accessible to interpretation throughout time, as outlined in social constructivism and symbolic interactionism (McGrath et al., 2019). However, Busetto et al. (2020) caution that participants are not necessarily the greatest judges of what constitutes legitimate research. In adherence to these criteria, participants' contributions were double-checked to minimise errors.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Aguinis (2023), credible research necessitates adherence to research ethics and does not only entail participant selection and study techniques. Braun and Clarke (2022) assert that ethical considerations apply to all researchers, irrespective of their designs, methodologies and sampling strategies. Meanwhile, Cohen et al. (2017) contend that when conducting research, researchers must remember that they are accessing the private spaces of their subjects. As a result, this means that crucial research ethical principles must be observed. In this study, before conducting research, ethical clearance was obtained from the University of South Africa (UNISA) ethics committee (Appendix B). As the study involved teachers, the researcher also sought permission to embark on the study from the Limpopo Basic Department of Education (Appendix E). In addition, the researcher adhered to the following principles in the study.

3.12.1 Permission and Informed Consent

Firstly, permission was sought from the Limpopo Basic Department of Education to embark on a study at their respective schools. As it was indicated earlier by the researcher, seven schools were selected from a pool of 21 schools in the Motupa Circuit. Therefore, permission from the district and circuits was sought to conduct a study (Appendices E, F and G). Furthermore, permission was sought through written letters to school principals and teachers who were participants in the study (Appendices H–N). Fourteen teachers were selected to take part in the study, and consent letters were provided to them (Appendix O).

3.12.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

The researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity of all the participants who were observed and interviewed during the study. In this study, the names and identification of places were not mentioned. According to Heaton (2022), when writing research, it is generally advisable to use pseudonyms for individuals and places to avoid significant dangers such as participant discomfort, legal issues and concealing of essential pieces of material. Lahman et al. (2023) note that it is vital that the researcher during the study should also check with participants regularly to establish which information the participants are comfortable with revealing about

themselves or their institution. The reason is to ensure that the data that was collected and analysed is protected (Lahman et al., 2023). The researcher assured the participants that all the data collected would not be shared with anyone; rather it would be kept safe in a locked cabinet. In addition, the researcher reassured the participants that all data collected would only be used for the study.

3.12.3 Honesty and Trust

The researcher adhered to ethical principles when conducting the study, which serve as a benchmark for honesty and integrity throughout the data collection and analysis that followed. For this current study, the researcher was honest, truthful and refrained from any form of bias when presenting and interpreting the data of the study. The researcher also made sure that the information participants provided accurately reflected their sincere responses to questions about their experiences.

3.12.4 Voluntary Participation

The researcher made the participants aware that taking part in the study was voluntary but that there was no form of monetary reimbursement for taking part in the study. The researcher made sure that participants expressed their agreement to participate and to withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable in doing so.

3.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This present chapter outlined the research approach, research paradigm, research design, study population, sampling and data collection techniques and data analysis. This chapter also discussed in detail how data of the study was collected and how it was analysed to address the researched question. Issues of trustworthiness in research were outlined, and how ethical considerations were conducted in the study. The following chapter presents data presentation and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed research methodology which included research design, research approach, research paradigm, population and sampling, data collection of the study and data analysis process. Moreover, the previous chapter discussed issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations. The current chapter discussed presentation and interpretation of findings of the study as generated from the collected data of the study. The data that was collected in this study was obtained through the use of individual semi-structured interviews, structured observations and document analysis. In order to ensure that the study adheres to the principles of ethics in research, pseudonyms were used instead of participant's real names. Thematic data analysis was employed to present and interpret findings of the study. Therefore, data of the study was collected, organised and reduced in order to answer research questions of the study. In trying to interpret data for this study, the researcher had to get familiar with data by means of generating codes, reviewing themes, naming and making sense of data that was collected.

Participants of the study were observed during sessions and field notes were transcribed. The documents such as SBST committee files, lesson preparations and learner profiling were also collected and analysed. The data generated from teachers and principals are also presented. The findings of the study are then presented. The findings of the study are then presented with reference to themes and sub-themes emerged from the data. The researcher went on to have a deeper level of engagement with the findings of the study in relation to the study research questions and objectives. The study sought to find answers to the following critical objectives:

- To explore teachers understanding of inclusive pedagogies within curriculum.
- To explore implications of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum.
- To explore challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices.
- To determine support measures and structures in place for the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum.

- To recommend a model that can improve inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum.

The researcher used verbatim quotations throughout data presentation. In this study data is presented then followed by a brief analysis by the researcher.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

This study was conducted in secondary schools of Motupa Circuit, Mopani-West District of Limpopo. The schools are located in rural villages of Motupa. The schools are not far from each other with regard to distance as they may be approximately 5 to 10 kilometres apart. In accordance with research ethics, to guarantee anonymity and protection of participant's information, the chosen schools were assigned codes. The participants of the study were assigned codes that were aligned with school codes. The study involved seven schools, this implies that the schools were categorised as School J, School K, School L, School M, School N, School S and School P. This study comprised of six women and eight men. The participants' biographical data is outlined in detail in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Participants' biographical data

Code Name	Gender	Highest Qualification	Teaching experience	Training on inclusive Pedagogy	Workshop attendance	School Codes
PRINCIPAL J1	M	ACE PGCE	20 Years	YES	YES	J: Secondary
TEACHER J1	F	B.ED	14 Years	YES	NO	J: Secondary
PRINCIPAL K1	M	M.ED	21 Years	NO	NO	K: Secondary
TEACHER K1	M	ACE	15 Years	NO	NO	K: Secondary
PRINCIPAL L1	F	B.ED HONS	18 Years	NO	YES	L: Secondary
TEACHER L1	M	B.ED HONS	20 Years	YES	NO	L: Secondary
PRINCIPAL M1	F	B.ED HONS	26 Years	NO	NO	M: Secondary
TEACHER	F	STD	25 Years	NO	NO	M:

Code Name	Gender	Highest Qualification	Teaching experience	Training on inclusive Pedagogy	Workshop attendance	School Codes
M1						Secondary
PRINCIPAL N1	M	ACE, B.ED	21 Years	NO	NO	N: Secondary
TEACHER N1	M	B.ED SPF	13 Years	YES	NO	N: Secondary
PRINCIPAL S1	F	B.SCIENCE PGCE B.ED HONS	14 Years	YES	YES	S: Secondary
TEACHER S1	F	ACE	12 Years	NO	YES	S: Secondary
PRINCIPAL P1	M	B.ADMIN PGCE	27 Years	NO	YES	P: Secondary
TEACHER P1	F	B.ED HONS	17 Years	NO	YES	P: Secondary
TOTAL		WOMEN	MEN			
		08	06			

Key: F= Female, M=Male, ACE=Advanced certificate in education, Med= Master's degree in education, PGCE= Post Graduate Certificate in education, BEDSPF=Bachelor of Education Degree Senior Phase and FET, Hons= Honours Degree in Education.

The data of this study was obtained from school management teams and teachers of secondary schools of Motupa Circuit of Mopani-West District. The researcher of the current study selected the participants hence they practice inclusive pedagogical practices in their teaching and learning. Data of this study was collected through the use of individual semi-structured interviews, structured observations and document analysis. Participant's biographical data was illustrated in the above table. The key goal of this information was to illustrate a balance in the representation of all genders in the study. Table 4.1 depicts the information in the following order; participant code name, gender, highest qualification, teaching experience, training on inclusive pedagogy, workshop attendance on inclusive pedagogy and school codes.

4.2.1 Description of Teachers Profiles

TJ1 is a teacher who is 45 years old at the time of data generation. She has since attended training on inclusive education. She has since obtained advanced certificate in education. She then upgraded her studies and obtained postgraduate certificate in education. She has since been teaching at secondary school for 20

years. She is responsible for managing fourteen teachers with an enrolment of 465 learners. She has since indicated the passion she has for working with children. She further indicated that her responsibility as the principal is to ensure that all learners are included in activities of teaching and learning and also encourage teachers to do their work.

TK1 is a 47 years old male teacher. He holds an advanced certificate in education with and has 15 years' experience working in secondary school. He has since worked in a special school for disabled learners for a period of 4 years before joining the school he is currently attached. He has since indicated attending training on inclusive education. He further indicated that he enjoys working with children and has developed passion to assist them with learning. He also mentioned that he would love to further his studies.

TL1 is a 45 years old male teacher at the time of data gathering. He has since studies bachelor of education degree. His training did not include teaching learners experiencing barriers to learning. He has since registered to study for honours degree in inclusive education in order to have specialised skills on inclusive education. He has been working as a teacher of secondary school for a period of 20 years. The teachers highlighted the love he has for teaching and also working with children. He further indicated that the fact that he is exposed to various learners with diverse learning needs remains a source of motivation for him.

TM1 is a female teacher who is 38 years old with a bachelor of education degree. Her initial training did not include teaching learners with barriers to learning. She is also registered and obtained her honours degree. She appeared to have interest in assisting learners with barriers. She has since been head of department in the same school where she has been working for 11 years.

TN1 is a 46 years old male teacher and holds a bachelor of education degree at the time of data generation. His experience included working with learners with diverse needs. He has since taught in secondary school for he has since registered for Honours degree in education. During the interview, he since indicated that he is at an advanced stage of his Honours degree. He has since indicated the passion he has for teaching and working with learners. He further indicated that his experience

of been in the education sector has made him to navigate well through the challenges that he encounters in his line of work.

TS1 is a female teacher who is 43 years old at the time of data generation. She holds an advanced certificate in education. The teacher has since received no form of training on inclusive education practices. She has since been working as a teacher in the secondary school for a period of 12 years. During the interview session she has shared that she that been a teacher is very much challenging but equally indicated that she relies on her experience to cope with work related challenges.

TP1 is a female teacher who is 51 years old at the time of data generation. She has bachelor of education degree. She has since been working as an educator for a period of 17 years in secondary school. She has since received training on working with learners with diverse needs when she was doing her bachelor of education degree. She has since indicated that the training she has received on inclusive education plays a very important role on how she engages with her learners during teaching and learning. She furthered her studies and obtained her honours degree in education management.

The ages of the sampled teachers were 45, 47, 45, 38, 46, 43 and 51. It can be concluded that the average age of teachers who took part in the study is middle age. It should also be noted that majority of teachers sampled are females. One might conclude that the services of supporting and giving care to learners are favoured by females. This can be attributed to the fact that females are supportive due to their sensitive nature. Some of the participants furthered their studies while some did not.

4.2.2 Description of Principals Profiles

In this section information of principals who took part in the study is presented. The principals were also given few minutes at the early stages of the interview to tell the researcher more about themselves, their qualifications and teaching experience. The responses of principals were written down as field notes that will at later stage be analysed. The participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The principals were identified as PJ1, PK1, PL1, PM1, PN1, PS1 and PP1 in the study with their true identity known only by the supervisor and the researcher.

PJ1 is a male principal who is 57 years old at the time of data generation. He has since obtained advanced certificate in education with 20 years teaching experience he was appointed as post level one teacher until the year 2000. He was then promoted to be head of department from the year 2000 until 2005. He was then promoted to be deputy principal at the end of the year 2014. He became a school principal at the end of the year 2018. He has since indicated that he is responsible for 16 teachers with an enrolment of 586 learners at the school.

PK1 is a male principal who is 52 years old at the time of data generation. He has obtained his teachers diploma and went on to obtain his honours degree in education. He has since begun his teaching career in the year 2004 where he worked in level one teaching post. He went on to get a promotion to be head of department in 2011. In the year 2015 he was then promoted to be a principal. He has indicated that he is currently registered his Master's degree in education. He is currently a principal in a secondary school managing 17 teachers with a total of 586 learners.

PL1 is a female principal who is 48 years old at the time of data generation. She has since obtained her bachelor of education degree. Moreover, she went on to further her studies and obtained her honours degree in management. She is currently a principal of a secondary school. She has since indicated her interest to further her studies in inclusive education. She highlighted that her responsibility is to ensure that all the teachers perform their duties and ensure that all learners are included in teaching and learning. She is responsible for managing 486 learners in her school with a total of 14 teachers.

PM1 is a female principal is a female principal who is 52 years old at the time of the interview. She has since qualified to be the teacher in the early 1999. She has been a teacher in post level one for a period of ten years. She became head of department and served for a period of seven years. She was then promoted to be a principal. She is responsible for 623 learners and eighteen teachers in her school. She has indicated that she has so much love of working with kids and giving them support. She also highlighted the fact that she would still love to further her studies. She has also mentioned that her responsibility is to remind teachers that they have to do everything in their power to ensure that all learners are included in teaching and learning.

PN1 is a male principal in a secondary school. He is 55 years old. He has obtained his advanced certificate in education and went on to obtain his bachelor of educators' degree. He has 21 years' experience in the education sector. He is responsible for fifteen teachers with an enrolment 504 learners. He highlighted that his responsibility as a principal is to ensure that there is effective teaching and learning. He further indicated his passion for teaching and working with learners.

PS1 is a female principal who is 40 years old at the time of the interview. She has since qualified to be a teacher in the early 2000. She has been working in secondary school for a period for fourteen years. She has since obtained her Bachelor of Science degree, went on to obtain postgraduate certificate in education. She has been appointed as a principal from 2020. She is responsible for managing fourteen teachers with the school having an enrolment of 487 learners. at the time of the study she has indicated she loves her job and enjoys motivating teachers and giving them directives to teach all the learners. She further mentioned that she would love to see all the learners included in teaching and learning.

PP1 is a male principal who is 51 years old during the time of the interview. He has since obtained his bachelor of educators' degree and further obtained his honours degree in management. He has been a teacher in level one post as of 1998 for a period of nine years. He was then promoted to be head of department as of 2007. He has 27 years of teaching experience. The school he is attached to has 427 learners with a total of 15 teachers. He indicated that he would like to see all stakeholders working together to ensure that all learners are included in teaching and learning.

The ages of the principals were 51, 40, 55, 52, 48, 52 and 57. It can be concluded that the average age of the principals is middle age. Meanwhile few of the principals are approaching their retirement age. It should be noted that even though some of the principals were trained before the introduction of inclusive education they appeared to be willing and ready to practice inclusive education and embrace diverse learning needs of the learners. The majority of the participants seems to be females. One might conclude that the profession of supporting learners with challenges is gender based. Hence, it is evident that activities of supporting learners who requires additional support in most cases it is favoured by females. Although,

some of the participants did not receive training on inclusive education, they indicated the will and interest to ensure maximum inclusivity of all learners in teaching and learning. One might argue that this type of work is mostly favoured by females due to their passion and sensitive nature.

The majority of the participants have upgraded their qualifications which ultimately mean they do qualify to occupy the positions they are in. Most of the participants have been working in secondary school for more than 10 years. The rationale for including principals as participants is that they are chairpersons of school-based support teams and should work closely with the DBSTs.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA FROM FINDINGS

For this study, interviews were used as the main technique of data collection. However, in order to ensure reliability of the study findings and triangulation, document analysis and structured observations were used. The participants of this study were seven members of the SMT and seven teachers. The participants of this study were selected in order to give responses with regard to inclusive pedagogical practices they use in delivering the curriculum. During the interview process the following issues were raised and sub-questions which in the end were subsequently turned into themes.

The data of the study that is presented was obtained through qualitative methods of data generation and the main participants' teachers and principals. The researcher then transcribed data through making of text from the recorded interview sessions and typing them as word processing documents. The researcher identified main themes and sub-themes related to the practice of inclusive pedagogies in school curriculum. The researcher then labelled the data and grouped it into themes and patterns that have common characteristics

According to Christou (2022) this whole process refers to thematic analysis, which means working with codes to identify patterns such as common characters and differences. The researcher analysed the study data that was found in order to determine what was useful in fulfilling the objectives of the study. Moreover, data obtained was then summarised and linked to literature reviewed as well as the

theoretical framework of the study. The data of the study presented five main themes:

- Teachers’ understanding on inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum.
- The implications of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum.
- Challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogy.
- Support measures and structures in the practice of inclusive pedagogy.
- Models and practices to be recommended to improve inclusive pedagogies for teaching in classroom.

4.4 THEME 1: TEACHERS UNDERSTANDING ON INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN CURRICULUM

The above theme emerged from the research questions of the study. The sub-themes are as a result of what the researcher extracted from the participants of the study’s semi-structured interviews. The main aim of the sub-question was to establish and gain insight on teachers understanding on the concept pedagogy in curriculum delivery. The participants of the study were asked about their understanding on the concept of pedagogy in curriculum. This was followed by the question: What is your view on the use of inclusive pedagogical practice in teaching and learning? Table 4.2 represents the main themes and emerging issues.

Table 4.2: Participants responses on teachers’ understanding of inclusive pedagogical practices

Main Objective	Emerging Issues
To explore teachers understanding of conceptualisation on inclusive pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson preparations and planning • Teaching strategies • Fundamentals for inclusive pedagogy • Teachers’ knowledge of resources

4.4.1 Teachers’ Conceptualisation of Inclusive Pedagogy in Curriculum

The knowledge and understanding of inclusive pedagogical practices for teachers is one of the most vital skills that has an impact on the effective implementation of inclusivity in teaching and learning. One of the reasons as to why inclusivity is not adequately realised in curriculum is due to the failure to conceptualise inclusive

pedagogical practices. In the context of this study, teachers understanding are vital for the effective practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in the classroom.

4.4.2 Lesson Preparation and Planning

The practice of inclusive pedagogy requires planning and preparations and it is another step of achieving maximum objectives for ensuring inclusivity in teaching and learning. It is therefore vital that teachers in their preparations of their lessons should ensure that various teaching strategies are employed in order to achieve maximum inclusivity in the classroom. In this study, participants expressed the following sentiments:

TJ1: "I think pedagogy is the method of teaching learners in during teaching"

TP1: "Eeh, I understand pedagogical concept as a method I use during teaching and learning and this is subject to change at any given time as my learners might not respond to the lesson the same."

TM1: "Mmm, for me I think pedagogy is that which one before they start teaching, must decide the method of teaching, do that is pedagogy."

