

Challenges of inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools

by

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I **Mahlase Teuns Phahlamohlaka**, Student number **29615578** declare that the contents of this thesis: **CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS** is my own unaided work;

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

Noting the university policy on plagiarism, this work hasn't been previously produced by any one and will not be passed to any one as their work.

Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the University of Pretoria.

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ABSTRACT

CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

After the ushering of the democratic dispensation in 1994 an increased diversity in the society and schools of South Africa resulted from the policies and legislations adopted to integrate the earlier ethnically divided education system. This democratic dispensation did not only bring about political change, but also aimed at democratising the education system and eradicating the inequalities of the past. This is in line with the constitution of South Africa which provides all children, young people and adults with human rights and education benefits.

The South African public schools' educators are tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that all learners with different educational needs are taught in a regular classroom. Providing teaching to multicultural classes requires positive experiences and support of inclusive schooling. The purpose of the study is to establish the challenges of teaching inclusive education in a multicultural class in the Gauteng Province public primary schools. This study used a qualitative research approach where participants were interviewed using one-on-one semi structured interviews and probes for clarity and depth. Data was analyzed inductively so as to use the results of the analysis as basis for subsequent data collection through follow up interviews.

Ten (10) post level one educators from five multicultural primary schools managing challenges of inclusive education (Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase) were purposively sampled. Official documents like the White Paper 6 (2001) on the rights of learners with educational needs, and the South African Schools Act (1996) were analyzed to get information on how educators should go about teaching inclusive education to multicultural classes. The findings of the study will contribute to the knowledge base on the management of challenges of inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools about the support structures required and may also inform policy makers.

KEY WORDS: Inclusive education; multicultural classes; White Paper 6; South African Schools Act; teacher support; education challenges and support structures.



KEY CONCEPTS / WORDS

Education challenges

Educator's support structures

Historically advantaged

Inclusive education

Management

Multicultural classrooms

Public schools

South African Schools Act

White Paper 6

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Standard
DoE	Department of Education
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Materials
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NAME	National Association for Multicultural Education
NCSNET	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NCESS	National Committee on Education Support Services
NCATE	National Council for Accreditation of Educator Education Standards
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
SBST	School Based Support Team
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SCFA	Social and Cultural Foundations of American Education
SASA	South African Schools Act
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In 1994, just after the dawn of the democratic administration in South Africa, society and schools in particular became progressively diverse as a result of newly implemented guidelines and laws aimed at integrating the former racially separated system of education (McKinney and Soudien 2010). The new democratic dispensation did not only bring about political change, but also necessitated curriculum reforms aimed at democratising the education system, thereby eradicating the disparities of the previous administration (Deventer 2009). According to the department of education, many black parents are still prejudiced about our education system, believing it is better to send their children to former advantaged schools, which were categorised as model C. There is therefore a need for looking into the underlying drivers of such prejudice to overcome these challenges (*DoE 2001*).

Further, Asmal maintains that the reason that children from black families are sent to the former advantaged model C schools was that parents hoped that their children will receive a better education with a greater supporting environment. Political factors contributing to schools' exodus include the introduction of outcomes-based education (OBE), which had no bearing on the quality of classroom education, but brought about mistrust from parents (Jansen 2002). The elimination of a segregated curriculum meant the elimination of racist elements, introduction of OBE and the review of Curriculum 2005 (Chisholm 2003).

In recent years, initiatives focused on social inclusivity have drawn public attention to the plight of millions of people, especially children, who have for centuries experienced exclusion within their own communities (UNESCO 2003). The new OBE system and legislative clauses are significant in this regard as it defends the rights of all learners, irrespective of disability, race and gender, and requires that support be given to educators teaching inclusive classes. Eloff and Kgwete (2007), however, indicate that the majority of educators feel unprepared and unequipped to deal with inclusive education. Sadly little or no research has been done on supporting educators in

managing inclusive education. South Africa underwent an educational transformation aimed at bringing quality and equitable education for all. The recently implemented education policies encourage the better management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools, yet implementing these policies remains a challenge.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Education is significant to poverty eradication. Ensuring that all learners have access is a fundamental human right that must be ensured by all means possible. The education system in South Africa has changed significantly since 1994 to restore the inequalities created by the previous administration by providing impartiality and education excellence (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996). In the old dispensation, primary school learners were categorised, for various reasons, according to identified deficits. As a result, many of these groupings did not fit into the ordinary schooling system.

Insignificant efforts have been made to ascertain the current learning breakdown as grounds for the South African education system. The South African education system should prioritise addressing issues that are central to accommodating diversity, and that lead to collapse in learning and stop learners from getting access to instructive delivery. These include difficulties in educational delivery and administration; obstacles to social and economic development; too many approaches; a rigid curriculum; linguistic and communication challenges; and an absence of legislation that is both empowering and defensive (Muthukrishna 2002).

The Constitution of South Africa contains the most important societal values which are inclusive of the attainment of fairness, equality, human rights, dignity and freedoms and the advancement thereof. The South African Constitution (1996) entrenches these societal values, including a key provision dealing with equality and human rights. Government may not discriminate, whether directly or indirectly, against any person on grounds of their diversity, be it gender, pregnancy, matrimonial position, racial or

social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, linguistic, religion and culture (South African Constitution, Section 9).

These are the values upon which our democratic administration is founded. The aim of the democratic government, elected in 1994, was to create a society whose values include essential human rights, societal righteousness, self-determination as well as fairness.

The Bill of Rights further entrenches the right of access to education, including basic and higher schooling, as well as adult basic education, which government must make increasingly available to all citizens through reasonable measures. However, the South African education system seems to fail many children of diverse backgrounds – depriving these school-going children of access to elementary schooling as advocated through the Constitution. Although the new policy and legislative framework lays the foundation for an all-encompassing schooling system, the practical application of this framework is still extremely slow (Department of Education 2001).

According to Fullan (2001), the foundation of achieving lasting transformation is a change in the beliefs and understanding of society at large. Despite considerable progress in introducing education policies to support inclusive classes in schools, most recent authors concluded that the improvement in creating a more inclusive education system in multicultural public primary schools have come to a standstill (Ferguson 2008; Vislie 2003). This can be ascribed to a lack of information, skills and inadequate educator training programmes to manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools, which demotivates educators or create a negative attitude towards inclusive education. The Miller *et al.* (2005) study of a Sudanese population in Melbourne, found that educators in the normal schools were not adequately skilled to manage challenges relating to inclusive education. Most educators teaching multicultural and inclusive classes have completed basic educator training, which did not sufficiently prepare them for the area of inclusive education. For them to change and become experts in managing inclusion in multicultural classes may take years. It is therefore imperative that educators be given the necessary support from school management as well as the schools' stakeholders.