PP1: "Ok well, pedagogy for me is the work that the teacher does in the classroom to make it a point that all learners learn, one more thing is that as teachers we are faced different learners in the classroom."

PN1: "What I personally understand about this concept pedagogy is that as a teacher it is up to me in my preparations and planning I should select relevant teaching strategies. Ehh, this is because as a teacher it is important for me to know my learners so that I can choose the right pedagogy to use during teaching, yeah that's what I can say about pedagogy."

Reflecting on the participants responses, one can deduce that teachers appear to have different understanding on the concept of pedagogy and that has an impact on how they approach teaching and learning. Participant responses suggest that despite differing views on pedagogy, teachers recognise the need to select appropriate teaching strategies when planning lessons and activities.

4.4.3 Teaching Strategies

Teachers as agents of change are entrusted with the responsibility to ensure inclusivity during teaching and learning. The participants of the study seem to understand that different learners seem to receive teaching differently. Ultimately, this means that teachers should select suitable and relevant teaching strategies for their learners. Although, teachers know and want to make use of various teaching strategies, they seem to raise a concern that time allocated for teaching does not always accommodate for such. The following participants had this to say:

TS1: “As a teacher it is up to us to select teaching pedagogies that address various needs of learners and if we don’t select the correct one it will mean that learning objectives of inclusivity will not be achieved.”

PM1: “Eish, I do understand that as a teacher I have to use a set of different teaching methods, but to be realistic, time is not on my side and in most cases learners who are less gifted or with barriers are affected as time does not allow for extra interventions.”

TL1: “Mmm, to be honest as teachers we are going through a lot, yes the use of different teaching strategies benefit learners, but our time table is not made in such a way that it allows one time to interchange teaching strategies.”

TK1: “I think the kind of teaching strategies have impact on how learners learn, this places us as teachers at the centre stage of having the powers to select the best teaching strategies to suit the needs of learners.”

Based on the assertions of the teachers above, one can deduce that teachers play a critical role in selecting various teaching strategies in their teaching to ensure maximum inclusivity in curriculum. From the teachers responses it is evident that teachers are aware of their responsibilities. However, time constrains remain a concern as they feel that periods allocated on the time table

does not allow them enough duration to interchange teaching pedagogies and therefore, it hinders their effort to achieve inclusivity in curriculum.

4.4.4 Fundamentals for Inclusive Pedagogy

Fundamentals for inclusive pedagogy are an intensive programme used to learners through the use of relevant pedagogy. The fundamentals for inclusive pedagogy emerged from the interview question; what are the implication of your teaching strategy on teaching and learning. The selection and application of appropriate teaching strategy is a pre-requisite for achieving inclusivity in curriculum and ensure learners are accommodated in teaching and learning. Therefore, it is vital for teachers to display high level of skills of teaching pedagogy. In order to understand how teachers view the impact of inclusive pedagogical practices, participants shared their sentiments by responding in the following manner:

TM1: "Firstly, as a teacher when you are given a subject to teach you should know the kinds of learners you have and also their abilities. Well this plays a critical role when it comes to choosing teaching pedagogy. In other ways what I am trying to say is that teaching strategy goes together with the kinds of learners you have in your class."

PN1: "Eem, making use of many teaching strategies helps a lot because learners are having various learning needs, you find that a classroom is made out of many learners who needs to be taught by one teacher who should have a skill to teach them at their level."

PK1: "I feel like as teachers there is too much power been put in our hands, what I mean is that we find ourselves having to teach kids who comes from different backgrounds and in the end if myself as a teacher do not have skills to use many different teaching methods it will affect learners."

PP1: "Well, as for me, us as teachers are at the driving force of curriculum delivery because if we don't know how to use pedagogy it will mean it will reflect on the performance of learners."

Based on the above expressions by the participant one can deduce that teachers understand their role in the practice of inclusive pedagogy. From the responses of the participants, it is evident that teachers are aware of their mandate to ensure that all the learners are accommodated in teaching and learning. Although, teachers seem to know their responsibilities, they also expressed concern that lack of understanding of teaching pedagogies will result in the negative impact on the achievement of maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning.

4.4.5 Teachers' Knowledge of Resources

One of the most critical elements of achieving inclusivity is the use of resources which plays an important role in promoting inclusivity in curriculum. It is a fact that without suitable and relevant resources achieving inclusivity will be a difficult task to employ in the classroom. To establish teachers' knowledge on the use of resources when delivering the curriculum, the following research questions was asked in order to gather their sentiment: what resources are available for your teaching strategies? Teachers had these to share:

TM1: "Well, I think the kinds of resources that we need as teachers may include teaching materials and assistive devices that will help to include all learners and their barriers, for example: we need projectors and other related technological devices."

TL1: "In my own opinion, I would say we need resources that are aligned with fourth industrial revolution since we can be able to solve some of our problems by going online to make research."

TP1: "So to answer your question, of course every lesson we deliver need resources. What I am trying to say is that resources are essential for teaching and learning. So I think we need things like modified textbooks and physical accommodation."

Based on the above assertions from teachers, one can deduce that resources play a vital role during teaching and learning especially in ensuring that there is maximum achievement to inclusivity in curriculum. From the responses of teachers, it is evident that teachers do understand their responsibility with regard to their teaching

pedagogy and it seems that teachers are willing to be capacitated so that they can practice inclusive pedagogical practice in curriculum.

4.4.6 Summary of Theme 1

Under the theme teachers' conceptualisation of inclusive pedagogical practices on curriculum, teachers expressed the vital role that planning and preparation has in determining the approach they will use in teaching in the classroom. Under the theme lesson preparation and planning in curriculum, teachers indicated the importance of planning and preparing their lessons in such a way that their teaching strategies are aligned with the learning needs of the learners. On the theme of fundamentals for inclusive pedagogy, teachers raised a fact that it is important to select teaching strategies that suit the needs of the learners. On the theme of teachers' knowledge of resources teachers raised concerns that although they are willing to practice inclusivity, lack of appropriate resources remains a challenge. Lastly, teachers raised the main concern with regard to their knowledge of using inclusive pedagogical practices in the classroom. In this, it was found that teachers have little understanding of conceptualising inclusive pedagogy into practice.

4.5 THEME 2: THE IMPLICATIONS OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN CURRICULUM

One of the objectives of this study was to determine the implication of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum to enhance inclusivity. Teachers are expected to practice inclusive pedagogy in their daily teaching in order to ensure that all learners are accommodated. In order to obtain such an objective, the following question was asked to participants: what is the implication of inclusive pedagogical practice in curriculum? The main aim of the question was to gain an insight as to whether inclusive pedagogy has an impact in teaching in the classroom.

Table 4.3: Participants' responses on the implications of inclusive pedagogy on curriculum

Main Objective	Emerging Issues
To determine the implication of inclusive pedagogy in curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of inclusivity • Differentiated teaching • Remedial intervention strategy

Main Objective	Emerging Issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising learning opportunities through the use of inclusive pedagogies

4.5.1 Culture of Inclusivity

A culture of inclusivity encompasses of various elements that must be sown into the school environment in order to ensure that inclusivity become one core objective that everyone is striving for in the school environment. Therefore, it is the duty of the teacher to cultivate a spirit and environment of inclusivity in the school. Teachers in their daily interactions with the learners should at all times ensure that learners practice tolerance and acceptance towards their fellow learners. A culture of inclusivity will include a classroom where respect is championed, valued and encouraged. The participant has this to say:

PM1: “Well sir, the use of inclusive pedagogy in teaching and learning, mm, it goes through a long way as we have slow learners, I am sorry for using the word (slow) but I don’t have a better word to say this, sir.”

PN1: “Yeah, I personally think as teachers it is up to us to know our learners so that we can also make use of teaching methods that accommodate them because trust me, sir, if you taught through methods that do not work well for you, you will definitely feel left out.”

TN1: “So as teachers we are given powers to make sure that learners do not take other learners for granted both in the classroom and outside the classroom, I personally know how it feels to be treated differently because of your learning capabilities, so making use of different teaching method will bring accommodation of all learners.”

PK1: “I think I can say it with confidence that the use of different teaching methods fosters unity and encourage acceptance towards the learners, what I know is that as teachers we should do everything in our powers to make sure that all learners are treated fairly.”

Reflecting on what participants have said, one would argue that inclusivity requires the teacher to make use of multiple teaching pedagogies in order to stimulate

learning needs. As articulated above, the teachers expressed their desire to establish a culture of inclusivity in the school environment. Furthermore, the teachers are fully aware of their responsibility to ensure maximum inclusivity in the classroom. The responses above further reveal important aspects of promoting respect and tolerance both outside and inside the classroom. In addition, one would say that teachers are optimistic about the impact of using pedagogical practices in curriculum. Another thing is that making use of multiple teaching strategies allows learners to explore and learn in a teaching strategy that suit their learning needs.

4.5.2 Differentiated Teaching

There is enough evidence that in order to achieve maximum inclusivity in curriculum it requires modelling of differentiated teaching by teachers. The reason being that classroom is made of learners with various learning backgrounds and learning needs. Therefore, this can be challenging as teachers are expected to teach and accommodate all the learners with their different learning needs. To understand how teachers ensure inclusivity in their teaching the teachers was asked the question: which inclusive pedagogical practices do they practice during teaching? The following sentiments were shared:

TL1: "The use of differentiated teaching helps learners to receive the lesson well especially as it ensures that individual learner get to learn, in a way that becomes for him/her to learn, for example, learners who grasp the lesson at first attempt and learners who want the lesson to repeated or be given various practical examples to learn."

PP1: "With this one (mmm) it is where myself as a teacher takes the centre stage to help the learners as now I know the through what we call learner profiling because now I must show that I know I my learners in order to use teaching strategies that is aligned with their needs"

PS1: "Well, when I teach I introduce the topic to my learners, I engage with them, I ask them what they know already about the topic and this is to determine what they already know, if there are other learners who

seem to struggle then I use another method of teaching in order to make sure I do not leave a single learner outside.”

Reflecting on the participants’ responses, one would argue that it takes a teacher who put into consideration the needs of the learners and understand them to use teaching strategies that suits their needs. Based on the above quotes, it is clear that teachers are committed to providing an environment that support learners and ensure inclusivity in their teaching. Teachers appear to be using multiple teaching strategies to ensure that learners learn in a teaching strategy that is aligned with their needs. The researcher would argue that by means of using differentiated instruction it provide all learners with equal opportunities to learn. Moreover, the above responses of teachers indicate that teachers have empathy towards learners who are struggling and that is why they go to an extent of using other methods of teaching that suit their needs.

4.5.3 Remedial Intervention Strategy

It has emerged from the interviews data that the journey of all learners to be accommodated in teaching and learning in the classroom involve remedial intervention strategies especially for learners with barriers. Under this theme, teachers’ main concern was that classrooms are made of learners with various learning needs and challenges. Therefore, there is a need for teachers to consider such in their selection of teaching methods. Below are the responses of the participants:

PN1: “There are some learners that during teaching will not understand the lesson at first glance then as a teacher I would have to use other strategies in order to bring such learners on board.”

TN1: “(Eish), It is hard as there are learners who struggle a lot, you will even see them on their face that they are lost during teaching, then even if you repeat the content they would still struggle then you would know that you have to come up with another teaching strategy in order to go down to their level.”

PS1: “Well its tough but as a teacher you cannot proceed teaching while other learners are left behind so what I do is that I make means to choose

a different strategy that assist them to understand the lesson better, (Eish) the challenges is that there is no time as the time allocated for the period is hour, but I do try my level best to use other methods just to accommodate them.”

Looking at the quotes above, one can argue that teachers do interchange the teaching strategies as a way to provide intervention strategies in order to obtain maximum inclusivity in teaching. It is clear from the above responses that learners do not receive content the same way. Moreover, it is evident that teachers try their level best to ensure that no learner is left behind because he/she cannot understand a particular teaching pedagogy. The above quotations show that teachers are willing to assist the learners. However, time to practise multiple teaching strategies remains a concern. Meanwhile, teachers are willing to assist, time constrains remains a challenge as periods are allocated time for teaching in the classroom.

4.5.4 Maximising Learning Opportunities Through the Use of Inclusive Pedagogies

It has since emerged from the data obtained through the interview that the use of multiple teaching pedagogies maximise learning opportunities for learners. This is attributed to the fact that classrooms are made of learners with various learning abilities. Therefore, it is common to have learners who would be comfortable with a certain teaching strategy while others are not. Teachers' use different teaching pedagogies to allow all the learners to be part of the lesson through their teaching strategies. Below are the responses of the participants:

TK1: “Indeed there are great implications in the use of inclusive pedagogies during teaching and learning, learners are given a chance to learn in the strategy that is aligned with their learning needs.”

PM1: “The use of teaching pedagogies in the classroom increase learner participation in learning as learners are allowed space to learn in a teaching method that they are comfortable with.”

TJ1: “I wish there was enough time for us teachers to practice inclusive pedagogies in teaching in order to allow our learners enough time to be accommodate through the use of a specialised teaching strategy,

unfortunately time does not allow it and I wish the department can do something about this issue.”

Participant responses indicate that inclusive pedagogies positively influence teaching and learning by enabling all learners to participate, regardless of ability. Although, it has been reported that the use of inclusive pedagogies has positive impact on learning, teachers also raised an issue of time as a factor that seems to be a challenge in the practice of inclusive pedagogy.

4.5.5 SUMMARY OF THEME 2

In this theme, the implications of inclusive pedagogical practice in curriculum, the following sub-themes emerged: culture of inclusivity, differentiated instruction and remedial intervention strategy. Under the sum-theme of culture of inclusivity, participants indicated that making use of inclusive pedagogical practices promote the culture of inclusivity in the school environment. Under the sub-theme of differentiated instruction, the participants indicated that making use of differentiated instruction ensures that all learners are afforded an opportunity to learn with a teaching strategy that suit their learning needs. Meanwhile, under the sub-theme of remedial intervention strategy the participants indicated that inclusive pedagogical practices provide interventions for learners to have access to teaching and learning in a manner that suit their diverse learning needs.

4.6 THEME 3: CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY TEACHERS IN THE PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

In this theme, challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogy within curriculum, it was revealed that teachers are tasked with the responsibility to ensure that maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning is obtained. In order to answer the question on the challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogy was asked to the participants. In addition, from the data obtained through the interviews the following sub-themes emerged; availability of teacher workshops, learners' background and socioeconomic status, parental involvement and inflexible curriculum. Below in the table are the main themes and sub-themes.

Table 4.4: Participants’ responses on challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogy

Main Objective	Emerging Issues
To explore challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of teacher workshops • Learners background and socioeconomic status • Parental involvement • Inflexible curriculum

4.6.1 Availability of Teacher Workshops

In every organisation the element in-service training is one of the most important measure put in place to develop knowledge capacity of employees on recent trends and debates related to their sectors. Teachers also need this type of training in order to keep abreast with what is happening and also improve on their teaching skills in the classroom. In-service training plays a vital role in equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge for policy implementation. In addition, the in-service training organised for teachers afford the teachers with an opportunity to meet other teachers and share challenges as well as good practices. The following are the responses of the participants:

PN1: “The workshops are the once we get in school, I honestly don’t remember a government workshop on inclusive pedagogy ”

PP1; “Yes, we do get workshops and the kind of workshops like towards the beginning of the year we attended a workshop on inclusivity ”

PL1: “Not all workshops are meant for teachers to discuss inclusive pedagogies, sometimes the people facilitating workshops hardly even mentions the issue of inclusivity ”

TJ1 : “(mmm) Do I recall, I don’t remember been invited to a workshop where teachers are trained on teaching strategies ”

TS1: “I cannot recall as to when was the last time I attended a workshop, here at school we do grade workshops were we share intervention

strategies on how to accommodate all learners, but as for circuit level and district, I have not attended a workshop ”

Reflecting on the above responses, one would deduce that as much as teachers are willing and trying to use multiple teaching strategies to accommodate all learners, there is a need for more external workshops to train teachers on inclusive pedagogy. Moreover, external workshops will assist teachers to have a platform where they are capacitated, reflect on their challenges and share knowledge and experience with other teachers. Reflecting on the above experience of teachers one would argue that an effective workshop would be the one that reach all teachers and offer training on inclusive pedagogy. Therefore, based on the above responses, a workshop that is aimed at direct benefit of teachers should be organised.

4.6.2 Learners' Background and Socioeconomic Status

From this sub-theme the following expressions from the participants were established in order to guide the researcher to the knowledge of learners' background and socioeconomic status. This main issue emerged after the participants were asked the question: what form of support do you get as teachers on the practice of inclusive pedagogy? The question was asked in order to establish external support given to teachers and also understand its impact on their work. This is what the participants have said:

TN1 : “(Eish) unfortunately majority of the learners in this school come from poverty backgrounds and as such learners are not motivated to learn, it is difficult to distance learners from their background as it is part of their lives and some learners are from very bad conditions to can even focus during teaching.”

TS1: Some of the learners' background are really a course for concern, you can see while you're teaching that a learner cannot even concentrate and as a result learners develop a negative attitude towards learning.”

TP1: The circumstances that are faced by other learners are not good, for example, some learners have lost both parents, others are forced to assume the role of parents as young age as they are left to look after their siblings.”

Based on the above responses, one can conclude that learners background contributes to some of the learners not having focus on teaching and learning. It is evident that apart from some of the challenges learners face in the school environment there are also external factors that seem to be a hindrance to the learners. Furthermore, teachers also expressed that learners having social problems such as poor family background, childhood families and being orphans. Based on the above expressions, one can deduce that the intentions of teachers to use multiple teaching strategies are hampered by challenges learners face emerging from social factors.

4.6.3 Parental Involvement

From the sub-theme, the following expressions of the participants guides the researcher to the parents' contributions towards their children's education. Parents play a vital role as stakeholders in the education of the learners, and it is important for parents to work together with the teachers. Learners come from the surrounding communities, and their enrolment in schools is based on parental consent. Thus, parental involvement is vital for the school and the education of the learner. This main issue emerged after participants were asked the question: what form of support do you get from various stakeholders in the practice of inclusive pedagogy? This is what the participants expressed:

TL1: "Parents don't want their children to be troubled, so most of the time when you call them to inform them about the struggles of their child, they don't want to hear anything about it, another problem is that most of this children are staying with their grannies, that also is one thing that contribute to lack of parental involvement, most of the grannies hardly come to school due to ill health and some don't even understand the importance of education."