Educators find it challenging to engage all learners in a multicultural classroom, despite their teaching abilities. De Vita (2001) asserts that culturally heterogeneous cohorts can bring about greater differences in educational preferences. Socioeconomic issues that are central to inclusive education can have a significant impact on those who were historically disadvantaged and marginalised (Mitchell 2010). The traditional methods of teaching and learning may be unproductive when used for public primary school learners from diverse cultural backgrounds (De Vita 2001). Studies on inclusive education have focused on those public primary school learners with needs that are educationally special. However, there is still a gap in knowledge on managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools (De Vita 2001). Much research has been done on the challenges of managing inclusive education, but not much research has been done on the relationship between culture and how learners learn. Most educators have their own teaching techniques and may struggle when confronted with culturally diverse groups of learners. This study therefore attempts to close the gap by exploring how educators manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

1.3 RATIONALE

With the appointment of a democratic dispensation in 1994, social diversity increased, particularly in South African schools. This resulted in the adoption of various new policies and regulations to incorporate those previously separated by culture in the education system. Many people thought that educators were qualified and would be able to do whatever was expected of them. Unfortunately this was not always the case. It came as a shock when some educators felt nervous because they did not understand how to manage multicultural classes, and most educators knew little of what was expected of them by the education authorities.

My interest in the study stems from my years of teaching in the former model C primary schools, where I experienced challenges in managing a multicultural class. I also observed how learners struggled to learn, because they did not get individual attention based on their individual needs. Most multicultural schools, though adequately resourced and having appointed remedial educators, still cannot satisfy the essential needs of the varied pupils in multicultural public primary schools.

Cultural diversity is evident throughout schools worldwide. Many learners in South African schools are from different cultural backgrounds. Educators in universities do not adequately train or prepare educators to manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. The Gauteng province is the economic hub of the country, has historic significance, and brings together diverse people through industrialisation and modernisation. The Gauteng province is also seen as the educational leader among the nine provinces and has to ensure that it builds a proudly South African education system that responds to economic needs (Pampallis 2003).

This research study focused on how educators manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. Ways through which learners' needs are addressed in primary public schools were investigated. Data was collected through interviews conducted with educators teaching multicultural classes, as well as principals. The study also investigated whether primary school educators' courses focused on multicultural teaching in schools.

According to Arbeiter and Hartley (2002), educators need the support, including suitable training programmes and the involvement of stakeholders, such as parents and the community. Ritter (1995) asserts that classroom-based educators lack the necessary skills to manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. In fact, educators are used to a particular range of deviant behaviour in mainstream classrooms; therefore their understanding of abnormal behaviour is more restrictive. Furthermore, educator judgment of misbehaviour only reflects problematic behaviour in a normal classroom context.

Significant research has been done with regard to learning styles, with limited literature concentrating on the connection between different cultures and learning styles. Studies also did not investigate the impact of cultural influences on learning style preferences and instructional approaches to be adopted by educators in managing challenges relating to culturally inclusive education (De Vita 2001).

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research study aims to explore and describe the challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province. Since most primary schools experience a lack of appropriately trained and skilled educators in managing multicultural classes, an investigation of experiences and views of educators in managing inclusion in multicultural classes has become a necessity.

The move towards inclusive education is imperative as it is cost-effective and fits into South Africa's cultural framework of fundamental rights of all children (UNESCO 2003). Several years ago, some United States of America (USA) and United Kingdom (UK) communities also supported the idea of an all-encompassing school as the top choice for inclusive placement of learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and groupings (CSIE 1997). Inclusive schools offer fitting opportunities in education for all school-going children, irrespective of background or cultural differences. The study therefore aims to establish:

- Educators' challenges in managing a multicultural class
- The experiences of educators in managing an inclusive multicultural class
- The expectations of educators managing an inclusive multicultural class
- The extent to which educators are prepared to manage inclusion in a multicultural class.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research study aims to assist in drawing up implications for inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. It will also help the Gauteng Education Department and those responsible for policymaking to improve much needed approaches and policies to assist educators in managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. Various ways of improving the management of inclusion in multicultural classes may be developed to assist educators struggling to manage cultural issues in teaching. Special programmes calling for stakeholders assistance, for example, to support facilitators, social workers and psychologist, may also be developed.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION

Research question

What are the challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province?

The research study used the following sub-questions:

- What are the challenges relating to inclusive education?
- What are educators' experiences of managing an inclusive multicultural class?
- What were their expectations in managing an inclusive multicultural class?
- What are the challenges they experience in managing a multicultural class?

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.7.1 Multiculturalism in education

According to Rosado (2010), multiculturalism is a belief system and encompasses the behaviours of culturally diverse groups in an organised society that recognises respects and celebrates their differences. Rosado maintains that multiculturalism enables these groups' continuous influence inside an all-encompassing social background, promoting and enabling everyone inside its scope.

Banks and Ambrosio (2002) uphold that multinational education attempts to achieve school transformation, thereby encouraging cultural fairness, social righteousness and equality. They also state that the main objective of multicultural education is to alter schools so that all school children can obtain the needed information, needed approaches and skills to perform in a racially and culturally varied society. The aim of multicultural education is to guarantee worldwide fairness, irrespective of racial and cultural ethnicity or socio-economic status. Furthermore, multiculturalism aims to ensure that the broader community is intellectually and psychologically equipped to value one another, declare their rights and have the same democratic say in every matter touching their welfare.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006), literature review helps in building a body of scientific knowledge about educational phenomena, in this case, managing inclusion in a multicultural class. Inclusion as a concept denotes a sense of fitting and acceptance (Voltz *et al.* 2001). Cultural background is important to developing individual learning styles, because a culture-based experience predisposes certain learning styles. Culture determines the way community members learn and plays a critical role in strengthening and determining knowledge and preferred learning styles. The cultural influence on learning may at that point clarify why methods of teaching, educational activities and surroundings that encourage educational learning in some cultures may be unproductive to some (De Vita 2001).

The Section 1a of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996) is founded on the ethical values of common citizenship for human dignity, the achievement of the development of human rights, equality and freedom. The abovementioned constitutional principles call on every one of us to be accountable and take on the challenge of reconstructing a generous and thoughtful nation to ensure a better life for all. In building the 21st Century education and training system, South Africa carries an exceptional duty to apply these morals and make sure that every school-going child, irrespective of their background, pursues their educational talent to completion.

According to the province's policy framework it is the Gauteng Education Department's responsibility to delivery on educational prospects, particularly for school-excluded learners who have encountered hurdles to their developmental learning and had to drop out of school due to the incapacity of the Department of Basic Education to accommodate their diverse learning needs. In order to efficiently build a cohesive education and training system based on the ethical principles of excellence, equality, rectifying historical inequities and access for all, the energetic involvement of all societal stakeholders are required to deal with undesirable stereotyping and eliminating social marginalisation (Department of Education 2001).