TP1: "Some parents are very helpful and supportive but some parents don't even have interest and when you call them to school is like you are bothering them and you can see from the attitude when they come to school meanwhile others will just tell you not to school them but do everything that you can do with their child."

TL1: "It is tough here most of the parents do not even show up for the parents meeting we organise, I have also realised that most parents who come to parents meeting are not even related with the learners at times."

TS1: "honestly speaking, parents in this community do not take education of their children seriously you can see it as they either send a friend or neighbour to a meeting to represent them or to collect a report card of their children."

From the above expressions, it can be highlighted that parental involvement is still an area of concern to teachers. It is a fact that parents as stakeholders play a vital role in the education of their children and their contributions either directly or indirectly will go a long way in lifting the morale of teachers and learners. Moreover, it can be deduced that parental involvement is a source of frustration to teachers in their attempt to help the learners.

4.6.4 Inflexible Curriculum

From the above expression of the participants the sub-theme of inflexible curriculum emerged. In order for the researcher to have depth understanding on the sub-theme, the researcher asked the question; what challenges do teachers experience in the practice of inclusive pedagogy? The participants indicated the following in their responses:

PN1: "We have a challenge of dealing with different learners in the classroom, some of the learners respond well to our teaching strategies while others are not doing so well, this is a challenge as we are supposed to follow the ATP to teach and time is not always on our side in terms of coming up with other measures to accommodate such learners."

TS1: "(Yeah) as a teacher really we are burdened, our curriculum is rigid and do not allow us to deviate as it is structured in such a way that one should follow it and it is difficult to come up with intervention strategies that are outside the scope of the ATP as we are obliged to follow it in our teaching."

TK1: "I think the issue of dealing with many challenges is not only in our school but our curriculum is rigid and one cannot operate outside its borders, so in the end we are forced to follow it as a matter of policy but it does have negative impact in the learner."

Based on the above expressions, one can argue that although teachers are willing to use other mechanisms to accommodate learners, curriculum also bring its own challenges. From the above expressions it is evident that curriculum structure also does not allow teachers to go extra mile as they have to be confined within the ATP as it also prescribes time frames for teaching certain content. Therefore, the expressions of participants indicate that inflexible curriculum discourages them to perform remedial interventions as it does not allow teachers to attend to individual needs of learners.

4.6.5 Summary of Theme 3

Under this theme, teachers identified limited availability of workshops as a key challenge in implementing inclusive pedagogy within the curriculum. On the theme of learners' backgrounds and socioeconomic status, it has been found that most learners are facing social factors that seem to distract them during teaching and learning. On the theme of parental involvement, teachers raised concern that parents seem not to have interest into supporting the education of their children. On the theme of inflexible curriculum, teachers expressed their frustrations over the curriculum indicating that it channels and limit them as it does not allow flexibility. Lastly, teachers raised the issue of unavailability of teacher workshops, where they indicated both external and internal workshops.

4.7 THEME 4: SUPPORT MEASURES AND STRUCTURES IN THE PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

In this theme of support measures and structures in the practice of inclusive pedagogy, the question: what support measures and structures are available for the practice of inclusive pedagogy was asked to the participants. The intention of asking this question was to determine the level of support and structures put in place to assist teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogy and the implication of such support:

Table 4.5: Participants’ responses on support measures and structures put in place for the practice of inclusive pedagogy

Main Objective	Emerging Issues
To determine support measures and structures put in place for the practice of inclusive pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of structures in the practice of inclusive pedagogy • Resources aligned with pedagogical practices • Lack of In-service training • Roles of principals, SBSTs and teachers

4.7.1 The Role of Structures in the Practice of Inclusive Pedagogical Practices

Structures are necessary for providing interventions at schools and in classrooms. Therefore, it is vital that support structures should be put in place to support both the teachers and the learners. Structures in this regard refer to any formal organisations, support groups and all mechanisms put in place to support teachers in their practice of inclusive pedagogy. Teachers alone cannot win the battle of ensuring maximum inclusivity without the support from various relevant structures. The role of different structures in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices plays a critical role into obtaining inclusivity hence their contributions and support will strengthen the efforts of teachers in their effort to bring inclusivity in teaching and learning. Achieving maximum inclusivity in curriculum requires a joint effort among teachers and all relevant stakeholders. Therefore, it is vital that all structures should be put in place to support teachers. The participants share the following sentiments in their responses:

TS1: “The Department of Education expect us to teach different learners with different challenges, it is understandable and good but time is not favourable for us to use multiple teaching strategies as we follow the ATP in our teaching and it is structured in a way that it has weeks and dates for one to follow.”

TM1: “The process of implementing inclusivity in curriculum will never be effective for as long as curriculum and policy are in such a way that teachers cannot deviate from what is prescribed in the ATP.”

TK1: “For me, I believe the Department of Education is the upper structure that at times has a tendency of throwing in policies to us teachers without proper training and consultation, as such they appear to struggle to make follow-up or to check the progress of the implementation of such policies, so as teachers we don’t have authority over policy development.”

PJ1: “I understand the department has the right and authority to introduce policies but the department fails us especially those of us who are working in deep rural areas as we are not capacitated enough.”

Based on the above expressions, it is evident that teachers are frustrated at the level of support given to them by key stakeholders. Based on the above responses one can also argue that there is a need for support in terms of policy implementation. In addition, the participants has indicated that it is vital for key stakeholders to work with them as this will go a long way in strengthening their efforts to bring inclusivity in teaching and learning. Therefore, it is important that all relevant structures involved should play their role to ensure effective practice of inclusive pedagogical practices.

4.7.2 Resources Aligned With Inclusive Pedagogical Practices

Resources aligned with inclusive pedagogical practices are key to the successful implementation of inclusive pedagogical practices. Resources aligned with inclusive pedagogical practices emerged from the interview question: what resources are available for your teaching strategies? The intention of asking this question was to establish the resources available to assist teachers in their practice of inclusive pedagogical practices. Resources aligned with inclusive pedagogical practice play a critical role in assisting teachers to achieve inclusivity in their teaching. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to be provided with appropriate resources aligned with inclusive pedagogical practice. In this study the participants expressed the following sentiments:

PL1: “To be honest with you we really want to help the learners with barriers to learning here at school, but the challenge is that we lack relevant resources to accommodate them so how are we supposed to assist in a situation like that.”

TS1: “Our situation worse because we don’t even have relevant resources to fully practice inclusive pedagogical practice in our teaching.”

PP1: “The department is not fair when it comes to distribution of resources to schools, I have realised that schools in the townships and suburbs are well-resourced while schools in the rural areas are really faced with very bad conditions when it comes to resources”

Participant responses suggest that teachers’ efforts to ensure inclusion are hindered by inadequate resources, which significantly constrain effective inclusive pedagogy. Moreover, participants indicated their frustrations that are caused by lack of adequate resources aligned with inclusive pedagogical practices. Furthermore, participants highlighted the discrepancies that are caused by unequal distribution of resources to schools as another issue for concern. Therefore, teachers should be supported by ensuring that relevant resources are available in order to assist teachers in their objective of achieving maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning.

4.7.3 Lack of In-service Training for Teachers

Successful implementation of inclusivity requires teachers who are trained and equipped. This theme emerged when participants were asked the question: what support is available for teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogy. The intention of asking this question was to determine the possible support measures put in place to assist teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogy. The participants of the study shared the following sentiments during the interview:

TJ1: “unfortunately there is no training on inclusive pedagogy that we have received as teachers, we only know that there is a policy of inclusive education and that is all”

TN1: “the department does organise workshops but unfortunately the policy of inclusive education is only mentioned in passing and I think this is because the department doesn’t have qualified personnel who have depth knowledge about the policy of inclusivity”

PS1: “the implementation of inclusive pedagogical practice will not be successful because as teachers we don’t have proper training while we are the one who have to make sure that there is inclusivity in teaching”

The above expressions reveal that there is a gap in the level of training that teachers receive on inclusive pedagogy. Moreover, the responses of the participants highlight that lack of in-service training impact on their effectiveness in the practice of inclusive pedagogy to achieve inclusivity in teaching and learning. From the participant’s point of view, it indicates that teachers need to be capacitated in order to understand the practice of inclusive pedagogies. Teachers experience various challenges with regard to teaching learners with diverse needs in their classroom and all the processes they have to follow to identify and design intervention strategies. Therefore, fulfilling teachers training needs has a direct impact on how teachers are prepared to practice inclusive pedagogies in their teaching and learning. The (DoE, 2001) maintains that teachers should be at the centre for achieving the goal of maximum inclusivity. Continuous development of teachers is critical for contribution of inclusivity. Therefore, the assertions of the participants indicate that in-service training play a critical role enhancing and equipping teachers for a successful implementation if inclusivity.

4.7.4 Roles of Principals, SBSTs and Teachers

It has emerged from the data of the interviews that in order to obtain maximum inclusivity all key role players should play their part. To understand the role that should be played by key role players a question that was asked during the interview; what is the role of different structures in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice? The intention was to determine who are the role players and what role do they play in the practice of inclusive pedagogy. The participants share the following responses during the interview:

PN1: “The role that I assume as the principal is to ensure that all learners in the school get access to equal and quality education as stipulated in the constitution, but at times my powers are also limited because of challenges such as resources and knowledge to solve certain challenges, at times it leads to other parents withdrawing learners from school since we are unable to offer support to such a learner.”

PP1: “My role as the principal is to make sure those teachers teach all the learners and adhere to policy on inclusive education, although, teachers are having a challenge that some do not know how to apply such policy because there has never been enough training on the policy.”

PN1: “As the principal my role is to work with all stakeholders to ensure that all learners are accommodated irrespective of their social status and learning abilities, but my concern is on parents who do not show up when we call them to school for meetings.”

PJ1: “My role as the principal is to ensure that all learners come to school and when they are in school teachers teach them without discrimination.”

Based on, the above expressions, one can argue that both teachers and principals acknowledge the role they have to play in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in order to achieve maximum inclusivity. Participants indicated that principals recognise their accountability for equitable teaching, while teachers acknowledge the need to use varied strategies to accommodate all learners. However, they both raised concerns that their efforts to achieve inclusivity are hampered by the fact that other stakeholders are not playing their roles.

4.7.5 Summary of Theme 4

This theme highlighted the role of structures in inclusive pedagogy, focusing on resource availability, limited in-service teacher training, and the responsibilities of principals, SBSTs and teachers. According to responses of the participants some of the stakeholders do not play their roles sufficiently in ensuring admissible practice of inclusive pedagogy to achieve maximum inclusivity. It has been established during the interviews that principals acknowledge their roles as accounting officers who have to make sure that there is effective teaching and learning in schools. However, the concern remains the lack of knowledge in terms of some of the policies of inclusivity. Furthermore, one of the main concerns that were raised was lack of functional SBSTs in schools.

4.8 THEME 5: MODEL AND PRACTICES TO BE RECOMMENDED TO IMPROVE INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGIES FOR TEACHING IN CLASSROOM

One of the objectives of this study was to recommend models and practices to improve the practice of inclusive pedagogy in curriculum. In order to identify models that can be used to improve the practice of inclusive pedagogies in curriculum participants were asked a question: Which models can be used to improve the practice of inclusive pedagogy in curriculum? The intention of asking this question was to determine as to which models can be put in place in order to enhance the practice of inclusive pedagogy in curriculum. The following are the main issues as well as emerging issues in a tabular format:

Table 4.4: Participants’ responses on the recommended models and practices to enhance inclusive pedagogical practices:

Main Objective	Emerging Issues
To recommend models to enhance the practice of inclusive pedagogy in curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional teacher development • Teachers and learners’ support • Establishment of credible SBSTs • Collaboration with parents • Proper implementation of SIAS policy

4.8.1 Professional Teacher Development

Participants of the study particularly teachers emphasised the issue of continuous professional development of teachers as an important mechanism in achieving maximum inclusivity in curriculum. This is attributed to the fact that teachers are at the centre of teaching and learning. Therefore, they should get proper training in order to enable them to practice inclusive pedagogy effectively. In addition, the participants indicated their frustrations over the fact that workshops are conducted after a long time, hence that is the reason why most teachers lack adequate knowledge on the practice of inclusive pedagogy. The following are the responses of the participants:

PK1: “I personally believe that the most valuable intervention strategy in achieving successful inclusive pedagogy is to provide in-service training to

teachers, I think schools and circuit should nominate teachers who should attend in-service training.”

TP1: “Well, I think inclusivity can be achieved, its just that one of the things that delays the progress of inclusivity is that our circuit do not provide adequate training to teachers, if teachers can receive continuous training on inclusive education policies I don’t think it can be impossible to achieve inclusivity.”

TS1: “I think the Department of Education should sample teachers to go for training on inclusive pedagogical practices, I don’t know which criteria will they use but I strongly believe that teachers should be afforded an opportunity for professional development, we cannot expect teachers to miraculously practice inclusivity when we don’t offer them support and training on such.”

Based on the above responses, the researcher can argue that the importance of professional development was denoted. Participants highlighted the need for continuous professional development in order to capacitate teachers with relevant knowledge that will enhance the practice of inclusive pedagogy. Therefore, professional teacher development should be prioritised as this will capacitate teachers and equip them since they are responsible for the implementation of the curriculum.

4.8.2 Teachers and Learners’ Support

Support of teachers and learners is essential in the effort to achieve maximum inclusivity. Therefore, various structures and key stakeholders should collaboratively work together in giving support to teachers and learners. It is evident from the responses of the participants that teachers and learners support is vital for strengthening learner and teachers’ relationship and to instil a sense of belonging. Furthermore, some of the participants emphasised the adoption of working with other social partners such as department of health and social development in order to provide support services to teachers and learners. Participants shared the following sentiments during the interview:

TM1: "Personally, I think in order for inclusivity to be realised in schools, teachers should be taken care of and given support so that their work spirit is revived and strengthened, so I suggest team buildings and outings for teachers so that teachers can share their experiences in terms of challenges and good practices."

TJ1: "The support of social partners such as NGOs will go a long way in assisting us as teachers and this is because at times we need donations for learners who come from disadvantaged backgrounds for things such as Clothes and food."

PP1: "We need the intervention of Psychologist, social workers and SAPS services in our schools; this will really assist a lot in dealing with social challenges that will need such services because to be honest with you, the communities that we work in are really facing numerous social factors."

The above finding highlight that both teachers and learners need support. Moreover, the support that is given to the learners is necessary for their learning. Based on the above responses from the participants one can argue that teachers and learners support can be another strategy to deal with the issue of inclusivity in schools. In addition, the participants suggested taking teachers out for team building in order for them to share challenges and good practices. Therefore, taking teachers out for relaxation and team building would allow them to deal with challenges they experience in their classrooms.

4.8.3 Establishment of Credible and Functional SBSTs

The participants of the study suggested the formation of credible and functional SBSTs in schools. Furthermore, the participants noted that functional SBSTs would perform their responsibilities with due diligence and that would result in the successful practice of inclusive pedagogy. Moreover, the participants in their responses indicated that collaboration of SBSTs and teachers would strengthen efforts to ensure inclusivity in curriculum through inclusive pedagogical practices. The following are the responses of the participants:

PS1: “The conditions that we work under in rural schools are really not good and majority of the learners are faced with social challenges but there are no formal SBSTs that can assist, at list one can say they are not there because we don’t see them working, majority of our learners are experiencing severe challenges that impact of their performance and it is through the intervention of the SBSTs that they can be identified and assisted.”

PL1: “I do have hope that successful practice of inclusive pedagogy can bring inclusivity in curriculum but that can be obtained if we only have functional school-based support teams that are doing their work in our schools but unfortunately we only have them on paper in terms of practice is a totally different story.”

TP1: “We do have SBSTs in our school even though I strongly see that they are just there for the sake of complying because we don’t see them having meetings or giving feedback for the work they are doing.”

PJ1: “Functional SBSTs are very much key and we should ensure that they are established in our schools hence they assist with challenges learners experience in learning and teaching.”

Participant responses indicate that although SBSTs exist in schools, they are often ineffective due to a lack of formal meetings and reporting. Moreover, participants indicated that lack of commitment by the SBSTs impact negatively on the support that can be given to learners who requires additional support to ensure inclusivity. The participants further suggested that schools should have a selection criterion on who should be in the SBSTs.

4.8.4 Proper Implementation of SIAS Policy

Teachers are faced with various challenges of having to ensure that in their teaching practices the learners are all included. The application of inclusive pedagogical practices involves the use of multiple teaching strategies. Therefore, teachers should know the strength and weaknesses of the learners they are teaching. The practice of learner profiling plays a critical role in

assisting teachers to have a background of learners so that they can be able to offer relevant intervention strategies. Proper implementation of learner profiling also assist the teacher. It is critical that parents should be involved and informed about the process of learner profiling. The participants of this study had this to say:

PL1: "In trying to accommodate all learners in the curriculum, us as teachers we should first know these learners and that will assist us to select the correct teaching pedagogies for them."

TN1: "You sell the issue of learner profiling is important as it will help to know the strength and weaknesses of the learners because you cannot offer assistance unless you know the area that needs assistance."

PK1: "There is no way we can have successful inclusivity in schools without learner profiling, it is very much important as teachers to conduct learner profiling hence it will assist to select the best teaching strategies."

Based on the above expressions, one can argue that performing learner profiling can assist teachers into achieving maximum inclusivity in their teaching. Participants have emphasised that learner profiling play a critical role into assisting teachers to know the strength and weaknesses of their learners. Furthermore, learner profiling enable teachers to select appropriate inclusive pedagogy as they will be knowing as to what kind of intervention strategies is needed for their learners. Therefore, appropriate application of learner profiling is essential in enhancing inclusivity in curriculum.