Isolated studies on inclusive practices of education have been carried out in geographically and culturally different localities with a collective obligation towards inclusive education. One of the studies concentrated on the application of a nationwide inclusion policy in the rural part of the United States of America (USA). Another study took place in a highly inhabited London Borough dedicated to the system of inclusive education. These two studies employed data collection methods of interviews and observations of innovative practice with key personnel. The studies' outcomes suggested that active inclusive schools can effectively be used for solving diverse problems and that diverse methods of realising the very goal that needs to replicate a setting that is socially cultural exist (Cruz-Saco and LópezAnuarbe 2013).

In Spain, the principles that govern schooling are those of normalisation and inclusion. This is aimed at guaranteeing all learners' inclusion and the functioning fairness of access to schools by children with special educational needs. Those minorities needing more devotion were included in the normal school class. The importance of this exercise was to address diverse pupils' learning problems, acting as soon as these problems were detected. At this level, teaching has to be based on inclusiveness to ensure progress by all and at the same time meeting the needs of a diverse group of learners (Soler 2013).

The Zimbabwean educators are not legally allowed to deny a pupil admission into their schools. Practically, however, significantly disabled children were being refused admission into Zimbabwean schools just because educators considered themselves ill-equipped and unqualified to teach these children. Maunganidze and Kasayira (2002) observed that about fifty-two percent (52%) of regular professional educators in Zimbabwe have developed positive attitudes towards learners with special educational needs in inclusive school settings. In their study, physically and visually challenged learners were considered more accommodated in inclusive schools compared to those who are intellectually and hearing impaired.

1.7.2 Culture and multiculturalism

Ocholla (2002) maintains that the South African population is diverse and composed of Whites, Coloureds, Africans and Indians. The White population is composed mostly English and Afrikaans speaking people. There is a shift from ethnicity to culture where culture is now seen as the defining term indicating a shift from individual rights to group rights. The government of South Africa has ensured that there is a level playing field in terms of education, while also giving recognition to the plurality of cultures in schools. The country's multicultural nature is legislatively emphasised in the Constitution, which mentions that "the South African nation consists of a diversity of cultural, religious and linguistic communities". Chapter 2, Section 30 of the Constitution states that "everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice".

Milazi (2012) defines multiculturalism as a philosophical thought that stimulates the institutionalisation of societies encompassing several cultures. From a political perspective, multiculturalism starts within the various cultures in a society that has equal respect to the promoting and maintenance of cultural transformations as a policy matter (Milazi 2012). The idea of multiculturalism proposes that a person's loyalty and identification surpass the limitations of nationalism and their obligations are pinioned to a larger vision of humanity. Society, nation and culture, wield incredible influence over each and every one's lives – manufacturing our world views, designing our experiential responses and constructing our values.

Adler (2002) maintains that societies are unable to stay away from some system of their own cultural influence. The person who tolerates multiculturalism can essentially inwardly allow a primary development of own confirmation, which is anchored to social circumstance, universality and diversified cultural practices. This person is also intellectually and expressively devoted to the fundamental unity of all people. Equally, a multicultural person is capable to identify, appreciate and address the cultural differences between different societal groups (Adler 2002). Multicultural classes may include learners with special educational needs in the mainstream education system.

1.7.3 Definition of multicultural education

Banks *et al.* (1995) are highly considered and recognised authors on multicultural education issues as they provide various interpretations and definitions for the concept. Both Banks (1995) and Nieto (2000) have good definitions and different interpretations regarding the meaning of multicultural education. Gorski (2006) and other scholars have revised the definition of multicultural education to fit into the contemporary education system, typifying the development of multinational education – from its former definition, through to the period including the 21st Century.

The concept of multicultural education dates back to 1954, and the USA Supreme Court case of the Board of Education versus Brown in which the principle of ‘separate but equal’ was contested through civil rights (Gorski 2006). There has been much change since then, refocusing and reconceptualising multicultural education. The concept is in a continuous state of assessment, both theoretically and practically. It has become common for schoolroom-based scholar or educator to have similar explanation for the concept of multicultural education. Each and every person is prone to shape thoughts to be suitable to their specific focus and the same applies to the discussion of the concept of inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

The multicultural education definition is as old as the beginning of the USA's civil rights movements, and is highlighted by its strategy of both an educational revolution and social transformation (Gorski 2007). Transformation in multicultural education can be understood as change in curriculum, plus new and varied teaching and learning resources, the inclusivity of groups usually discriminated against, together with altering the classroom environment.

The definition of multicultural education focuses mainly on issues, such as resource allocations and social change to form part of the broader transformation of society, in order to discover and criticise repressive practices with regard to the way education helps in upholding the existing state of affairs and world-wide socio-economic circumstances and mistreatment (Gorski 2007).

Although there are many different definitions, shared ideals provide a basis for understanding multicultural education. Of course some principles pay attention to different educators and learners, while others are very much 'macro' in focus.

Multicultural education definitions differ extensively in subject matter, methodology and referent group alignments. The main emphasis of the current research study is on the meaning of multicultural education, designating "multicultural education as an idea, an educational reform movement and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions" (Banks 1993).

According to Sleeter (1992), multicultural education's definition may take on a very comprehensive range, and can be explained as "any set of processes by which schools work with rather than against oppressed groups". This definition implies that schools need to contest matters of domination and help shape learners' future to be just, democratic and equal, a future that does not claim an arrangement to one dominant social standard. Multicultural education's most inclusive definition is provided by Nieto (1996), signifying it as a "transformational process permeating and impacting every aspect of the operation of an educational system, including government policy, staffing, curriculum, disciplinary policy, student involvement, parent and community involvement, pedagogy, assessment and funding."

Therefore, it becomes significant to advance multicultural education, grounded in the societal principles of educational equity, social justice and a dedication to educational knowledges facilitation, allowing all learners to realise their full potential for us to become a socially conscious and lively community throughout and beyond the country's boundaries. When developing one's own definition of multicultural education one needs to remember and be mindful that multicultural education has certain goals such as helping learners understand and appreciate cultural differences and similarities (Ramsey 2004).

1.7.4 Managing inclusion in a class

Managing inclusion in a multicultural class has challenges, especially if one is not trained to teach such a class. To tackle the challenge of inadequacy, professional development courses for educators should be rolled out to make provision for training on the principles of learning and teaching in a multicultural environment. Further, there should be a more reliable and continuous training methodology for all educators, including district officials, on the challenges relating to inclusive education and related concepts and methodologies. An insufficient number of educators are receiving much needed professional training to ensure an inclusive system of education. It is therefore necessary for the majority of South African educators to change their attitude towards inclusive education. They must be assisted and encouraged to discover ways that will enable them to embrace an inclusive teaching and learning environment (Schoeman 2012).