4.8.5 Collaboration With Parents

Parents are the most important stakeholders in the education sector. It is without a doubt that through the support and contributions of parents' maximum inclusivity can be achieved in curriculum. Equally, if parents lack interest and commitment in the education it will have negative impact on the effort of teachers to bring inclusivity. The participants of the study indicated that parental involvement will make their job easy and also strengthen their effort to achieve maximum inclusivity in curriculum. This is what the participants had to say:

PM1: "Parents are the pillars of the schools, without their support it is difficult for us as teachers to win the learners and that is why I strongly suggest collaboration between schools and parents."

PP1: "you see the thing is some of the parents see us as enemies and when we call them to school they come with attitude, I strongly feel that it should not be like that, there should be collaboration between us and parents and that will benefit the learner."

PS1: "I think we can win and obtain inclusivity in schools, what we need is just to teach parents and motivate them on how to support the education of their children, also encourage them to see themselves as partners with teachers."

From the above responses, one can argue that teachers acknowledge the involvement of parents in the education of the learners. It is evident from the responses of the participants that nothing can be achieved when it comes to helping the learners without the involvement of their parents. Furthermore, the participants suggested that there should be mechanisms put in place to teach and motivate parents on how to positively take part in the education of their children. This implies that parents as the primary caregivers of the learners the school should establish a mutual relationship with them in order to work together for the benefit of the child.

4.8.6 Summary of Theme 5

This theme dealt with recommended models and practices for the improvement of inclusive pedagogies in teaching and learning. The participants indicated that inclusive pedagogical practices can be a success if learners and teachers receive adequate support. From this theme, the following sub-themes were formulated: professional development of teachers, teachers and learners support, establishment of credible and functional SBSTs in schools, proper implementation of learners profiling and collaboration with parents. The participants suggested a framework model for the practice of inclusive pedagogy in curriculum which they believe would enhance and yield positive results regarding the implementation of inclusive education policy.

4.9 DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATIONS FROM OBSERVATIONS

This study used classroom observations as the secondary phase of data collection. The observations of this study were conducted in seven secondary schools sampled. The intention of conducting observation was to explore inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum used by teachers to ensure inclusivity. The goal of conducting observations was to explore resources used in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in teaching and learning. In addition, the observation was conducted in order to explore how classroom setting enables a culture of inclusivity among learners. This implies how teachers involve learners who have learning barriers in their classroom through inclusive pedagogical practices. Moreover, the observations were conducted to explore how teachers and SBSTs operate in addressing challenges faced by learners within the school environment.

Lofland, Snow, Anderson and Lofland (2022) indicate that data collection through observation can involve watching people, noting traits in their natural surrounding and exploring events. The observations of this study was informed by the time table of the sampled schools, which started at 07h30 and ended in at 14h40 daily. The observations were conducted both internally and externally during teaching and outside when learners were doing physical education during Life Orientation lessons as a subject that is compulsory to all learners and allows learners to go to the sports ground.

Data was collected through observation guidelines that had a checklist. The observation checklist was used to document various interactions and resources used during teaching and learning. Observation checklist data were analysed to examine the implementation of inclusive pedagogical practices, identify challenges, and suggest practical interventions for addressing learning needs in rural schools. This includes:

- Teaching pedagogies.
- Classrooms environment.
- Teaching resources.
- Functionality of SBSTs.

4.9.1 Teaching Pedagogies

Teaching strategies selected by teachers for teaching and learning plays a vital role in enhancing inclusivity in curriculum. The observations revealed that methods of teaching contributed to the hampering of effective practice of inclusivity. Most teachers used cooperative learning as prescribed by the CAPS and relied on the Annual Teaching Plan, which in some cases limited flexibility and posed challenges to achieving full inclusivity in teaching and learning. The ATP prescribes the learning outcomes and the content that should be covered every term. This result in some of the teachers operating within the prescribed time frames of the ATP and this might compromise remedial interventions for learners. Furthermore, teachers end up using teaching strategies that leave some of the learners behind.

4.9.2 The Classroom Environment

The researcher observed the classroom environment as it is crucial for guaranteeing that all learners feel accommodated, interact with their teachers, generate confidence and maintain motivation. The observations found that teachers do manage to establish positive environment that promote inclusivity in the classroom as they were able to interact with learners and apply various teaching strategies during teaching. However, all the efforts that teachers put in trying to foster inclusivity during teaching in some schools is hampered by the type of infrastructure and furniture available in the classrooms. Ong and Quek (2023) argue that positive classroom atmosphere enhance learners to feel at home. Therefore, classroom that is well-structured and has a culture of inclusivity has a positive impact on learning.

4.9.3 Teaching Resources

Resources play a vital role for both teachers and learners in enhancing inclusivity in teaching and learning. The observation revealed that schools in rural areas are limited to using textbooks, chalkboards and chalks as the traditional resources used for teaching. The process involves the teacher writing notes on the chalkboard while learners copy them while the teacher explains. There are no available digital resources in some of the schools in order to support and advance the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, learners with learning barriers will not have extended opportunities to be included in learning. According to Assefa and Zenebe

(2024) effective resources may create a welcoming atmosphere where learners can engage and where measures to accommodate diversity can be implemented. Thus, the observations have found that lack of adequate resources hampers the quality of the practice of inclusive pedagogy. Moreover, the study has revealed that lack of adequate resources persist to be a source of frustrations to teachers and their effort to obtain maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning.

4.9.4 Functionality of School-Based Support Teams

The SBSTs has the responsibility to assess, identify learners' barriers and offer support in order to counteract such barriers. In the context of inclusive pedagogical practices, this implies that the SBSTs should work together with the teachers to identify learners who need additional support through the practice of multiple teaching pedagogies. It is the responsibility of the SBSTs to establish strategic planning to intervene on challenges facing learners and teachers should know of such plan and also have access to it. On the contrary, the observation found that SBSTs that are in schools are there just for compliance and do not perform their duties. Moreover, all the schools the researcher has observed have the SBSTs on paper but not functional. This seems to suggest that SBSTs members do not adhere to their duties. Thus, one can argue that SBSTs in rural schools are not functional.

4.9.5 Summary for Classroom Observations

This section presented analysis of observations of classrooms under the following themes: the classroom environment, resources in pedagogical practices, pedagogical practices for teaching and learning and SBST functionality in support of inclusive pedagogical practices. On the first theme, classroom environment showed that teachers created an atmosphere that promotes inclusivity. On the second theme of pedagogical practice for teaching and learning, the observations revealed that teachers' do use various teaching strategies however, lack of resources remains a concern. On the third theme of resources in pedagogical practices, the observations revealed that lack of resources aligned to the practices of inclusive pedagogy impact negatively of the efforts of teachers to foster inclusivity in teaching and learning. Lastly, on the theme of the SBSTs' functionality in support of inclusive pedagogies, the observations found that SBSTs are available in schools on paper; however, they are not functional as there is no evident of meetings and records of their work.

4.10 DATA PRESENTATIONS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

In this study, the researcher reviewed textual and official documents created at school level and they differ from one school to another. Documents created at school level are the documents that schools create in order to use as a guide for standard operating procedure. Meanwhile, official documents are formal documents released by the department and other parties affiliated with the DBE. The intention of reviewing documents was to answer the main research objective: to explore inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum. In the context of this study, the researcher reviewed inclusive education policies, records of learner profiling, lesson preparations and SBST committee files. The analysis of various documents in this study assisted the researcher to explore inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum in order to enhance inclusivity.

4.10.1 Policies of Inclusive Education

Policies of inclusive education practices are essential documents that offer guidelines on all processes and regulations in terms of operating procedures at school level. In order for schools to appropriately practice inclusive education they should be guided by such policies. This study purposefully sampled seven secondary schools to be part of this study, all the sampled schools were aware of the policies of inclusive education. However, some of the schools did not have the policies in the school, therefore, the researcher suggested that arrangements be made for the schools to have all relevant policies to be made available.

4.10.2 Lesson Preparations

The lesson preparation of teachers was reviewed in order to evaluate how teachers structure their lesson. The intention was to determine as to whether the lesson preparations of teachers include various teaching strategies and intervention strategies for learners with barriers. All 14 sampled teachers were in position of the lesson preparations in their files. However, the lesson preparations did not indicate intervention strategies and remedial for learners with various diverse needs. Therefore, the researcher advised the teachers that although time might be a challenge, it is vital for them to bear in mind the different learning abilities of learners when preparing for their lessons.

4.10.3 Records of Learner Profiling

Learner profiles are vital as they assist teachers to know the background and well-being of learners. In addition, they also assist teachers to select appropriate teaching pedagogies in order to ensure that all learners are accommodated in teaching and learning. The document reviews in this study revealed that out of the fourteen sampled participants, only six participants had proper filing records of learner profiling. Although, participants acknowledged that they are aware that is their responsibility to have records of learner profiling. The researcher advised participants to prepare learner profiling files as they will assist in structuring teaching strategies and lesson preparation. Moreover, learner profiling plays essential role in the academic journey of the learners as they proceed to the next grades.

4.10.4 School-Based Support Teams Committees

Formation of school-based support teams is critical for the successful practice of inclusive pedagogy within curriculum. School-based support teams should be functional in schools, have committees and hold regular meetings to support learners and teachers. Document reviews revealed that schools do have SBSTs committees; however, most of the committee members are not even aware of their roles as there are no records of meetings and reporting. Therefore, the researcher advised that all committee members should be trained and empowered to do their work.

4.10.5 Summary of Document Analysis

This section presented findings from document analysis from four elements. The four elements were policies of inclusive education, lesson preparations, records of learner profiling and SBSTs. On policies of inclusive education evidence indicates that schools do have policies of inclusive education although some sampled schools did not have hard copies within the school premises. On lesson preparations evidence indicates that teachers do prepare lesson plans. However, due to time constrains lesson preparations does not have intervention strategies for learners with barriers. On records of learner profiling, the study revealed that teachers do not do justice to the practice of learner profiling, thus some of the teachers indicated they are aware of learner profiling yet there is no evidence of the implementation. Lastly, on the SBSTs,

the evidence revealed that schools have established SBSTs but the committees are there on paper but not functional.

4.11 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

This chapter focused on data presentation and interpretations. Data of the study was presented from responses of the participants obtained from semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis. The chapter presented biographical information of the participants. This was followed by the description of teachers in the semi-structured interviews. The chapter also presented data collected from classroom observations. Lastly, data obtained from document analysis was also presented. The following chapter present discussions and analysis of findings.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter, chapter four dealt with data presentation and interpretation. The background information of the participants such as principals and teachers was presented in the form of a table that reflected key information of participants such as gender, qualifications and years of teaching experience and codes of schools. The participants were given codes to represent them. This chapter discusses and analyses findings that emerged from interviews, observations and document analysis of the practices of inclusive pedagogy in curriculum. The theoretical framework of the study and literature review confirms the relevance of discussion of the results of this study.

This study was conducted with the view to achieving the following objectives:

- To explore teachers understanding of inclusive pedagogies within curriculum
- To explore implications of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum
- To explore challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices
- To determine support measures and structures in place for the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum
- To recommend a model and practices that can improve inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum

From the objectives above, several sub-themes have been emerged which guided the discussion of this study. The section below presents the sub-themes that emerged from each of the objectives:

5.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THEME 1: TEACHERS UNDERSTANDING ON INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN CURRICULUM

From the theme above, the following sub-themes emerged, which guided the discussion of this section:

- Teachers' conceptualisation of pedagogy in curriculum

- Lesson preparations and planning
- Teaching strategies
- Fundamentals for inclusive pedagogy
- Teachers' knowledge of resources

5.2.1 Teachers Conceptualisation of Pedagogy in Curriculum

In this study, it has been revealed that the knowledge and understanding of pedagogy for teachers in practicing inclusivity in curriculum are vital for the practice of inclusive pedagogy. Moreover, the study found conceptualisation of inclusive pedagogy is key to the successful implementation of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum. The study revealed that teachers are able to conceptualise the practice of inclusive pedagogy. However, teachers appear to have different conceptions and understanding of inclusive pedagogical practices. McAfee and Hoffman (2021) indicate that misconception of policies may have bad effects on how teachers implement the policy.

Meanwhile, Morgan (2022) is of the view that the key to a successful implementation of any policy is in conceptualising such policy appropriately. Malin and Lubienski (2022) advocates that teachers as agents of change are expected to use their skills of pedagogies to ensure inclusivity in curriculum for all learners. Thus, this implies that teachers in their selection of pedagogies should prioritise learners. Thus, teachers should ensure that all teaching strategies are aligned to learners needs. The findings of this study confirm the research question of the study that seeks to know teachers understanding on the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices. Therefore, the fact that teachers are able to conceptualise the concept of pedagogy in relation to teaching to achieve inclusivity it is an indication that teachers are conscious on what they are supposed to do. According to Barnard and Henn (2023) to obtain maximum inclusivity in curriculum, teachers should be given freedom to interchange teaching strategies in order to accommodate all learners. The correct conceptualisation of inclusive pedagogy will ultimately enable teachers to the appropriate practice of inclusive pedagogy. Similarly, the incorrect conceptualisation will also mean that the practice of inclusive pedagogies will not be practised well.

Teachers, as agents of change and curriculum practitioners, must correctly interpret curriculum policy to ensure its effective implementation and intended impact. Mahabeer (2021) advocate that teachers are expected to demonstrate high level of understanding of curriculum as agents of change. Thus, teachers should prioritise learners in their selection of teaching pedagogies. This finding is in line with one of the research questions of this study that sought to explore teachers understanding of inclusive pedagogies. The fact that teachers demonstrate understanding of inclusive pedagogies confirms that teachers are conscious of their responsibilities when it comes to teaching and learning. Moreover, it also means that teachers in their choice of teaching pedagogies will prioritise learners hence they acknowledge the impact of their teaching strategies.

To support the above finding, various scholars seem to suggest that there is no universal conceptualisation of inclusive pedagogy hence there are different views expressed regarding conceptualisation of teaching pedagogy. Moosa and Bekker (2021) seems to argue that teachers' conceptualisation of inclusive pedagogy must be put into consideration as teachers understand inclusive pedagogy differently. Meanwhile, Namanyane and Shaoan (2021) highlight that lack of universal approach to inclusive pedagogy result ineffective practice of inclusive education by teachers. According to Scholtz (2019) conceptualisation of inclusive pedagogy is not a unitary skill but goes further to express concern that teachers requires sufficient understanding of inclusive pedagogy in order to practice inclusive pedagogy appropriately. Some literature reveal that classroom teaching pedagogies cannot be separated from learners learning needs, because of how teachers engage learners during teaching and learning (Bertram, 2022). Therefore, teachers understanding of inclusive pedagogies can be attributed to various factors such as skills of teaching pedagogies and adequate training on inclusive pedagogies.

5.2.2 Lesson Preparation and Planning

The findings of the study revealed that teachers have lesson preparations. According to Sehveli et al. (2022), lesson preparation plays a critical role into enhancing teaching and learning in the classroom. In addition, Enama (2021) seems to concur that lesson preparation have positive impact on teaching and learning in the classroom. It is for this that the findings of the study confirmed the question on the

implications of lesson preparations and planning of pedagogy on curriculum. Teachers indicated that preparations and planning should be prioritised in order to provide intervention strategies when teaching in the classroom. Based on the responses of the teachers, it is evident that teachers are aware of what they are supposed to do in terms of lesson preparations and planning. Consequently, lesson preparations and planning have positive impact on teaching and learning. However, the issue of time constrains was raised by teachers.

Regarding lesson preparation and planning, the study revealed that inclusivity in the curriculum requires efficient preparation and planning as another step towards the achievement of maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning. Therefore, teachers as professionals should at all times ensure that their work is of a great standard through preparation and planning of their lessons. The finding aligned with this theme revealed that lesson preparation has positive impact on teaching and learning. This confirms the question that this study sought to achieve on the implication of teaching pedagogies in curriculum. Teachers indicated the critical role played by planning and preparation in ensuring maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning. According to Mamabolo (2021) most teachers are either untrained or semi-trained on inclusive pedagogies particularly in rural villages, due to not receiving specialised training specifically on inclusive pedagogies. Similarly, Blignaut (2021) noted with concern that teachers continue to lack support and training in the implementation of inclusive pedagogies.

5.2.3 Teaching Strategies

This study has found that the choice of teaching strategies in teaching and learning has an impact on how learners respond to teaching. Therefore, it is critical for teachers to be conscious of learners' diverse needs when selecting teaching methods. It is a fact that at the core of teaching activities and curriculum delivery teachers are pillars of such activities. Thus, empowering and strengthening the skills and capacity of teachers will enhance the effective use of inclusive pedagogical practices to accommodate all learners. According to Mahano and Dlamini (2025) teachers play a critical role through their teaching strategies in ensuring inclusivity in teaching and learning. In support, Agyeman and Aphan (2025) indicated that it is the responsibility of teachers to use and adopt compassionate teaching strategies

that promote inclusivity in the classroom during teaching and learning. The choice of teaching strategy remains critical as will determine as to how learners respond to teaching. Moreover, it will play a key role in ensuring that learners are taught with strategies that are aligned to their learning needs.

Teachers as agents of change are entrusted with a task to make sure that all learners are accommodated in teaching and learning (Themane & Thobejane, 2019). In addition, Themane and Thobejane (2019) assert that the modern education sector increasingly call upon all teachers to use teaching strategies that caters for the diverse needs of learners. Therefore, it is vital for teachers to be prepared to adjust and interchange their teaching strategies to suit the learning needs of all learners. Malahlela and Johnson (2024) argue that despite the learning challenges teachers' experience, teachers are still capable of making a difference through their teaching strategies in curriculum. McKenzie and Dalton (2020) argue that beyond the impact of teaching strategies on learning, it is crucial to examine teachers' willingness to adapt their approaches to accommodate diverse learner needs.