Managing mainstream education for learners with special learning needs is challenging given that inclusive classes require more of an educator's attention than would have been required in a general class. Research findings by Schumm and Vaughn (1992) reveal that mainstream education educators are underequipped to manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural classes, as they do not need to focus on behavioural problems in mainstreamed classes since learners do not display behaviourally sensitive problems. Schumm and Vaughn (1992) state that educators are usually willing to adapt but are less likely to spend considerable time

planning or making adaptations to multicultural aspects of learning based on learners' culture.

Another problem with educators of inclusive classes is that they are often unaware of the special needs of learners and rarely use cultural profiling in their planning. This makes it imperative that inclusive class educators be given assistance in planning for managing inclusion in multicultural classes through support structures (Schumm and Vaughn 1992). Trump and Hange's (1996) research study, conducted through focus group interviews on the concerns of educators about inclusion, found that there may be a discrepancy between the academic and cultural aspects of education as learners are taught using the same teaching style through the grade levels.

The central argument of this study is that managing inclusion in multicultural classes does not only require the implementation of new policies, but educators need ongoing support, in-service training and time, for the fruitful implementation of managing challenges relating to inclusive education. Professional educators need adequate knowledge, skills and training to address cultural diversity for the actual implementation of an inclusive education system in schools. Most educators, especially in the previously White model C schools, do not have the ability to manage diversity, and experience feelings of fear and hopelessness. Furthermore, misinterpretations and confusions of the concept of inclusion also seem to thwart its implementation. Lack of support and training, as well as lack of knowledge of official policy documents, has led to some educators developing resistance and disillusionment in inclusive education management (Ladbrook 2009).

In light of the above, the need for support and ongoing training is a prerequisite for educators managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. From the study by Swart and Marietjie (2011), it seems that present work-related developmental training does not always meet the needs of educators. The preservice training and development programme for educators does not sufficiently prepare them for managing learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and

there seems to be an undesirable indifference towards in-service training, which does not bring about the preferred transformation (Fischer 2011).

1.7.5 South African literature on managing inclusive classes

Although the South African national government had developed progressive policy frameworks in recent years, which in many ways are considered principled, the Department of Basic Education, at provincial government level, has been unable to effectively apply these policies. This can be ascribed to budget limitations and demands for public expenditure restrictions. The result is that these new policies have been unable to uphold equity, compensation for past inequalities and to stimulate much needed development in the society (Muthukrishna 2002). Most literature on inclusive education relates to learners with special educational needs, and the research study I undertook was highly supported.

The Department of Basic Education is committed to the establishment of an inclusive education system. This commitment stems from the Education White Paper 6 (2001) which aims at creating inclusive education system that facilitates the inclusion of all exposed learners and decreases the learning barriers, through directed support structures and mechanisms in order to improve the retention of learners in the system of education, particularly learners who are likely to fall out of school. The South African system of education aims to promote inclusive education because government acknowledges that all children can learn; and this is part of a wider approach to encourage an inclusive culture thereby contributing to the excellence of education for all.

1.7.6 Preparing educators for multicultural classrooms

Trainers of educators need to be knowledgeable about how to deal with the multicultural classrooms in order for them to prepare student educators to manage the challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural classrooms. Educators need practical knowledge, professional insights and confidence in their particular teaching practice. Education for educators must be developed through an integrative process rooted in educators' own classroom practice and guides educator behaviour in the

classroom. Both theoretical principles and educator proficiency are necessary to refining the educator knowledge base (Muthukrishna 2002).

1.7.7 Experiences in managing an inclusive multicultural class

Educators managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools may experience that the old-fashioned teaching methods are ineffective with a group of students from diverse social backgrounds and with different learning methods. The reason for this is the mismatch between the style of teaching used by educators and the learners' learning styles. Some learners may be traditionally inclined to learn in incompatible ways compared to the indigenous and mutual instructional methods, the latter depending on social conditioning (De Vita 2001). Knowledge from learning is a cultural phenomenon and may enlighten educators on why successful methods of teaching, responsibilities and surroundings related to and promoting learning in some beliefs may be ineffective in others.

1.7.8 Prerequisites to manage an inclusive multicultural class

The first and foremost principle of many student and beginner educators in primary schools is the creation of a positive working classroom atmosphere. This becomes more challenging in a multicultural classroom. Educators become aware of the significance of providing clear instructions and improving student behaviour every time it is needed, but they also want to reduce potential negative influences of improvements to the atmosphere of the classroom.

The objective of positive working classroom atmosphere is to develop a positive educator-student relationship and to adjust teaching methods to anticipate learners' responses. However, most educators appear hesitant to refer to their learners' cultural and ethnic background (Chirume 2008).

1.7.9 The challenges of managing a multicultural class

According to Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke and Curran (2004), the significance of developing knowledge about learners' cultures and their communities, thereby ensuring a caring relationship with learners, is very critical. Educators are discouraged from devaluing the cultural practices of learners which are not part of the leading social paradigm. The multicultural classroom can be challenging for both learners and beginner educators, which can potentially create misunderstanding between learners and educators with diverse ethnic and socio-cultural backgrounds (Ladson-Billings 1992).

An additional challenge lies in the urban location of most multicultural schools. According to Milner (2009), USA's urban schools are not only considered largely ethnically and culturally varied in terms of their student population, but their learners also tend to be associated with poorer socio-economic conditions. The first concern for most student and beginner educators is the creation of a positive working and classroom atmosphere.

The challenge educators' face may be the realisation that culturally diverse learners have perspectives that provide a lively and vibrant opportunity for deliberation and the necessity for mutual respect complements the overall dignity of the environment. Educators may not have the understanding that someone from another language or culture offers prospects for everybody to connect with one another on their cultural upbringing as part of the learning platform. Educators will have to be very active and effective in encouraging respect for diversity, and making the most of the abundant opportunities diversity presents (Milner 2009).

The notion implying that all learners are entitled to "equal opportunity to learn in school" is, according to Banks (2004), a key element to addressing the challenges in managing multicultural education. The refusal of racism and other forms of discernment in schools and society, as well as the acceptance and affirmation of pluralism among learners, their communities, and educators, represent some of the challenges within multicultural education (Nieto 2004).

Educators are facing novel challenges every day due to the international society within which they find themselves. In modern society, outdated teaching approaches are being challenged, with the focus being more on learners' needs. Educators, together with school managers, need to learn to adjust to a more culturally vibrant teaching and learning environment. Multiculturalism affirms the idea that modern societies should embrace and include distinct cultural groups with equal social status. Learners come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, families, lifestyles, environments, and situations and some of them are not even English speakers. Today's school management and educators have the task to adapt their management and teaching styles to incorporate the entire school's and classroom's diversity (Hargreaves 1994).

According to Guang-Lea (2002) the challenge of managing multicultural education lies in the fact that a gap exists between the specified principles and actual practices. The implication is that there is a difference between what is supposed to happen and what is actually happening within schools. Guang-Lea further states that, to address this, several initiatives have been put in place which concentrated on the putting into practice of multicultural education, such as associations of education promoting multiculturalism and the National Council for Accreditation of Educator Education Standards, which stipulate multicultural experiences for educators' and learners' education, as well as for individual educators who are making an effort to improve their ability to teach learners from varied social backgrounds. Nevertheless, the argument for multicultural education efforts seems to outweigh actual efforts (GuangLea 2002).

In conclusion, the literature indicates that it requires effort and dedication to create a desirable positive atmosphere. It is challenging to have an ideal classroom that is welcoming to the diverse learners but if educators are well trained, this can be managed accordingly. The need for inclusive and multicultural classroom is so necessary in order to accommodate the global citizens as well and the local diverse communities who learn from the historically not so inclusive schools.

1.8 THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The researcher considered social justice theories, since the majority of people want to live in a just society where those who were discriminated against in the past, like women, the poor and those with special needs, receive equal opportunities. The basic principle of social justice is to learn, appreciate and be ready to without judging, to view others as social beings that warrant opportunities and admiration. All learners have the right to human rights and dignity. These human rights are what make freedom possible – as without our rights and freedom we wouldn't be much of a civilization (Miller *et al.* 2005).

Social justice is regarded as the promotion of a just society by challenging injustice and valuing diversity. Social justice happens when society shares a common humanity and therefore has a right to impartial treatment, support for their human rights, and a fair community resources distribution. In circumstances of social justice, no individual is discriminated against, nor is their wellbeing and welfare inhibited or discriminated on the basis of social differences or background (Caputo 2000).

Legislative guidelines are usually constructed based on a sensible and influential observation of the execution processes within which certain goals are to be realised through specific means (Kyvik 2004). The researcher used the Constructivist Grounded Theory for its popularity as a method for research studies, mainly in disciplines such as education. A social constructionist approach to grounded theory allows us to address why questions while preserving the complexity of social life. Grounded theory not only is a method for understanding research participants' social constructions but also is a method that researchers construct throughout inquiry (Caputo 2000).

1.9 RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher employed a qualitative approach in this study as the focus was on people's social actions, attitudes, perceptions, challenges and motives. This approach is appropriate as it allows for an interactive relationship between the researcher and participants, and discloses the nature of some societal interactions and conditions, settings, procedures and systems (Corbin 2014). A qualitative approach also assists in collecting rich data that contributes to a deeper understanding of the management of inclusion in a multicultural class (McMillan and Schumacher 2010). A qualitative approach used to conduct this study also highlighted certain limitations to the study, as well as how ethical issues are considered.

This study aims to understand and interpret educators' perspectives on the challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province. The interpretivist and constructivist paradigms are the methodological assumptions upon which this study is based. The interpretivist / constructive approach provides guidelines that enabled the researcher to deconstruct the realities of managing inclusive teaching in a multicultural class in public primary schools in the Gauteng province.

Understandings from both the interpretivist constructivist paradigms are joined in creating meaning from the distinctive and subjective lived experiences of participants (Crotty 1998). School management and educators may reveal different views because of their different individual realities that emerge as a result of their experiences. Both the interpretivists and constructivists believe that truth is created on individual understandings, which vary from one person to the next (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 2002).

The constructive and interpretive paradigms that directed this research study complement each other with regard to participant-researcher association. Although in the interpretivist approach the researcher aims to establish a trusting connection with participants and may be able to discover rich experiences; the constructivist approach

may encourage mutual interaction between the researcher and participants (Denzin and Lincoln 2000). Both approaches are combined to create profound meaning throughout the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. Even before commencing with the data collection process through communications about the research, rapport was established with the participants, and maintained throughout the research process.

School management and educator participants participated in the study through semi-structured interviews where their feelings and experiences in managing inclusion in a multicultural class were revealed. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as they allowed the researcher to obtain comprehensive information to expand and further explore topical themes present in the interview schedule. The qualitative approach used, enabled the researcher to conduct one-on-one interviews with participants to establish how educators manage inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

This qualitative study is underpinned by both the epistemological and ontological assumptions that maintain that knowledge is constructed through the social interaction of participants with their reality (Andrews 2012). The qualitative approach also enabled the researcher to analyse data inductively and to use the results as basis for subsequent data collection through follow-up interviews.

1.10. METHODOLOGY

1.10.1 Interviews

Data was collected directly from individuals through the one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. This allowed for further probing questions to obtain clarity and depth (Creswell 2003). Employing semi-structured interviews enabled participants to deliberate on their understandings of the world in which they live, and to express how they look at circumstances (Kotter 2002). An interview is also defined as “a data collection method in which an interviewer asks questions of an interviewee. Interviews reveal in-depth information about participants’ thoughts, knowledge, reasoning and

feelings about the subject being researched (Sturges 2004). A major advantage of interviews is that they give the researcher access to valuable information, even when they are not directly observing participants. Interviews also permit participants to share personal information (Creswell 2007). Disadvantages may be that the information being provided is filtered through the views of the interviewers or participants, and participants may only be providing information they want the researcher to hear.

Semi-structured interviews combine both structured and unstructured approaches to make it easier for the provision of information required for the study (Creswell 2009). Qualitative interviewing allows the researcher to enter into the inner world of another person to gain insight into that person's viewpoints (Seidman 2013).

According to Creswell (2007), a qualitative interview occurs when researchers ask one or more participants general, open ended questions and record their answers. The participants should be given the opportunity to express their views and experiences unrestricted by the viewpoints of the researcher and prior findings of the research study. Only the data applicable to this study were extracted from the recorded interviews for use in answering the research questions that guide the study.

1.10.2 Sampling

Purposive and convenience sampling was used to select participants. Purposive sampling is an effective research means if properly used. The process of choosing a small number of participants for a research study in way that only key informants who are able to contribute to the researcher's understanding of a given phenomenon are selected is called purposive sampling (Lindsay 2007). A non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher is called convenience sampling.

A sizeable number of educator participants were sampled from former public primary model C schools that were easily accessible and deal with challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural environments are dealt with. The total sample comprised ten educators from five public primary schools. This is a purposive sample

because participants were chosen with a specific purpose in mind, namely, managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. The selected and targeted educators were those dealing with the challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools and were conveniently available and easy to work with.

1.10.3 Document analysis

To gain insight into the legislative and policy environment regarding the educational rights of learners with barriers to learning and development and on how educators of public primary schools should manage inclusion of multicultural classes in schools, the researcher analysed the *White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (2001) and the South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996). The researcher also analysed the selected schools' policies on inclusion, as well as departmental circulars. These documents were then triangulated with the data attained through interviews.

1.10.4 Data analysis

The researcher listened to the recorded interviews and transcribed them to help analyse the data. The researcher read through the transcribed data to deduce participants' logic and their sense of understanding of the experiences of educators managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. The researcher followed the way of coding data using open coding analysis to get the initial codes. The codes were then clustered into categories to establish broader thematic issues (Glasser & Strauss 1999).