5.2.4 Fundamentals for Inclusive Pedagogy

Acceptance and inclusion in 21st century are judged to be the most critical need every learner should be afforded with to participate meaningfully in social, economic and political activities in the community they come from (Blignaut, 2021). On the theme of fundamentals for inclusive pedagogies teachers raised an important concern that they lack some of the basic knowledge of the practice of inclusive pedagogy in order to achieve inclusivity. This finding answered the question of the implication of inclusive pedagogies on teaching and learning. This is relevant to this study as it is vital to know as to what are the challenges that teachers face on the ground in order to determine intervention strategies should there be a need for such. The successful practice of inclusive pedagogy is dependable on every teacher been armed to use various teaching pedagogies during teaching and learning to accommodate diverse needs of learners. According to Mjijlma (2021), teachers in their selection of pedagogical practices should consider factors such as cultural, social, political and economic status from their respective communities. On this theme, teachers raised concerns that learners' background has an impact on how they respond to teaching strategies. This finding sought to answer the research

which intended to know the implications of teaching strategies in the classroom. This relevant for this study hence it is important to know that teachers are faced with various challenges emanating from classroom that are made of learners with different learning needs. According to Mabasa-Manganyi and Botha (2022), the development of lesson preparation and selection of teaching strategies should be aligned with diverse needs of learners. In their argument, they emphasise the importance of selecting relevant teaching strategies as the base of fostering inclusivity in the curriculum (Mabasa-Manganyi & Botha, 2022). Therefore, it is critical that teachers should have skills and knowledge of fundamentals of inclusive pedagogical practices in order to ensure effective practice of inclusive pedagogy.

5.2.5 Teachers' Knowledge Resources

Teachers raised challenges they experienced regarding knowledge of resources and their use. It was revealed that teachers are exposed to various resources that they use to practice inclusive pedagogical practices in order to achieve maximum inclusivity. Vygotsky (1978) cautions teachers in his theory of constructivism that they should use resources well in order cater for diverse learning needs of learners. The theory state that learners learn through various learning strategies namely, communication, experience and understanding of the real world around them. Undheim (2022) emphasises that effective learner inclusion depends on teachers' deep knowledge of inclusive pedagogical practices. In addition, teachers should demonstrate explicit knowledge in using and selecting appropriate teaching strategies and resources in order to achieve inclusivity. It is a necessity for teachers to know teaching pedagogies and have skills on how to apply them during teaching and learning in order to support learners.

The study revealed that resources play a vital role in capacitating teachers to achieve maximum inclusivity in curriculum. However, teachers raised issues on their knowledge and use resources. It was revealed that teachers are well exposed to various ICT resources and projectors. However, some still showing signs of struggle of using modern technology for their teaching. Similarly, Mahano and Dlamini (2025) reported that even though the use of ICT has become a norm in modern day teaching, some teachers still prefers the traditional methods of teaching. On the contrary, Mphahlele et al. (2021) emphasise that the use of digital resources

increases opportunities for teachers to achieve maximum inclusivity through additional intervention strategies. Therefore, teachers should possess explicit skills, knowledge of selecting and using digital resources to achieve inclusivity in their pedagogical practices.

5.3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THEME 2: THE IMPLICATIONS OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN CURRICULUM

From the theme above, the following sub-themes emerged, which guided the discussion of this section:

- Culture of inclusivity
- Differentiated teaching
- Remedial intervention strategies
- Maximising opportunities through the use of inclusive pedagogical practices.

5.3.1 Culture of Inclusivity

Regarding this sub-theme, it was found that teachers play a vital role in establishing a spirit and environment of inclusivity where all learners are free, enjoy and willing to participate in teaching and learning. The culture of inclusivity should include a classroom where respect and acceptance are championed and encouraged among school environment. According to Ngubane and Makua (2021) culture refers to beliefs, values, norms and systems that characterises each learner in the school environment. The culture of inclusivity in school encompasses of various elements that must be sown in young learners' hearts and minds. According to Ramango and Naicker (2022), an inclusive environment should acknowledge social behaviour and identifies awareness with regard to culture, learners can develop values of acceptance and inclusivity. In the context of this study, teachers indicated that they try by all means to make it easy for learners to approach them. In addition, teachers indicated that they have positioned themselves in such a way that learners are free to approach them and discuss challenges that are also outside the classroom. The findings of this study in relation to this sub-theme are supported by Vygotsky (1978) as he contends that learning is the process whereby the socially competent person facilitate and mediate in the learning environment. This implies that teachers as MKO

select appropriate and relevant teaching pedagogies that are aligned with individual learning needs.

The study findings further revealed that environment that fosters the culture of inclusivity is important in ensuring that all learners are accommodated in the curriculum. Teachers in their responses indicated that they are willing and ready to practice inclusive pedagogical practices to obtain maximum inclusivity in curriculum. However, they raised frustrations due to other contributing factors that hinders their efforts. In addition, it revealed that teachers do put efforts to provide intervention strategies to accommodate all learners. However, it was reported that the behaviour of some of the learners was a contributing factor to the ineffective practice of inclusive pedagogical practices. Ramango and Naicker (2022) highlight that creating a school environment that enables inclusive culture starts by acknowledging that all learners can learn if given support. In addition, an environment that enables inclusive culture is critical in ensuring that learners with barriers to learning are accepted and given support through pedagogical practices.

Meanwhile, Ngubane and Makua (2021) emphasise that an inclusive environment enables learners to respond well to intervention strategies. In agreement, Motala, Sayol and De Kock (2021) assert that culture of inclusivity in a school environment enables learners to do well academically. On the other hand, Pineda and Mishra (2023) testified that some of the factors hindering maximum achievement of inclusivity is the environment created around the school. The above view seems to suggest that culture of inclusivity would establish a positive environment that supports all learners. Nonetheless, Ramango and Naicker (2022) encourage all teachers to keep fostering an environment that enables culture of inclusivity.

5.3.2 Differentiated Teaching

The study revealed that differentiated teaching maximises the opportunities of learners to be included in curriculum. In this study teachers raised concerns that they are willing and prepared to use differentiated instructions in order to accommodate learners. However, time constrains remains a factor that challenges teachers in their efforts to apply differentiated teaching. According to Taole (2020) teaching and learning should be differentiated in order to accommodate diverse learning needs of learners. In support, Onyishi and Sefotho (2020) seem to believe that teachers

should make use of differentiated instruction to present their content in order to enable learning opportunities for diverse learning needs. Traditionally, teachers are given ATPs to follow to structure their lessons. In criticism of this approach, Bekker (2024) argues that these kinds of approaches where teachers are given a blueprint to follow does not promote inclusivity in addressing diverse learning needs of learners. Therefore, the findings of this study confirm that teaching strategies selected by teachers are some of the contributing factors to the ineffective or effective practice of inclusivity in teaching and learning. Moreover, it implies that teachers teach learners with the primary goal of covering the ATP. Consequently, this prevents teachers from establishing additional intervention strategies to accommodate diverse needs of learners.

5.3.3 Remedial Intervention Strategies

A remedial teacher is regarded as professional who has high level of knowledge in establishing mitigating strategies to address learner's barriers to learning in order to enhance inclusivity (Mahlaule & Napoles, 2024). It has emerged this study that the journey for all learners to be included in the curriculum will involve an establishment of remedial intervention strategies. This finding is in line with the theoretical framework of the study. The social constructivism theory of Vygotsky (1978) places the teacher as a competent professional, who is a skilled adult, more experienced knowledgeable in teaching and learning through meaningful engagement. In this context, the teacher mediates in learning through the application of various teaching pedagogies to accommodate learners. According to Matolo and Rambuda (2021) teachers makes use of differentiated instruction to accommodate learning needs of learners. In support, Nomtshongwana et al. (2025) alludes that it is the responsibility of the teacher to make use of their skills in pedagogy to accommodate unique learning needs, abilities and organise their teaching strategies to suit the needs of learners. Govender (2024) encourages teachers to conduct remedial intervention that is more comprehensive and supportive to support learners.

5.3.4 Maximising Learning Opportunities through the Use of Inclusive Pedagogical Practice

The use of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum maximise opportunities for various learning needs of learners to be accommodated. The contributions came

from this theme are that teachers can use their skills and experience in teaching pedagogies to maximise inclusivity in curriculum. The findings of the study also affirm the research question which was aimed at exploring implications of teaching pedagogy in curriculum. The findings of this study are in harmony with Mandoza and Heymann (2024) that teachers choice of pedagogy are important factors in ensuring that maximum inclusivity is achieved in classrooms. Similarly, Ndlove (2021) echoes the same sentiment that the use of different teaching pedagogies maximise opportunities for all learners to be accommodated in teaching as they learn through teaching strategies that suit their needs. Meanwhile, Landa, Zhou and Marongwe (2021) contribute similar view that teachers are in control of teaching and learning processes. Therefore, one can argue that making use of various teaching pedagogies maximise inclusivity in teaching and also serve as a mitigating strategy to address learners learning challenges.

5.4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THEME 3: CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY TEACHERS IN THE PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

From the theme above, the following sub-themes emerged, which guided the discussion of this section:

- Availability of teacher workshops
- Learner's background and socioeconomic status
- Parental involvement
- Inflexible curriculum.

5.4.1 Availability of Teacher Workshops

In this study, teachers raised concerns on the lack of teacher workshops both internal and external workshops. In addition, teachers indicated that these workshops would contribute so much in their work as they would be able to share challenges and good practices with other teachers. In the absence of teacher workshops, it means teachers continue to experience challenges in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices within the curriculum. According to Ndlovu et al. (2021) the main challenge facing teachers in terms of development to achieve inclusivity is lack of workshops. Moreover, they emphasise that in practicing inclusivity there should be extensive training. This finding contrasts with the

theoretical framework of this study in the sense that Vygotsky's (1978) constructivism places the teacher as the MKO. In this context, the teacher is viewed as a more experienced and skilled to mediate teaching and learning which is constructed through meaningful interactions. Therefore, it is vital for teachers to be trained and capacitated in order to be able to execute their responsibilities effectively.

5.4.2 Learners' Background and Socioeconomic Status

On the theme of learners' background and socioeconomic status the study revealed that most learners came from poor backgrounds and they were not receiving adequate support from parents. In addition, the study found that some of the learners were orphans while some were being raised by their grandparents. This finding is in line with Archer's (1999) factor of structure meaning that the role that is played by family as structure is very important. This is in line with the finding of this study that learners should have support structure from their families in order to display a meaningful interactions with others in the school environment. The findings are supported by Motsabi et al. (2020) who contend that learners' background play a critical role in how they respond and behave in the school environment. According to Motsabi et al. (2020) the progress of learners in learning cannot be isolated from their parents' involvement in education, thus the social background of learners remain another factor attributed to how learners perform in schools. Meanwhile, McKenzie et al. (2021) assert that inclusivity can be achieved through interactions of teachers and parents of the learners. In agreement, Buthelezi and Maseko (2023) highlight that inclusivity in curriculum is a result of meaningful interactions among stakeholders such as parents, caregivers, guardians, communities and teachers working together. Research has found that learners from well-established family background turn to perform well in the academics (Mabena et al., 2021).

5.4.3 Parental Involvement

In this study, it was revealed that parents are the key stakeholders of the schools and the practice of inclusive pedagogical in curriculum would be successful when parents also play their part. However, participants of the study raised concerns regarding parental involvement in the education of their children. Moreover, the study found that majority of parents lack interest as they hardly come to school when they

are invited for meetings to show support to their children. According to Hornby and Lafaele (2023), parental involvement is essential in realising maximum inclusivity in curriculum. In support, Oranga et al. (2023) when stating that successful implementation of inclusivity can be achieved when parents play their part to support learners and teachers.

Thus, it is clear that parents play a vital role in the education of their children. However, Sengonul (2022) found that some of the parents are not interested in engaging in the educational activities of their children. Ma et al. (2022) maintain that schools should establish mechanisms to encourage parents to see the importance of supporting education of their children. This means that schools should have strategies to influence parents to take part in the learning of their children. Furthermore, the study revealed that limited parental involvement was influenced by factors such as parents' academic backgrounds and socioeconomic challenges. Supporting this view, Jeynes (2024) notes that some parents show limited engagement in their children's education due to socioeconomic constraints. Consequently, there is a need to educate and sensitise parents about the important role they play in supporting their children's educational development.

5.4.4 Inflexible Curriculum

This study revealed that inflexible curriculum hinders teachers on the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum. Thus, participants highlighted that in their teaching they are confined by what is prescribed by the ATP. As a result, time constrains makes it difficult for them to interchange teaching pedagogies during teaching. Consequently, teachers are unable to make use of various teaching strategies to offer remedial for learners with barriers. Tyron (2023) explains inflexible curriculum as the curriculum that does not encourage flexibility and problem-solving skills. Meanwhile, Gourlay and Mujtaba (2024) state that curriculum plays a vital role of obtaining educational objectives, even though it is not effective when it is rigid. This implies that ineffective curriculum does not offer teachers an opportunity to interchange teaching pedagogies in order to provide additional support for learners with barriers to learning.

In addition, Han and Lei (2024) indicate that inflexible curriculum has negative impact on the successful practice of inclusive pedagogical practices. Meanwhile,

Adu-Boateng and Goodnough (2022) assert that inflexible curriculum have severe consequences for learners with learning barriers as teachers are limited in their provision of intervention strategies. Munasi (2024) suggests that teachers should establish additional strategies to support learners with challenges through their teaching strategies. Sharing the sentiment are Tebele and Chaka (2024) who report in their study that it is vital for teachers to differentiate their teaching in order to provide support for learners with diverse needs.

5.5 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THEME 4: SUPPORT MEASURES AND STRUCTURES IN THE PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

From the theme above, the following sub-themes emerged, which guided the discussion of this section:

- The roles of different structures in the practice of inclusive pedagogy
- Resources aligned with inclusive pedagogical practices
- Lack of in-service training for teachers
- Role of principals, SBTSs and teachers.

5.5.1 The Roles of Different Structures in the Practice of Inclusive Pedagogy in Curriculum

The study revealed that structures involved in inclusive education implementation play a vital role in enhancing the quality of inclusive pedagogical practices. Villa and Thousand (2021) asserted that for practices of inclusive pedagogy to be carried out effectively structures and stakeholders need to work together. This was attested by Han (2021) in Chapter 2 of this study who emphasised inclusive education practices cannot take place in vacuum. Structures such as DBSTs, SBSTs, non-governmental organisations and the community at large should provide support and encouragement to teachers and learners in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices.

According to Archer (1994) human interactions has the possibility to bring systematic changes. This includes all the structures that are involved in education; there is a need for engagement and collaboration for the effective cycle of the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices. Walter (2024) confirms that systematic change

involves co-ordination of activities involving all structures working together. On the other hand, Woodcock et al. (2022) state that the department as the upper structure has the responsibility to ensure a smooth collaboration among structures. Villa and Thousand (2021) argues that teachers play a critical role in ensuring maximum inclusivity in curriculum. Meanwhile, Archer (1999) affirms that concepts of agency and structure are interconnected and depended on each other to influence successful practices.

5.5.2 Resources Aligned With Inclusive Pedagogical Practices

The study revealed that teachers did not receive sufficient resources to support the implementation of inclusive pedagogical practices. Participants indicated this was one of the challenges that hamper the provision of the effective support on inclusive pedagogical practices. Mulovhedzi and Luhalima (2023) corroborate the above finding and cautions that the provision of resources aligned with inclusive pedagogical practices has a great impact on the successful achievement of inclusivity. It was noted in chapter two that lack of resources aligned to inclusive pedagogical practices impact negatively on the curriculum delivery. The literature has since revealed that SBSTs are not able to perform some of their core duties due to lack of resources. Netshipale et al. (2025) highlight that SBSTs that are not functional derails the whole process of trying to achieve inclusivity in teaching and learning. In concurrent, Benoliel (2021) highlights that the effectiveness of SBST contribute to the successful efforts of inclusivity in the school environment. The study has further revealed that lack of resources aligned to inclusive pedagogical practices has serious impact on how teachers practice inclusive education. Mahlaule et al. (2024) support the above finding and indicates that failure to support teachers with resources will result in ineffective practice of inclusive education. Meanwhile, Bayene et al. (2023) highlight that lack of access to resources will derail efforts of teachers of trying to achieve maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of the DBE to ensure that adequate resources are provided to schools in order to ensure effective practice of inclusive education policies. In agreement, Madhav (2024) corroborates the above point of view and cautions that the DBE should prioritise resources and structures with regard to supporting teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogies in teaching and learning.

In this study, it was revealed that resources are some of the elements that have enormous impact on the effective practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum. Woolfson (2024) describes resources as the supplies, personnel and infrastructure available within regular setting of teaching. Moreover, Nilholm (2021) further explains resources as having enough classrooms, textbooks, funding and facilities such as computers and intervention support available for learners with barriers. The practice of inclusive pedagogy should take place in an environment that enables inclusivity. However, in this study, it was revealed that teachers are prepared to practice inclusive pedagogy in curriculum, but lack of resources negatively impact on their effort to bring inclusivity. Thus, this is due to the fact that resources aligned with inclusive pedagogy are not available in some of the schools. According to Mokaleng (2020) there seems to be imbalances with the provision of resources and funding to schools. According to Walton and Engelbrecht (2024), the imbalances of the provision of resources and funding to schools impact on the practice of inclusive pedagogy in curriculum in schools.

On the other hand, Tai (2022) contends that successful inclusivity in curriculum practices is dependable on the kind of resources that are available to schools. A study by Qorib (2024) revealed that teachers who work in conditions of under-resourced environment find themselves frustrated and demotivated to provide additional intervention strategies to assist learners with barriers. In agreement, Li and Rupparr (2021) who assert that majority of teachers are frustrated by lack of adequate resources in their practice of inclusive curriculum. Therefore, it is evident that resources play a vital role in equipping and capacitating teachers in their effort to achieve maximum inclusivity.

5.5.3 Lack of In-service Training of Teachers

This study has revealed that lack on in-service training for teachers on inclusive pedagogical practices and inclusive education has severe repercussions on the successful practices of inclusivity in curriculum. Nembambula (2022) highlight the provision of in-service training on inclusive policies to teachers as an important factor in equipping and capacitating teachers. According to Legodi-rakgalakane and Mokhamphanyane (2022), continuous in-service training of teachers on inclusive pedagogy enables a sustainable practice of inclusive education. However, in the

context of this study, it was found that teachers are offered some sort of training, although most of the times the workshops are not productive. In addition, the workshops that teachers attend on inclusive education policies, inclusive pedagogical practices are only mentioned in passing by facilitators.

Zindi and Sibanda (2023) have since criticised the manner in which the Department of Education uses the cascade model to train teachers. They argue that the cascade model is limited because it trains only selected teachers, relying on them to pass knowledge on to others who do not attend workshops. Mtetwa and Ndemo (2022) demonstrate that the use of the cascade model to train teachers needs careful monitoring as the flow of information get to be distorted when it reaches teachers. Therefore, the study has found that the use of the cascade model to train teachers is not effective. Consequently, it leads to teachers not accessing quality training that enables them to correctly practice inclusive pedagogies in teaching and learning.

5.5.4 Roles of Principals, School-Based Support Teams and Teachers

The study has revealed that principals, teachers and school-based support teams play a critical role in ensuring quality practice of inclusive education in schools. The existence of SBSTs is vital for the identification and support of learners who requires additional support. Principals as accounting officer, it is their role to support teachers and also ensuring that all learners have equal access to quality education. The study findings paint a different picture with regard to SBSTs, as it was revealed that from the seven sampled schools that SBSTs are either established but not functional or they are not established at all. Tsoetsi and Omodan (2020) seems to have a notion that empowering school-based support teams is critical for the successful practice of inclusive pedagogical practices.

According to Mpanza and Govender (2022) school-based support teams are critical in the identification and support of learners with learning barriers. Meanwhile, Makhalemele and Jama (2023) highlight the importance of principals, teachers and SBSTs committee working together towards supporting learners with diverse needs through the practice of inclusive pedagogies to achieve maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning. According to Ngobeni (2025) establishing and maintaining partnerships among key stakeholders is essential for assisting learners who requires additional intervention support in learning.

5.6 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THEME 5: MODELS TO BE RECOMMENDED TO IMPROVE INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGIES FOR TEACHING IN CLASSROOM

From the theme above, the following sub-themes emerged, which guided the discussion of this chapter:

- Professional teacher development
- Teacher and learner support
- Establishment of credible school-based support teams
- Proper implementation of learner profiling
- Collaboration with parents.

5.6.1 Professional Teacher Development

One of the main challenge teachers experience in the practice of inclusive pedagogy is for them to effectively facilitate and put into practice the training they have received. The successful practice of inclusive pedagogy is dependable on the support given to key implementers who in this context are teachers. Moreover, it is of paramount importance for teachers to know inclusive education policies, understand it and be able to engage with it. According to Mabena et al. (2021) the unsuccessful practice of inclusivity can be attributed to lack of professional development. In addition, Mabena et al. (2021) highlight that the basic DBE turn to introduce policies without proper planning on how to bring teachers on board regarding such policies. Ongoing development of teachers on policies such as inclusive education and SIAS policy is vital. Development of teachers should not only be theoretical but should also include practical work. The DBE (2010) is in line with the above and stresses that teachers who have appropriate skills, training, attitude and curriculum support are critical in the delivery of quality education for all learners. The study has further revealed that teachers do get training, although it is evident that it is not sufficient. It was also found that even after there has been some form of training, there are still teachers who show signs of resistance to the practice of inclusive education policies. Professional development efforts should equip teachers to develop a sense of responsibility for ensuring that all learners irrespective of their learning needs and backgrounds are included in the activities of teaching and learning.

It came out in this study that professional teacher development is critical to have formal teaching in pedagogical practices. Schmid and Garrels (2021) explains professional teacher development as an important aspect in ensuring that teachers are equipped and capacitated with appropriate skills and knowledge to implement pedagogies for inclusivity. However, the study revealed that factors such as lack of training, qualified facilitators and poor planning derails the successful practice of inclusive pedagogical practice. On the other hand, Govender et al. (2023) criticises the DBE for making use of the cascade model to train teachers in policies and regard it as ineffective. Moreover, Zindi and Sibanda (2023) indicates that majority of teachers have questions with regard to policy implementation while the department use the cascade model to train few teachers with the hope that they will train other teachers. Equally, the study also revealed that some of the facilitators who are entrusted with responsibility to train teachers are either unprepared and lack conceptual knowledge of policy implementation. Meanwhile, Rachana (2023) takes the blame for unsuccessful practice of inclusivity in schools to teachers; it triggers a curiosity on planning and preparation of lessons. Mpu and Adu (2021) seem to suggest that the department should consider appointing qualified and competent personnel to train teachers. On the other hand, Rio and Newman (2022) is of the view that extensive training on policy should be conducted for teachers in order to have successful practice of inclusive pedagogy.

5.6.2 Teacher and Learner Support

As much as inclusivity is what everyone would want to see taking place in teaching and learning, it can also be a demanding task to do especially when it comes to teachers. Therefore, support of both teachers and learners is vital for achieving maximum inclusivity. In this study, one of the concerns raised was that teachers have since pointed at the gap that exists when it comes to professional teacher development with regard to inclusive pedagogical practices. The theory of Vygotsky (1978) of social constructivism advocates for teachers as mediators and MKO, where his/her skills is required to assist learners during teaching and learning where learners experience difficulties. In the context of this study, teachers make use of relevant and appropriate teaching strategies that are aligned with diverse learning needs of learners. The above findings are connected to Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism whereby the teacher is regarded as the supporter of the learner in the

learning process through mediation. Teachers are committed and willing to create multiple learning opportunities for learners. This strategy has proved to yield positive outcomes as they mitigate and strengthen inclusivity in teaching and learning. It is suggested that teachers should know which teaching pedagogies are best in which context to assist in their teaching to be more inclusive.

The study revealed that teachers and learners support is critical in fostering relationships in the classroom. The successful practice of inclusive pedagogy requires both learners and teachers to get support. Adewumi and Mosito (2019) concurs that teachers and learners support will contribute to the successful achievement of inclusivity in teaching and learning. Teachers in the study raised concerns that they are committed to ensuring maximum inclusivity in curriculum. However, they are frustrated by lack of support from the stakeholders. Consequently, these demotivate teachers in their attempt to involve all learners. Teachers reported that parental unavailability limits communication about learners' progress and challenges. The above finding is in line with a study conducted by Mabele (2024) that revealed that lack of support to both teachers and learners will result efforts to bring inclusivity to be ineffective.

Consequently, this behaviour hampers the attempt of inclusivity in their pedagogy as they seem to be in the battle alone without the support of the parents and other stakeholders. In concurrent, Motshusi et al. (2024) alludes that lack of parental involvement makes it difficult for teachers to have full control over the learners.

According to Munje and Mncube (2018) parental involvement is fundamental for school functioning. Meanwhile, Motshusi et al. (2024) report that without parents' involvement in education of their children it becomes difficult to offer additional support. In support, Mabena et al. (2021) alludes that parents have shifted all responsibilities of their children to teachers. It is evident when they are called for school meetings. However, Myende and Nhlumayo (2022) indicates that teachers who are given support by parents perform well and are more equipped in dealing with various learners with different learning needs.

5.6.3 Establishment of Credible School-based Support Teams

In chapter two it was explained that one of the roles of SBSTs is to support teachers and learners. It was further stressed that if there is no committee at school level, the SBST should assist to establish it. It is the responsibility of the SBSTs to support teachers by ensuring collaborative problem-solving with regard to assisting learners with barriers. The SBSTs should position itself to facilitate any form of support that might be needed. However, the challenge that remains is that some of the SBSTs are dysfunctional which makes it difficult to execute its responsibility effectively. Consequently, if the SBSTs are not functional it will result in the vision of maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning not been realised. It is evident from the data obtained that SBSTs are established in some schools meanwhile in other schools they remain dysfunctional. However, there seems to be elements that contribute to the dysfunctionality. The findings study on the roles of the SBSTs in the practice of inclusive pedagogy has since revealed that there is lack of support and that teachers do not get necessary support from the DBST. Furthermore, the findings paint a picture that in some of the schools the SBSTs are not established or either the committee members are not even aware of their duties and responsibilities. It was also revealed that some of the schools do not have functional SBSTs due to lack of flow of instruction. This finding aligns with Mpanza and Govender (2022), who identified poor information flow and insufficient support as factors undermining the effective functioning of SBSTs and ongoing support in schools. The study conducted by Benoliel (2021) also reveals that in some districts there has been no meaningful support or any form of training to SBSTs. This is particularly the case in the rural communities. The above finding correlates with Agulhas (2021) as he argues that realising maximum inclusivity in schools, the DBE is confronted with the challenge of support and disseminating information to communities. They also face challenge of providing training to SBSTs members in order to practice their duties effectively (Agulhas, 2021). The above has confirmed that the functionality of SBSTs at school level plays a critical role in realising inclusivity in teaching and learning.

The study found that school-based support teams are vital structures that have to support teachers with resources that would ensure maximum inclusivity in curriculum. However, the study revealed that most of the sampled schools do not have functional and credible SBSTs. Mpanza and Govender (2022) alludes that the

best strategy to achieve successful implementation of inclusivity is through the empowerment of school-based support teams (SBSTs). Meanwhile, Hussein (2021) highlight that SBSTs plays a critical role in assisting teachers to identify learners who needs additional support. SBSTs operate through key structures: whole-school development for school-wide needs, learner support portfolios for early identification of barriers, and educator support portfolios to build teachers' capacity for inclusive curriculum practice. However, in all the sampled schools of this study, none of the portfolios mentioned above seems to exist and the SBSTs' members are not aware of such portfolios. It is evident that the SBSTs that are in most schools are not functional. Moreover, one may even suggest that SBSTs in most schools are there for compliance. Fink (2023) seems to suggest that the Department of Education should find competent personnel to offer training on the functions and roles of SBSTs in order to offer assistance in continuous professional development of teachers.

5.6.4 Proper Implementation of Learner Profiling

Findings revealed that schools do not conduct learner profiling correctly. Ultimately, this result in challenging teachers to know the background of their learners and be able to identify those learners with barriers. Tomlinson and Jarvis (2023) reiterate that learner profiling plays a critical role in inclusive education since it allows teachers to develop intervention strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities for learners with barriers. Meanwhile, Muedi et al. (2021) emphasise that learner profile assist the teacher to discover teaching methods that are aligned with individual learning needs. Mnguni (2025) acknowledge learner profile as the process of assessing learners' strength and weaknesses with the aim to provide support in areas where learners are weak. According to DBE (2014), learner profiling enable teachers to build relationships with learners and developing understanding of curriculum perspective.

Williams (2024) emphasise that learner profiling plays a vital role for teachers to know their learners and assist with additional support to ensure inclusivity in curriculum. Moreover, it allows teachers in their planning and preparations to discover suitable strategies for learners with learning barriers (Williams, 2024). In addition, Qorib (2024) acknowledges that learner profiling is a process that assist

teachers to create opportunities for learners to feel belonging among others. According to Anis (2023) learner profiling helps teachers in establishing positive relationships with learners and ensuring inclusivity in curriculum.

In addition, the study found that majority of teachers does not have adequate knowledge on the application of support needs assessment (SNA) to use it to profile learners. The study revealed that teachers found the process of learner profiling time-consuming. Although, some of the teachers do acknowledge the role played by the process of learner profiling to mitigate challenges faced by learners and to maximise inclusivity. It came out in this study that the process of learner profiling is complex and time-consuming. However, the study has since revealed that few of the schools acknowledge the relevance and the critical role played by learner profiling. Mhlongo et al. (2023) emphasise that in order for teachers to understand the backgrounds of the learners they are dealing with they should conduct learner profiling. Maribe (2025) also highlighted that achieving success in inclusivity include considering various factors that contribute to learning barriers, and such can be known through conducting learner profiling. According to Woodcock et al. (2022) indicates that achieving maximum inclusivity is not only the responsibility of teachers but all stakeholders involved.

5.6.5 Collaboration with Parents

The study revealed that collaboration with parents is important in order establish teaching and learning space that enables teachers and learners to work together. Masondo and Mabaso (2025) describe collaboration with parents as the state in which parents and teachers welcome, identify and value the diverse perspective of every learner together. Lefokane (2023) emphasise that in order to have effective practice of inclusive pedagogies, all stakeholders involved in education, particularly parents and teachers have to put their differences aside and work together for the greater benefit of the learner. Masondo and Mabaso (2025) again assert that teachers make use of their skills to involve parents of learners in ensuring that there is effective practice of inclusive pedagogies.

It came out in this study that parents do not engage in the academic education of their children. Jacobs (2024) in his study has revealed that some of the parents who are not part of the education of their children feel embarrassed when they are called

to school to discuss their children. Lefakane (2023) advocates the need for effective communication and inter-relationship among parents and teachers in order to make the practice of inclusive pedagogy to be easy. Meanwhile, Ralejoe (2021) contends that it is essential that communities understand their role and contributions to issues around inclusivity in teaching and learning so that they could intervene when there are issues among learners and teachers that needs support.

5.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter discussed and analysed findings of the study. The main and sub-findings of the study were discussed under several themes. These included teachers' conceptualisation of pedagogy in the curriculum and lesson planning. Other themes focused on the foundations of inclusive pedagogy, teachers' knowledge of resources, and the culture of inclusivity.

Additional areas covered differentiated instruction, remedial intervention strategies, and maximising opportunities for inclusive practice. The study also examined the availability of teacher workshops, learners' backgrounds and socioeconomic status, and parental involvement.

Further discussion addressed curriculum inflexibility, the role of school structures in inclusive pedagogy, and the lack of in-service training. Lastly, the findings highlighted professional teacher development, teacher and learner support, the establishment of functional SBSTs, collaboration with parents, and effective learner profiling

The next chapter present of findings, conclusions, recommendations and contribution to new knowledge.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter, Chapter 5, presented discussions and analysis of results of the study based on the research sub-questions and main issues. The purpose of the study is to explore inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum. The current chapter, chapter six, present summary, conclusion and recommendations from the findings to determine the extent to which findings of the study were achieved. This chapter contributes to new knowledge that the schools sampled in the study may use to promote inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum. In addition, this current chapter focuses on the overview of the study chapters, summary of key findings, main conclusion and concluding remarks that highlight limitations of the study and suggestions for future research. Lastly, the researcher makes recommendations for action and suggests possible gaps for future research.

6.2 REVIEW OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

The study explored inclusive pedagogies within school curriculum to enhance inclusivity in the classroom. There is evidence that teachers in their efforts to achieve maximum inclusivity seems to face challenges which are contributing factors to the unsuccessful practice of inclusive pedagogies to accommodate all learners. Factors such as time constrains, inflexible curriculum and lack of functional SBSTs are among some of the contributing factors derailing maximum inclusivity. The findings of this study were supplemented by observing teachers while teaching in their classrooms to establish their teaching pedagogies. In addition, relevant documents such as CAPS, lesson preparations and policies of inclusivity were reviewed in order to supplement the findings of this study. Teachers are expected to create lesson preparations and make use of teaching pedagogies which enhance inclusivity in curriculum for all learners.

Researchers such as Hlalele et al. (2020) assert that successful practice of inclusivity in teaching takes place when learners and teachers have necessary resources and support. Research has been conducted with an effort to strengthen inclusivity through the application of inclusive pedagogical practices; however, there

is a need for more efficient and prolific strategies for inclusive pedagogies (Bekker, 2024). The application of inclusive pedagogical practices has obtained international recognition as a philosophy for achieving maximum inclusivity in curriculum, safety and equity for all children (Onyishi & Sefotho, 2024). Hence, the current study explored inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum of Motupa Circuit of Limpopo Province.

6.3 SUMMARY OF KEY IDEAS BY CHAPTER

This study was divided into six chapters as outlined below.

6.3.1 Chapter 1

Chapter 1 presented the background and introduction of the study. The background was drawn from the international, African and South African contexts to highlight the use of inclusive pedagogies in order to promote inclusivity within school curriculum. The problem statement was outlined and aligned with main research question, objectives and purpose of the study.

6.3.2 Chapter 2

This chapter discussed the theoretical framework that guided the study. The chapter also reviewed the literature relevant to inclusive pedagogies that can be used to enhance inclusivity. Review of literature on theories was done pertaining to the implications of inclusive pedagogies was outlined.

6.3.3 Chapter 3

Chapter three presented the research approach, research paradigm and research design. This chapter outlined the study's methodology, including data collection procedures, population and sampling, data collection instruments, data analysis and management, trustworthiness measures, and ethical considerations.

6.3.4 Chapter 4

This chapter presented and interpreted the empirical findings drawn from the purpose of the study, which is to explore inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum to promote inclusivity in classrooms. Firstly, the study presented the biographical information of the participants. The data was presented and

analysed based on the research questions and how the participants responded to the questions. Emerging themes, sub-themes and arising issues which were supported by verbatim quotations were also presented.

6.3.5 Chapter 5

In this chapter, the researcher presented the discussion and analysis of results based on the research sub-questions and main issues raised in chapter four. The purpose of the study is to explore inclusive pedagogical practices to enhance inclusivity within school curriculum. The theoretical framework of the study and literature review was used and confirmed against the findings of the study.

6.3.6 Chapter 6

This chapter provided a summary of the findings of the study, suggested a conclusion and added a contribution to new knowledge. The chapter also provided recommendations for further research. The chapter also focused on the presentation of an overview of the chapters, summary of the key findings, main conclusion, as well as the concluding remarks that highlight the limitations of the study and the suggestions for future research. Lastly, the chapter presents the recommendations for action and suggests possible gaps for further research.

6.4 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The summary of the main findings of this chapter are summarised below in terms of the research sub-question 1, research sub-question 2, research sub-question 3, research sub-question 4 and research sub-question 5. The aim of this section is to outline how each of the research sub-questions was answered.