1.10.5 Credibility and trustworthiness

The researcher planned to focus on credibility, reliability and comparability as indicators of the authenticity of the research procedures used. The reliability of this research study was revealed through the quality of the investigation and findings to make it noteworthy to audiences (Schwandt 2007).

According to Johnson and Christensen (2012), qualitative research has qualities of validity, credibility and trustworthiness and can be defended. There are many strategies that can be used to maximise validity or trustworthiness of research, including: giving feedback to participants; having discussions on the interpretations and conclusion with another researcher not directly involved; and member checking. By employing one of these tactics which is having discussions with the supervisor, the researcher gained useful insights and used an outside expert to assess the quality of the study. Being thoughtful of own personal bias and how it shapes the study, the researcher tried to be as objective as possible though it was not easy to circumvent sifting data through an individual lens shaped by the researcher's socio-cultural and historical background (Creswell 2007).

In admitting the existence of bias, values and interests, the researcher affirmed that the researcher attempted to limit personal interpretation while acknowledging that it is inherent to qualitative data analysis. Harper and Cole (2012) state that retaining the records of conversations and checking their veracity with participants, or member checking, ensures qualities of credibility and trustworthiness. Member checking is a key means for qualitative researchers gaining evidence of the authenticity and credibility of their data to meet the ethical requirement of constructing trustworthy research that may be of some benefit to society.

The research results of this study were obtained from triangulation of the multiple sources, documents and interviews in establishing educators' experiences in managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has some inherent weaknesses.

There is no guarantee that participants' responses were unbiased and truly reflected their attitudes concerning the issues under the study. The study primarily focused on the challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools and was limited to public primary schools in Gauteng. A limited number of participants were involved in this study and were not a true reflection of the experiences of the entire population of primary schools in Gauteng.

The findings of this study cannot be generalised to all areas of education because it represents the perceptions of a small sample of educators managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools through the eyes of available members only. The study only included participants from five primary schools in Gauteng, and do not represent the views of the educators of all the schools in the district or province. However, the aim was not to generalise, but to serve as impetus for further study.

Furthermore, the outcomes of this study cannot be duplicated as the conditions under which the phenomenon was investigated will not be exactly the same as those of the groups studied in this inquiry. In other words, the findings are applicable only to those educators in the public primary schools in Gauteng to which the study was confined.

1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to De Vos (1998) ethics are generally accepted as they offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects, participants and everyone involved in the research study. Ethics are a set of moral principles, as suggested by the individual or a group. Firstly, the researcher asked for permission from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to conduct

research interviews in the selected schools. The researcher then obtained ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria (in line with the Statutes and Regulations of the university and the Faculty of Education) before commencing with the field research work. The research and its purpose were explained to participants, and their role in the research study was clarified. Participants' consent to be interviewed was sought and pseudonyms were used to protect their identities.

Participants were also made aware that their participation is voluntary, and that they can withdraw from the study should they feel that they do not want to continue with the interview. Participants were assured upfront that information shared with the researcher would not be made available to any person that is not involved in the study (Trochim 2001). Participants were further assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their information and that they will not be jeopardising their position (Ary 2006). Participants were also allowed to verify the transcripts of interviews as a way to ensure transparency and develop trust.

No information regarding other participants was made known to others, and this aspect was made clear in the invitation letter. The researcher made sure that data collection did not disturb the daily school activities, and arranged interviews at a suitable venue and time chosen by the participant. The researcher kindly thanked participants for their participation, especially in giving their personal experiences and insights. The final research report will be made available to participants in order for them to learn from the research conducted (Creswell 2019).

1.13 CHAPTER OUTLINE AND SCHEDULING

The study was delineated into five chapters which are outlined below.

Chapter 1 is the introduction and orientation of the research study. It states the purpose and outlines the problem statement, main question and sub-questions for the research study. This chapter also provides the motivation for the study, the purpose of the study and focuses on the design and methodology used. It clarifies certain

concepts used in the study, as well as strategies employed to enhance the credibility of the study. Ethical issues, limitation and significance of the study are also included.

Chapter 2 focuses on the literature review relating to key issues informing the study, and which provides an understanding of the role of the educator in managing a multicultural class, as outlined in government policies. This chapter paid attention to the theoretical discourse relating to challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools and the historical background to the emergence and development of multicultural education. Finally, the literature on the discourse relating to challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools was discussed.

Chapter 3 aims to present and describe the design and methods of the research used. It explores the appropriateness of a qualitative approach and interpretative paradigm, and the data collection technique is explained.

Chapter 4 presents data from the interviews, analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings. This chapter gives an account of the findings, data analysis and interpretations. The data findings are derived from in-depth responses through semi-structured interviews with each of the participants in this study who manages challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province. The participants were purposefully sampled and face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each one of them.

Chapter 5 provides a summary, discusses the findings, recommendations and conclusion emanating from the data analysis of this research. These findings are elaborated on and recommendations are made.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter pays attention to literature on the challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural classes in public primary schools. It further focuses on the historic background to the concept of multicultural education and its development, and explores the management of challenges related to it. The researcher discussed the central challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. This is followed by a discussion of strategies for teaching in a multicultural classroom, which were compiled on the basis of the 'Copernican' view of teaching according to Manzano-García (2016).

The theoretical underpinnings and development of multicultural education in the USA and South Africa are outlined in this chapter in an effort to explore the challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural classes in public primary schools. To achieve this aim, the literature review considered attempts to describe multicultural education and its influences on the general societal understanding of the effective management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

The theoretical underpinnings contained in this study are subjective to many authors who extensively wrote on the multicultural education issue. This includes Vygotsky's social constructivism theories and his opinion on learning and teaching inside a social setting.

The research study tries to define challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools within the context of South Africa where the education system urges schools to become more multicultural. The study also looks at the document experiences in managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools where learners from different racial and cultural upbringings are brought together.

The multicultural education's theoretical underpinnings include definitions that are dependent on the characteristics of diverse groups' cultures, while other such characteristics emphasise social problems. Other characteristics provide directions for school reform in all settings, irrespective of the characteristics (Enoch 2007).

In their effort to include various ethnic groups into the curriculum, the traditional education systems have been unsuccessful and resulted in a misrepresentation of real society. These traditional education systems contributed to the formation of an ethnocentric and xenophobic society where people do not tolerate those who seem to be different because they have not learnt to understand one another.

Educators and school managers need to become more effective in the operation and management of schools (Coddling & Bergen 2004). Effective management can be ensured by giving learners the opportunity to have positive cultural interactions and affirming diversity. According to Banks (2006), multicultural education can be helpful in renewing the traditional education system.