6.4.1 Research Sub-question 1: What Are Teachers' Understandings of Inclusive Pedagogies in Curriculum?

In this study, it has been found that knowledge and understanding of pedagogy by teachers in curriculum is one of the most vital skills that has a bearing of effective use of inclusive pedagogies to obtain inclusivity in curriculum. Concerning lesson preparations and planning, the study revealed that successful inclusivity requires efficient lesson preparations as another strategy to achieve maximum accommodation of all learners during teaching. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to

ensure proper planning and preparations of their lessons in order to provide additional support to learners with challenges. On the theme of fundamentals of inclusive pedagogy, teachers raised a vital issue of the knowledge and skills they should have in order to interchange teaching pedagogies for the benefit of the learners. The findings of this study reveal that teachers are willing to accommodate all learners in their teaching, however, inadequate resources and lack of in-service training remains a concern.

6.4.2 Research Sub-question 2: What Are the Implications of Inclusive Pedagogical Practice in the Classroom?

In this theme, teachers indicated that the practice of inclusive pedagogies profit learners and ensure inclusivity in curriculum. They also revealed that inclusive pedagogy encourages the culture of inclusivity in the school environment. It was also reported that the support of teachers and learners is essential especially to teachers in order to strengthen their efforts to achieve maximum inclusivity. Teachers indicated that the use of inclusive pedagogy serve as an intervention strategy they use to offer remedial for learners with learning challenges. The study further revealed that teachers have the responsibility to see to it that they make use of multiple teaching pedagogies in order to accommodate various learning needs of learners. Therefore, one can argue that inclusive pedagogy enables teachers to select suitable teaching strategies that are aligned with learners needs. Teachers further raised the issue of resources aligned with inclusive pedagogy as an important factor to enhance the practice of inclusivity in the classroom.

6.4.3 Research Sub-question 3: What Are the Challenges Experienced by Teachers When Practicing Inclusive Pedagogy in the Classroom?

On challenges experienced by teachers when using inclusive pedagogy, teachers raised that they face challenges such as inflexible curriculum. Teachers indicated that when teaching they are confined by ATP and at times it becomes a challenge to deviate from it. In addition, time constrains has also been raised as another contributing factor to their challenges. On the theme of learners' background and parental involvement, it was established that most learners are from disadvantaged family backgrounds and do not get support from their parents. Teachers also raised a concern with regard to lack of in-service training, where they indicated the need for

both internal and external workshops in order to meet other teachers to share challenges and good practices. Therefore, it is advisable that teachers' workshops that deal with inclusive pedagogy should be organised by the Department of Basic Education.

6.4.4 Research Sub-question 4: What Support Measures Does Teachers Require in the Practice of Inclusive Pedagogy in Curriculum?

On the support structures and resources in inclusive pedagogy, the study revealed that teachers do get support. Although, teachers reported that more can still be done to support them. In addition, teachers reported the need for digital resources to strengthen their practice of inclusive pedagogy. However, they also indicated that some of the teachers still struggle to use modern digital technology such as computers and over-head projectors. They also found that structures such as SBSTs that are meant to offer support in identifying learners with barriers are there but not functional. It is worth noting that this study also found that SBSTs that are in most schools are there for compliance but not functional. It is therefore, suggested that functional SBSTs be established and competent personnel train members on their duties and responsibilities.

6.4.5 Research Sub-question 5: What Models and Practices Can Be Recommended to Improve the Practice of Inclusive Pedagogies in Curriculum?

This sub-question involved practices that can be recommended to improve inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum. The study revealed that most teachers are able to conceptualise inclusive pedagogy. Although, it has been revealed that teachers conceptualise the concept of inclusive pedagogy differently. Thus, implying that there is no universal definition of inclusive pedagogy. Furthermore, it was revealed that teachers are aware that they have to plan and prepare lessons bearing in mind various needs of learners. Moreover, teachers also do acknowledge that it is their responsibility to ensure the practice of various teaching strategies aligned with learners needs to ensure inclusivity. It was revealed that time constrains remains a challenging factor when teachers have to interchange teaching strategies during teaching. Teachers raised the importance of parental involvement, differentiated instruction and establishment of credible SBSTs to ensure inclusivity.

6.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This study can confirm that as much as teachers attempt to achieve inclusivity through the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices, there are still challenges that they encounter on their day to day teaching in the classrooms. These challenges range from inflexible curriculum among others as they have to teach in accordance with what is prescribed in the ATP. The unavailability of resources aligned with inclusive pedagogy such as digital resources remains a challenge. Lack of parental involvement in the education of their children remains a challenge. Lack of in-service training for teachers can also be attributed to the unsuccessful practice of inclusive pedagogy. Thus, this means that the journey to maximum inclusivity in curriculum is still proficently long. The study suggests collaboration of all stakeholders where communities, department and teachers work together in ensuring that all stakeholders involved play their part in supporting learners. Inclusivity is essential in teaching and learning and without it; the future of learners is blurry.

6.6 CONTRIBUTION TO NEW KNOWLEDGE

The practice of inclusive pedagogies is essential for achieving inclusivity in teaching and learning to ensure that every learner has equal access to quality education. Achieving maximum inclusivity in curriculum requires teachers to be equipped and capacitated with adequate resources. In addition, it requires collaboration of all stakeholders concerned to work together. The challenges that derail the successful implementation are as a result of various contributing factors. Due to this knowledge gap, there is a need to rethink teaching pedagogies, conceptualise pedagogies and strengthen collaboration of stakeholders involved in curriculum. Below is the suggested framework that states the teaching pedagogies to promote inclusivity:

6.6.1 A FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATORS FOR INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY IN CURRICULUM

The following section outlines the suggested interventions that will promote inclusive pedagogy within the school curriculum in order to enhance inclusivity.

6.6.1.1 A suggested reconfiguration collaborators' framework

The framework shows how to reconfigure collaborators in education in order to achieve maximum inclusivity in teaching and learning. This framework advocates that teachers, learners, parents, DBE and curriculum planners should work together in order to improve inclusivity in curriculum. Therefore, this framework break the theoretical grounding that successful inclusivity requires collaboration of all stakeholders concerned to work together. Figure 6.1 indicates that parents, learners, teachers, and the DBE are important theoretical lenses for successful inclusivity.

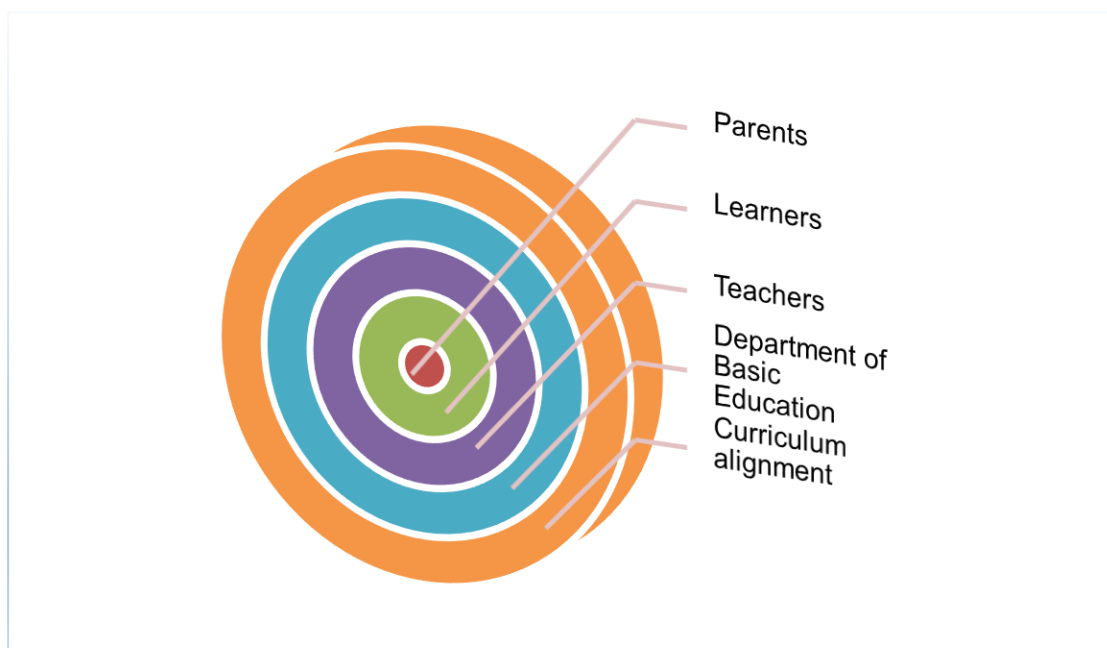


Figure 6.1: Collaborative Framework

The above collaborative framework advocate for the significance of collaboration among stakeholders for the successful practice of inclusive pedagogical practices. The framework put the learner at the centre, which ultimately mean that all stakeholders should work together to support the learner. The collaborative framework encourage teachers, parents, the DBE and policy makers to work together effectively in ensuring that the learner receive necessary support from home and also in the school environment. In addition, SBSTs play a critical role in supporting teachers and learners in promoting inclusivity in teaching and learning. The responsibility of SBSTs involves identification of learners with challenges. The collaborative framework also talks to the DBE as the upper structure that should

provide resources and support to teachers. Lastly, the framework emphasises the importance of curriculum alignment in order to promote inclusivity.

6.6.2 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT: BREAKDOWN OF EACH THEORETICAL LENS

Stakeholders play a critical role in ensuring there is inclusivity within the school curriculum. Therefore, it is equally important that every stakeholder should play their role.

6.6.2.1 Parents

In this framework, parents have been identified and placed in the first lens as they are the one who bring their children to school. Parents have a vital role they play in the lives of learners for providing social and security needs such as love, safety, self-esteem and sense of belonging. These needs are essential for every child's well-being when they are at school. The role and contributions of parents to the education of their children cannot be isolated from positive academic performance of learners. In this framework, the role of parents is to support the children both socially and with school needs. Malatjie, Mavuso and Malatji (2018) highlight that the school exist in order to serve the community. Therefore, the collaboration of key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, education specialists and the community will ensure that all parties share problems and strengthen regular communication. In addition, this will encourage community participation in school matters. Furthermore, Malatji et al. (2018) indicated the importance of educating the community in particular the parents about issues of inclusivity.

6.6.2.2 Learners

In this framework, the learner is placed in the second lens as he/she is the centre of attention for promoting inclusivity. It is important to note that all activities of teaching and learning are designed to afford every learner with quality education. Moreover, parents also offer support to the learners to ensure that they access quality education. The constitution guarantees every child a basic right to education, therefore, every child who is at the age of seven must be admitted and go to school. Quality education in this framework will require learners to be present in schools and attend classes. This implies that learners as collaborators must work with parents

and teachers. A study by Mabasa-Manganyi (2023) highlight that placing learners at the centre will ensure that all stakeholders involved direct all their efforts towards assisting the learner. Moreover, the study further indicated the role that parents play in the education of their children. Malatji, Mavuso and Malatji (2018) assert that in order to achieve maximum inclusivity parents, teachers and the community should work together towards removing all barriers. All stakeholders involved in education should work together to ensure that all learners are protected (DoE, 2001).

6.6.2.3 Teachers

The teacher has been placed at the third theoretical lens in the framework. The reason is that they are responsible for offering support to learners through teaching pedagogies in the classroom. It is important to note that before learners come to school, first they are from the care of their parents. In this context, teachers are regarded as professionals and highly skilled to use inclusive pedagogies to accommodate all learners through the process of teaching and learning. Malatji, Mavuso and Malatji (2018) advocate for the importance of conducting teacher workshops in order to enable them to share ideas and be capacitated to practice inclusivity. Mabasa-Manganyi (2023) corroborate that is vital to train and capacitate teachers in order to be able to handle learners with their various learning needs.

6.6.2.4 Department of Basic Education (DBE)

DBE has the responsibility of designing the curriculum that is implemented at school level. The role of the department is to ensure that the curriculum, teachers and resources are made available to schools for the effective teaching and learning to take place. One of the objectives had been that activities of teaching and learning should be to accommodate all learners. Furthermore, the department is responsible for monitoring and support of the implementation of the curriculum.

6.6.2.5 Curriculum alignment

There should be an alignment between what it taught at school and background of learners. Background experience and what is taught at school will maximise learners' academic performance and strengthen inclusivity. The department must consider such factors when designing the curriculum and the resources to use. The study will recommend that the resources already available be topped up in order to

maximise inclusivity and support teachers in their effort to include all learners in teaching and learning. This framework is in line with Biggs (1996) constructive alignment. Constructive alignment advocate for alignment between teaching and assessment. In the context of this study, Biggs (1996) constructive alignment is relevant as the study advocate for the alignment between what is taught and the background and experiences of learners.

6.7 THE BENEFITS OF USING THE SUGGESTED FRAMEWORK

This framework has multiple benefits for the school, teaching, learning and the education sector. The first benefit is that it will help teachers in developing positive attitudes towards inclusivity and build their confidence in their practice of inclusive pedagogy in teaching and learning. Secondly, the framework will help restore the dignity and opportunities for access to quality education for all learners irrespective of their learning abilities and strengthen the implementation of White Paper 5 and EWP6 by bringing collaboration as important tool for inclusivity. The third advantage of this framework is that it will motivate parents to take part in the academic of their children. Lastly, this framework will show a hierarchy of collaborators working together to achieve inclusivity in teaching and learning.

6.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

As indicated in chapter three of this study, the study was limited to seven schools at Mopani-West District, Motupa Circuit in Limpopo Province. Similar studies can be carried out in other circuits across the districts in Limpopo and even extended to other provinces on the same topic for results to be triangulated nationally. This study focused on exploring inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum. Moreover, it is also recommended that the study could be extended to other provinces to involve majority of schools and teachers.

6.9 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of this study are presented in response to research questions and findings. Therefore, the study presents the following recommendations:

6.9.1 Teacher Pedagogical Skills

The training that is given to teachers should not overlook the pedagogical skills and knowledge that teachers require in teaching and learning to ensure inclusivity. The knowledge of various pedagogical skills will enable teachers to explore teaching strategies to accommodate all learners. This can be achieved through reflecting and conceptualisation of content that teachers are trained on during workshops.

6.9.2 Parental Involvement

Parents play a vital role in the life of learners as stakeholders; therefore, their role in the education of their children should be strengthened. This can be possible through engaging parents in school, grade and phase meetings where issues of curriculum are explained. Schools should come up with mechanisms to motivate parents to take part in the academic life of their children.

6.9.3 Department of Basic Education

The Department of Education as the upper structure has the responsibility that precedes other collaborators such as parents, teachers and learners in education. Therefore, the department should lead by example with regard to curriculum implementation, support and provision of quality resources for teaching and learning. Teachers should be equipped and capacitated through in-service training on pedagogical practices.

6.9.4 Curriculum Alignment

It is critical that when designing the curriculum, the background of learners should be taken into consideration. One cannot separate the background of learners from how they respond in teaching and learning activities at school. Therefore, familiarity of content taught at school with learners' experiences will always serve as an advantage to the learner to perform well academically. Therefore, curriculum designers should consider such factors when designing the curriculum.

6.9.5 Teacher Professional Development

Teachers are implementers of the curriculum at school level. Therefore, training of teachers will go a long way in ensuring that teachers are equipped and capacitated

in their work. Moreover, attending workshops of inclusive pedagogies will enable teachers to share both challenges and good practices with other teachers in order to strengthen their efforts to practicing pedagogies in teaching and learning. Furthermore, competent and qualified facilitators should be appointed to train teachers on inclusive education policy.

6.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study explored inclusive pedagogical practices in the school curriculum using semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis to gain insight into teachers' conceptualisations of pedagogy. Teachers projected different understanding of inclusive pedagogical practices. The study concluded that collaborators engagement is essential to mitigate challenges teachers experience. Furthermore, investing in resources aligned with inclusive pedagogical practices will also add and stimulate the efforts of teachers to achieve maximum inclusivity. The findings and recommendations of this study reveal the urgency of engagement of collaborators to execute their responsibilities to the benefit of the learners. Lastly, the study was limited to seven schools of Mopani-West District, Motupa Circuit cluster under Tzaneen Municipality in Limpopo Province.

6.11 EVALUATION OF OBJECTIVES

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- To explore teachers understanding of inclusive pedagogies within curriculum
- To explore implications of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum
- To explore challenges experienced by teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices
- To determine support measures and structures in place for the practice of inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum
- To recommend a model and practice that can improve inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum

Findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis indicate that teachers struggle to understand inclusive pedagogies, resulting in ineffective inclusive curriculum practices. Moreover, this is attributed to various conceptualisations of

inclusive pedagogies by teachers. In the second objective, the study achieved this objective as teachers were aware of their responsibility to plan and prepare teaching strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities for all learners. Regarding the third objective, the study found that teachers face challenges such as curriculum inflexibility, inadequate resources, dysfunctional SBSTs, and learners' socioeconomic backgrounds in implementing inclusive pedagogies. Moreover, the unavailability of teacher workshops was also revealed as a challenge. On the fourth objective of the study, the study intended to determine support measures and structures in the practice of inclusive pedagogies. The study found that support structures are not doing enough to support teachers and learners. It was reported that the SBSTs established in schools are not functional. On the fifth objective, the study intended to recommend a framework to improve the inclusive pedagogical practices in curriculum. This objective was achieved by designing a framework for the practice of inclusive pedagogies in curriculum.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PROOF OF REGISTRATION



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TRANKEN
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STUDENT NUMBER : 16670817
ENQUIRIES TEL : 0800 001 870
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2026-01-23

Dear Student

I hereby confirm that you have been registered for the current academic year as follows:

CODE	PAPER	S NAME OF STUDY UNIT	NQF crdts	LANG.	EXAM. DATE	PROVISIONAL EXAMINATION CENTRE (PLACE)
Study units registered without formal exams:						
TFCU801		DED - Education (Curriculum Studies)	**	E		

You are referred to the "MyRegistration" brochure regarding fees that are forfeited on cancellation of any study units.

- * Your attention is drawn to University rules and regulations (www.unisa.ac.za/register).
- Please note the new requirements for reregistration and the number of credits per year which state that students registered for the first time from 2013, must complete 36 NQF credits in the first year of study, and thereafter must complete 48 NQF credits per year.
- Students registered for the MBA, MBL and DBL degrees must visit the SBL's ESOnline for study material and other important information.
- Readmission rules for Honours: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy academic activity must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the University during each year of study. If you fail to meet this requirement in the first year of study, you will be admitted to another year of study. After a second year of not demonstrating academic activity to the satisfaction of the University, you will not be re-admitted, except with the express approval of the Executive Dean of the College in which you are registered. Note too, that this study programme must be completed within three years. Non-compliance will result in your academic exclusion, and you will therefore not be allowed to re-register for a qualification at the same level on the National Qualifications Framework in the same College for a period of five years after such exclusion, after which you will have to re-apply for admission to any such qualification.
- Readmission rules for M&D: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy, a candidate must complete a Master's qualification within three years. Under exceptional circumstances and on recommendation of the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (fourth) year to complete the qualification. For a Doctoral degree, a candidate must complete the study programme within six years. Under exceptional circumstances, and on recommendation by the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (seventh) year to complete the qualification.

BALANCE ON STUDY ACCOUNT: 23660.00

Payable on or before:	2026/03/31:	0.00	2026/05/15:	7927.00	2026/08/15:	7928.00
Immediately: 7805.00	2026/11/15:	0.00	2026/03/15:	0.00		

Yours faithfully,

Prof MH Sepota
Registrar

104X 0 0



University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



College of Education _ERC

Date: 11/09/2025

Dear: Mr DONALD MOAGI

**Decision: Ethics Approval from
11/09/2025 to 10/09/2030**

NHREC Registration # : (if applicable)
Ref #: 7964
Name: Mr DONALD MOAGI
Student #: 16670817
Staff #:

Researcher: Mr DONALD MOAGI

MOLEKETLA PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLOKWANE

16670817@mylife.unisa.ac.za 0727608378

Supervisor: Professor Khashane Stephen khashane.malatji@ump.ac.za

Co-Supervisor:

Co-Researcher(s):

Email address:

Exploring inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum: A case study of Motupa Circuit, Limpopo Province

Qualification: Doctor of Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics approval by the College of Education _ERC for the above-mentioned research study. Ethics approval is granted for **five years**.

The **low risk application** was **reviewed** by the College of Education _ERC in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising during the undertaking of the research study that may affect the ethical integrity of the study, including those involving research participants, third parties, or juristic persons, must be reported in writing to the College of Education _ERC without delay.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that may affect study-related risks to research participants, juristic or third persons, must be reported in writing to the College of Education _ERC , accompanied by a progress report.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research study complies with all applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines, and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Where applicable, adherence to the following South African legislation is essential: the Protection of Personal Information Act (No. 4 of 2013), the Children's Act (No. 38 of 2005), and the National Health Act (No. 61 of 2003)
6. Future use of this research data is permitted only in de-identified form and only for secondary research with objectives similar to those of the original study. Any secondary use involving identifiable human data will require additional ethics clearance.
7. No fieldwork activities may continue beyond the stated expiry date (10/09/2030). A completed Research Ethics Progress Report must be submitted as an application for renewal and is subject to approval by the Research Ethics Committee. A Close-Out Report must be submitted upon completion of the research study.
8. The College of Education _ERC may require the submission of regular progress reports on an annual basis, in alignment with Section 7.2 of the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics (2024).

Additional Conditions

1. Disclosure of data to third parties is prohibited without explicit consent from the research participants and Unisa.
2. Research data must be stored in compliance with the university's research data management policy for a period of up to 15 years.
3. When publishing the results, the researcher must take appropriate precautions to safeguard the confidentiality and privacy of the research participants, juristic persons, third parties, and the university, in accordance with institutional policies and ethical standards.
4. Adherence to the National Statement on Ethical Research and Publication Practices, specifically Principle 7 on Social Awareness, must be ensured. This principle states: 'Researchers and institutions must be sensitive to the potential impact of their research on society, marginal groups, or individuals, and must consider these when weighing the benefits of the research against any harmful effects, with a view to minimising or avoiding the latter where possible.' The University of South Africa (Unisa) accepts no liability for any failure to comply with this principle.

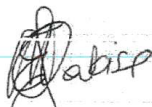
Note

The reference number 7964 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



Prof Justin Oswin August
Chair of College of Education _ERC
E-mail: augusjo@unisa.ac.za



Prof M Makoe
Executive Dean / By delegation from the Executive Dean of College of Education
E-mail: qakisme@unisa.ac.za, magolmc@unisa.ac.za

Prof M Makoe
Executive Dean / By delegation from the Executive Dean of College of Education
E-mail: qakisme@unisa.ac.za, magolmc@unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SMT'S AND TEACHERS.

Individual's semi-structured interview questions.

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this interview as part of my PhD degree in education on the topic; **Exploring inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum: A case study of Motupa Circuit, Limpopo Province**

Please indicate the position that you hold in the school

Principals/Deputy principal/departmental head/teacher:

The information provided below is for the purpose of the research purposes only and all information provided will be treated with confidentiality. You have the right not to disclose any personal information and feel free to answer any question in the best way possible and you are also free to not answer any question that you feel uncomfortable about. However, you are advised to answer all questions honestly and truthfully. This interview will take approximately 15–30 minutes.

Main question	Guiding question	Possible interview questions	Follow-up question/probe
What is your understanding on the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice?	Which teaching strategies do you use in teaching?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is your role in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice? ➤ What challenges do you face in trying to ensure inclusivity in the classroom? ➤ How best do you deal with the challenges of ensuring inclusivity during teaching? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why do you think so? Please elaborate further?
Which policies are do you apply when practicing inclusive pedagogical		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is there any specific policy that you follow to practice inclusive pedagogical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do you think the policy is relevant? Please support your answer

practices?		practice?	
	What support measures can be put in place to support teachers in the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What method of support do teachers get with regard to the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice? ➤ In which way can the Department of Education assist in the implementation of inclusive education? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why do you think so?
	What strategies can be recommended to improve the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What can be done at school level to ensure the effective practice of inclusive pedagogical practice? ➤ Which resources do teachers need in order to enhance the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice? ➤ Which approach can be used in order to better the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why do you think the strategies will work?
What are the challenges faced when practicing inclusive pedagogical practice?	What role does support structures play in the promotion of inclusive pedagogical practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What support structures do you have for the practice of inclusive pedagogical practice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ May you kindly give examples?
What practices and strategies can be put in place to enhance	What can be done to enhance support given to teachers on the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What strategies can be put in place to address the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why do you think so? Please elaborate further?

<p>the inclusive pedagogical practice in school curriculum?</p>	<p>practice of inclusive pedagogical practice?</p>	<p>challenges of inclusive pedagogical practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How will the strategies contribute to the betterment of inclusivity in curriculum? ➤ What can be done by teachers to address the challenges of inclusive pedagogical practice? ➤ What can be done by the Department of Education to address the challenges of inclusive pedagogical practice? 	
--	--	--	--

I humbly want to express my appreciation to you for taking your time to participate in this interview.

Thank you.

APPENDIX D: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE



RESEARCH TITLE: Exploring inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum: A case study of Motupa Circuit, Limpopo Province

Primary investigator: Moagi Donald

Study leader: Prof K.S Malatjie of School of Interdisciplinary Research and Graduate Studies, UNISA.

SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Rating scale				
	Rating scale often	Sometimes	Not seen	Field notes
	1	2	3	Comments
Content differentiation				
What to look for:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does teaching methods cater for the needs of all learners 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The language of teaching accommodative of various needs of learners 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How teachers differentiate 				

teaching methods				
Teaching strategy				
• Individual strategy				
• Group strategy				
• Whole-class strategy				
• Any other not listed above				
Classroom environment				
What to look for:				
• Classroom organised to cater needs of various learners				
• Learning materials promote inclusivity				
• Classroom appearance promote inclusivity				
Support structures				
What to look for:				
• School support inclusive education practice				
• Support of teachers by experts on inclusivity				
• School have counsellors/psychologist/ social worker				
General attitude towards				

inclusivity				
What to look for:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers attitude towards the policy 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners attitude towards learners with special needs 				
School environment				
What to look for:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General security and safety of the school 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities that promote inclusivity 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General infrastructure of the school is conducive 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility of facilities 				
Resources				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and learning resources 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology 				

APPENDIX E: LETTER FOR REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY



University of South Africa
College of Graduate Studies
Faculty of Education

5 May. 2025

Head of Department
Limpopo Education Department
Private Bag X 9489
Polokwane
0700

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am employed by the Limpopo Department of Basic Education and currently teaching at a primary school. I am currently registered for a Doctor of Philosophy in curriculum studies (PhD. Ed.) at the University of South Africa within the department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies. The topic of my research project is: **“Exploring inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum: A case study of Motupa Circuit, Limpopo Province.”**

I cordially request for permission to conduct research in schools of Motupa Circuit. The educators that teach in the sampled schools will be used as participants to

collect data for the study. The researcher requests to conduct interviews and observations from these teachers.

The researcher will schedule convenient times with the selected teachers to conduct interviews, observations and document analysis.

I hope the findings of this study will benefit and assist the Department of Basic Education and educators in the practices of inclusive education.

Yours faithfully

Mr. Moagi Donald

073 645 6009 or email: moagidonald1@gmail.com

Prof K.S. Malatji (Supervisor)

APPENDIX F: PERMISSION LETTER FROM LIMPOPO EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref: 2/2/2

Enq: Makola MC

Tel No: 015 290 9448

E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

**MOAGI D
STAND30001, RELELA VILLAGE
TZANEEN
0838**

Moagidonald1@gmail.com [072 760 8378]

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH.

1. The above bear's reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to undertake research titled: **"EXPLORING INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES WITHIN SCHOOL CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY OF MOTUPA CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE"** has been approved
3. The following conditions should be considered:
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the School concerned.
 - 3.3 The conduct of research should not in any how disrupt the academic programmes at the school(s).
 - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations, especially in the fourth term.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MOAGI D Page 1

Cnr 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X 9489, Polokwane, 0700
Tel: 015 290 7600/ 7702 Fax 086 218 0560

The heartland of Southern Africa-development is about people

- 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected and treated with dignity).
- 3.6 Upon completion of the research, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
- 4 Additionally, you are expected to produce this letter at School(s)/Office(s) where you intend to conduct your research as evidence that permission has been granted for access to the research site(s).
- 5 The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.

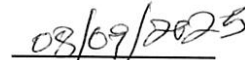


MC Makola PhD



Mashaba KM

DDG: CORPORATE SERVICES



Date



Date

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MOAGI D Page 2

Cnr 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X 9489, Polokwane, 0700
Tel:015 290 7600/ 7702 Fax 086 218 0560

The heartland of Southern Africa-development is about people

APPENDIX G: PERMISSION LETTER FROM MOPANI-WEST DISTRICT

Confidential Information - This is for official consumption



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

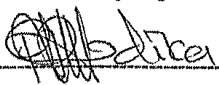
Confidential

Ref 13/4/14 Enq: Shikhibana ZB EMAIL shikhibanazb@edu.limpopo.gov.za Cell: 082 954 0325

To: Mr Moagi Donald
Box 1346
Tzaneen
0850
072 760 8378
Email: moagidonald1@gmail.com

**SUBJECT: CONSENT TO CONDUCT A STUDY AT MOPANI WEST DISTRICT AT MOTUPA
CIRCUIT: YOURSELF**

1. Your letter date 11 September 2025 regarding reference.
2. You are granted permission to conduct your study on "Exploring inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum: A case study of Motupa Circuit.
3. You are requested to make prior arrangement with the Circuit Manager and the Principal of the schools so that they could schedule convenient time for your study.
4. The conduct of research should not in any how disrupt the academic programmes at the school(s) and consider examinations time.
5. In conducting your study, please adhere to research ethics.
6. We wish you good luck in your studies.


DISTRICT DIRECTOR

19/09/2025
DATE

Page 1

27 Peace Street, Prosperitus Building, Tzaneen, 0850, Private Bag X4032 Tzaneen, 0850

The heartland of Southern Africa development is about people

APPENDIX H: PERMISSION LETTER FROM SCHOOL (K)

School K Letterhead

To whom it may concern

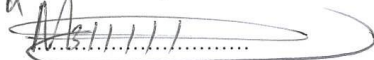
Permission to conduct a study

We wish to inform you that the above mentioned school has since approved your request to conduct a study.

Hope you find the above in order.

Best wishes with your studies.

Yours Sincerely



Principal

SCHOOL STAMP

APPENDIX I: PERMISSION LETTER FROM SCHOOL(L)

School L: Letterhead

19 / 09 / 2025

Mr Moagi Donald
University of South Africa
P O BOX 392
South Africa
0003

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Permission to conduct research in our school

This is to confirm that we did receive your letter of request to conduct research in our school and we *officially grant you permission* to do so. As a school we encourage educational research as we hope it will benefit us as professional in our line of work.

Best wishes with your studies.

Yours faithfully

Mr NS Mopal (Principal)

SCHOOL STAMP

APPENDIX J: PERMISSION LETTER FROM SCHOOL(M)

School M: Letterhead

To: Mr Moagi Donald
University of South Africa
P O BOX 392
Pretoria
0003

24/09/2025

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Approval for study

We wish to inform you that the above mentioned school has since approved your request to conduct a study. We hope that the study will bring positive contributions to the education sector. Please do feel free to contact the school for any further clarity on the matter

All the best with your studies.

Yours Sincerely



Principal

SCHOOL STAMP

APPENDIX K: PERMISSION LETTER FROM SCHOOL (N)

SCHOOL N: LETTERHEAD

23/09/2025

Mr Moagi Donald
University of South Africa
P O BOX 392
South Africa
0003
23 September 2025

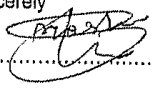
Re: Permission to conduct research in the school: Donald Moagi

The above mentioned school hereby confirm that permission is granted to Mr Donald Moagi to conduct educational research in our school. The school will assist him in availing all relevant information and material needs in his research.

For further clarity and information contact us using the above contacts.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Principal : 

SCHOOL STAMP

APPENDIX L: PERMISSION LETTER FROM SCHOOL (S)

SCHOOL S: LETTERHEAD

24/09/2025

Dear Sir/Madam

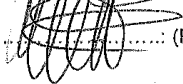
Re: Approval to conduct a study in our school: Donald Moagi

I am pleased to notify you that the SGB and the management of the school has since approved your request to conduct a study in our school. We believe that the study will be of value to the education community.

For further clarity please feel free to contact us.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

 (Principal)

SCHOOL STAMP

APPENDIX M: PERMISSION LETTER FROM SCHOOL (P)


SCHOOL P: LETTERHEAD

To whom it may concern

Permission to conduct a study

We wish to inform you that the above mentioned school has since approved your request to conduct a study. We are ready to have you in the school in a time that will be arranged. All the best with your studies.

Yours Sincerely

.....

Principal

SCHOOL STAMP

APPENDIX N: PERMISSION LETTER FROM SCHOOL (J)

SCHOOL J: LETTERHEAD

To: Mr Moagi Donald
University of South Africa
P O BOX 392
Pretoria
0003

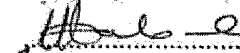
Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Approval for study

We wish to inform you that the above mentioned school has since approved your request to conduct a study. We hope that the study will bring positive contributions to the education sector. Please do feel free to contact the school for any further clarity on the matter

All the best with your studies.

Yours Sincerely



Principal

SCHOOL STAMP

APPENDIX O: CONSENT LETTER



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

Research title: “Exploring inclusive pedagogical practices within school curriculum: A case study of Motupa Circuit, Limpopo Province.”

Researcher: Mr Moagi Donald (16670817)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the Interview session data collection method.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname..... (please print)

Participant Signature..... Date.....

APPENDIX P: TURNITIN REPORT

DONALD MOAGI THESIS 16670817.docx

ORIGINALITY REPORT

6%	5%	6%	2%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	ir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	2%
2	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	1%
3	hdl.handle.net Internet Source	<1%
4	Submitted to Tshwane University of Technology Student Paper	<1%
5	Submitted to University of South Africa Student Paper	<1%
6	Moagi, Donald. "The Challenges of Implementing Inclusive Education in Full- Service Schools: A Case Study in Thabina Circuit, Mopani-West District at Limpopo Province", University of South Africa (South Africa) Publication	<1%
7	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
8	vital.seals.ac.za:8080 Internet Source	<1%
9	libdspace.ufh.ac.za Internet Source	<1%

APPENDIX Q: CONFIRMATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDITING



Blue Diamonds Professional Editing
Services (Pty) Ltd.

Email: jacqui@bluediamondsediting.co.za

OR

Email: chris@bluediamondsediting.co.za

WhatsApp: +447895146059nds.co.za

Website: <https://www.bluediamondsediting.co.za/>

Accounts: accounts@bluediamondsediting.co.za

Enhancing YOUR brilliance

9 January 2026

Declaration of editing
EXPLORING INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES WITHIN SCHOOL CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY OF
MOTUPA CIRCUIT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE
by
Moagi Donald

I declare that I have edited and proofread this thesis. The editing was restricted to language usage and spelling, completeness and consistency, technical formatting and formatting the references.

I am qualified to have done such editing, being in possession of a Bachelor's degree with a major in English, having taught English to matriculation, and having a Certificate in Copy Editing from the University of Cape Town. I have edited more than 600 Masters and Doctoral theses, as well as articles, books and reports.

As the copy editor,

- I am not responsible for detecting, or removing, passages in the document that closely resemble other texts and could thus be viewed as plagiarism.
- I am not responsible for editing AI generated text.
- I am not accountable for any changes made to this document by the author or any other party subsequent to the date of this declaration.

Sincerely,

Dr J Baumgardt

UNISA: D. Ed. Education Management

University of Cape Town: Certificate in Copy Editing

University of Cape Town: Certificate in Corporate Coaching



Jacqui Baumgardt
Full Member

Membership number: BAU001
Membership year: March 2025 to February 2026

+44 7895146059
jacqui@bluediamondsediting.co.za
bluediamondsediting.co.za

www.editors.org.za



Blue Diamonds Professional Editing Services (Pty) Ltd (Registration Number 2014/092365/07)

Sole Director: J Baumgardt