According to Banks (2006), multicultural education aims to create equal educational opportunities for learners from diverse racial, ethnic and socio-cultural groups. Learners would benefit from contact between different cultures resulting from the transformation of an outdated education system into a multicultural system (Banks 2006).

The South Africa Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996) is founded on the values of equality, dignity and the advancement of human rights. The South African government, in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), is dedicated to directing its efforts towards the accomplishment of educational rights for children that is fitting to their learning needs and their preparation for the future. The Constitution challenges educators by requiring that they prioritise the basic educational right for all South Africans. This commitment to the right to basic education is articulated in Section 29(1) which states that one has the right to basic education, including adult basic education and Sections 9(2), 9(3), 9(4) and 9(5) are particularly important to this research study

as they address aspects relating to protecting all learners and require that support be given to educators managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

Goal 2 of the MDGs states that educators need to be qualified, motivated and provided with support. For good quality education, the school management team needs to support educators in managing inclusiveness in a multicultural classroom as the school community is accountable for the education of children. When the policy on inclusion was introduced in schools, many thought that educators were qualified and capable to teach a diverse group of learners. Unfortunately, this was not always the case, and it came as a shock when some educators felt panicky as they did not understand what inclusive education entailed. The majority of educators did not feel prepared and equipped to manage challenges relating to inclusive education and felt that there is no readily available research conducted on educator support in inclusive education (Eloff and Kgwete 2007).

2.2 DEFINITIONS, AIMS AND BENEFITS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education embraces a pedagogy that is culturally responsive, with skilled mentors assisting in implementing it (Ladson-Billings 2005). Multicultural education is further described by the American National Association for Multicultural Education (2011) as a theoretical thought containing the ideals of justice, equality, freedom, equity and human dignity, as acknowledged in numerous official papers. According to Gorski (2007) the meaning of multicultural education is highlighted by its school transformation and social change policy.

There are a multitude of definitions of multicultural education; however, for the purposes of this study, the researcher preferred the definition as provided by Banks (1993) which reads: “Multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions”.

Generally, multicultural education can be defined along a very comprehensive scope as “any set of processes by which schools work with rather than against oppressed groups” (Sleeter 1992). Nieto (1996) and Banks (1994) postulate that multicultural education is a “transformational process permeating and impacting every aspect of the operation of an educational system”.

Multicultural education aims at empowering educators to develop a vested interest for the learners within their schools. Banks (2008) maintains that multicultural education helps learners to develop a positive self-image by providing knowledge about historical cultures and the contribution of different social groups. Multicultural education further promotes critical thinking and creates an environment that is inclusive and encouraging all learners to develop socio-cultural consciousness of diversity.

The aims of multicultural education are to develop multiple historical perspectives; strengthen cultural consciousness, as well as combat all forms of prejudice and discrimination (Bennett, as cited by Bulankina and Polyankina 2011). According to Meier (2009), multicultural education aims to instill understanding in learners about the social living conditions, cultures and beliefs of other groups. Therefore, multicultural education becomes vital in safeguarding success in the school system, thereby teaching youth to value their social and cultural differences (Darling-Hammond 1996). Authors of multicultural education say that it empowers learners to better understand fellow classmates and act as positive change agents in the specific areas of tolerance and diversity when they become adults.

The research study by Powers (2006) delivered substantial information that “native cultural identification was positively correlated with learners’ intention to complete school and their presence and participation at school”. This is significant to this study because it contributes to the presentation of multicultural education benefits, including advice on the effective management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. According to Wasiams and Cooney (2006), learners learn to celebrate distinctive life experiences through reading, writing and art. Their findings are important to this research work because it shows how influential

educators are in stimulating the emotional and social growth of learners from diverse backgrounds through promoting early literacy skills and the arts to inspire an appreciation of different cultures in the schools.

The importance of multicultural education is that it inspires learners to appreciate that the inclusive multicultural perspective is widespread and practical to real world opportunities. Nieto (2004) claimed that when opportunities are provided to learners, they get culturally inspired and become equipped to combat large-scale change as they grow to become active citizens. The research work by Nieto is relevant to this study as it shows that through multicultural education, learners are cultivated to adjust their thinking and can confidently engage in society. Educators have the responsibility to contribute to a positive cultural identity formation to form a harmonious connection with learners. The critical element in the expansion of intercultural learning is not the fullness with which one knows each culture, but the degree to which the process of cross-cultural learning, communication and human relations has been mastered (Mahoney and Schamber 2004).

2.3 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE USA: THE PAST AND PRESENT FOR EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

According to Naidoo (2007) multicultural education can be traced as far back as the 1960s, when African-Americans and other people of colour and disabilities, through their social action challenged the prejudiced practices in public schools. During the struggle for justice and freedom, USA citizens desired self-existence and equality for all, which resulted in the development of multicultural education for equal educational opportunities. Multicultural education's ability to challenge social stratification and celebrate diversity and equal opportunity is appreciated as a vehicle for social reform.

Much can still be done with regard to implementing multicultural education, but it clearly has the transformative potential to integrate educational processes (Gay 2004). There are encouraging reasons to continue developing multicultural education, keeping pace with the changing societal demographics and schools. The advantages of multicultural

education are that it accepts culture for equality and desegregation and regards culture as a tool of excellence and equity in education. Educators, as designers and implementers of educational programmes to meet the changing needs of their learners and society, experience obstacles in the teaching process and find themselves challenged when it comes to the management of diversity (Gorski 2006).

2.4 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE PAST AND PRESENT FOR EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Mafumo (2010) regards the phasing in of South African multicultural education as a comprehensive method based on educational value and addressing matters of racial equality. Educational success is not just about scholastic and intellectual achievement but all other cultural and social aspects must be included. One of the most urgent of those challenges is the reconstruction of the education system that does not separate learners instead should provide equal educational opportunities for all (Donald *et al.* 2002).

The period between 1990 and 1994 is considered as time in which the South African apartheid government allowed black learners to be enrolled into historically white schools. The democratic government based the education for all principle on the South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996). Due to these progressive changes, there was pressure for the former white schools to transform, desegregate, integrate and include all learners. The 1990s educational policy changes were intended to redress past imbalances in the schooling sector, thereby making equal opportunities available for all citizens, irrespective of differences in religion, race, ethnicity, colour, and gender. The discriminatory racial and gender challenges characterise the many years of fighting for transformation and equality which the current South African education system experienced since the end of apartheid in 1994 (Donald *et al.* 2002).

The South African transformation posed remarkable challenges to managing the education system, and created a sense of unprecedented urgency about the many cultural realities represented in South African schools. These challenges include the cultural and linguistic diversity of learners and have been there since 1994 (Johnson and Kress 2003).

The South African Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (Department of Education 2001) is founded on the Constitutional values and principles that ensure the right to equality, and protection from discrimination for all. The White Paper further seeks to redress the disparities that confronted historically disadvantaged groups to create equal opportunities for each and every person – the kind of education that is responsive and available to all learners, based on the values of justice and human rights, public participation and integration, equal access to an inclusive education system and beneficial school curriculum as well as redress.

Policy changes were brought about by the White Paper which called for active participation of all educational stakeholders in school management and administration. These policy changes fall within the ambit of this research study, which is the management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools (Department of Education 2001).

Many challenges on how schools are managed came about with the increase of diversity among learners. In the new democratic South Africa, all educational stakeholders are called on to assist in addressing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools (Shezi 2005). Schools should be inclusively democratic with participatory principles (South African Schools Act 1996).

2.5 CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

According to Banks (2004) a crucial element of the challenges related to multicultural education is the idea that all learners are entitled to 'equal opportunity to learn in school'. This includes saying no to racism and other forms of discrimination in society and schools, and accepting and affirming ethnical and racial pluralism of learners and educators (Nieto 2004). Educators need to learn to adjust to a more multicultural, dynamic school environment and to adapt their teaching styles to encompass the diversity in their schools.

Educators need to be skilled to effectively manage the cultural diversity and to attend to learners' cultural and other needs. South African schools undergo continuous transformation, leading to increased managerial challenges. The cultural diversity of educators and learners is just one of the challenges educators face in managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. Managing these challenges requires educators to consider the multicultural diversity issues of South Africa, and its long apartheid history where people were denied equal opportunities. Educators are not yet fully prepared to address the challenges associated with implementing a multicultural education system (Banks 2004). However, today educators can be able to support one another to overcome these challenges.

Multicultural education became an umbrella term for addressing a variety of cultural differences, although it began as a challenge to address the inequalities experienced by the previously disadvantaged learners of colour. Ladson-Billings (1998) asserts that within every one of these groups of dissimilarities, some other cultural and ethnical matters arose. Provision of culturally inclusive education, with equal opportunities for all people despite their diversity, is the goal for educators.

Many South African educators still have to teach a curriculum that is unsuitable to the diverse learner population needs within their schools. Gutmann (1995) proposes that a solution to the outdated education system should aim to appreciate the life experiences and social contributions of various social groups; that people consist of a lot of different cultures; and that learners should be taught as such. Due to globalization, educators can through reading and interaction, learn from the outside world how inclusive education is managed.

Some of the challenges faced are evident at different school echelons. Overcoming these challenges therefore requires many educational role players, including the society at large. It is significant that every role player make a noteworthy input into eliminating these educational challenges (Lumadi 2008). According to some authors, transformation of schools must ensure that schools become centres of excellence for every learner. Making schools centres of excellence is, however, contributing to the challenges for educators, and requires the empowerment of these educators (Carl 2002).

The reform of schools should occur within the integration context, borne out of “a conscious effort to transform undemocratic, apartheid culture and practice, by replacing it with a democratic, inclusive, education ethos founded on a human rights culture” to achieve the centre of excellence vision (Nkomo 2015). In order to achieve this excellent vision, educators need to set direction and tone for the school. As educators set the tone, they face the challenge of creating equitable opportunities for cultural diversity within the school system (Murakami 2009).

The Department of Basic Education (2012) recently introduced Curriculum Assessment Policy Standard (CAPS) to address issues relating to learners who are struggling to learn in an unfamiliar language. The aim of CAPS is to provide learners with learning opportunities in their own language and to, through training, enable educators to assist learners in reaching the CAPS target indicators. These curriculum changes put even more pressure on educators, despite being aimed at assisting educators in managing inclusive education-related challenges.

Managing challenges relating to inclusive education should be undertaken by the entire school, and schools should adopt approaches of transformation and encourage all educational stakeholders to take collective and communal action, regarding issues of diversity. Curriculum reform may be seen as the first manner through which a multicultural environment can be managed.

2.6 MANAGING THE INCLUSION OF DIVERSE LEARNERS AND CHALLENGES IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Altering the structures and goals of the current curriculum may be seen as the best approach in the management of multicultural education and related challenges. Literature in the form of books and lessons, as well as group discussions concerning several ethnical and cultural groups exposes learners to information. Creating awareness on the content of the curriculum and skills change of educators is necessary when making changes to the curriculum. These changes include considering educator effectiveness, professional growth, as well as monitoring for weaknesses and strengths inside the school curriculum.

A good curriculum has the fundamental values of inclusion, completeness and accuracy. Multicultural education and its effectiveness within the curriculum require culturally diverse curriculum materials (Gorski 2010). Guang-Lea (2002) suggests that a cultural knowledge and perspective-based curriculum would encourage admissions of societal discrimination and oppression.

2.7 TEACHING INCLUSIVELY TO DIVERSE LEARNERS

The inclusion process in education addresses and responds to the diversity of learners by increasing their cultural and learning participation within and without education (UNESCO 2008). The inclusion policy tried to address challenges relating to learners with disabilities by reducing exclusionary pressures in schools and other learning centres through the promotion of participatory access in curriculums and belonging in

school communities (Department of Education 2001). The inclusion policy also entails achieving equity by ascertaining and addressing impediments to access, participate and belong in school environments (Department of Education 2001).

Inclusion policy development dates back to October 1996, when the Department of Education commissioned the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services to examine and make recommendations on every aspect of educating special needs learners and offering support services and training (Department of Education 1997). The extensive report's findings were presented to the Minister of Education and included the national findings as well as a 'vision' to guide strategies and principles for developing a system of inclusive education and training.

White Paper 6 intended to reconstruct schooling so as to meet the diverse learner population's learning needs and realise social and transformational justice. As the curriculum is one of most important obstacles to learning, rules and procedures had to be developed to facilitate and support curriculum diversity in the classroom. Some of the challenges facing South African education post-apartheid are the realisation of the values of non-discrimination, equality and the access to education for all learners, as contained in the Constitution (Walton *et al.* 2009).

Most learners experienced great challenges in gaining access to basic education just before the South Africa democracy dawned. There were very few inclusive schools and learners from historically disadvantaged backgrounds could not be accommodated in special schools and had no educational support. Educational support became very significant in eradicating the ongoing injustices experienced by special schools sector. Support for learners with educational needs, needs to be uniformly accelerated in order to have a more South African demographic representation. The South African Department of Basic Education supports formation of a system of inclusive education and training and sees it as a cornerstone to ensure a unified education system and caring 21st Century society (Department of Education 2001).

Several sources suggest that challenges relating to inclusive education require more of an educator's attention than in a general system of school. Educators are usually willing to make changes during lessons, but they are less likely to spend time planning or making adaptations to the curriculum based on the performance of learners. Another problem with general education educators is that most inclusive education educators are not aware of learners' special needs in education and seldom use psychological reports in their planning.

It is therefore imperative that inclusive education educators be given the necessary assistance by the school based support team (SBST) to plan for inclusive classes and other support structures (Schumm and Vaughn, 1992). The SBST comprises of educators, educational psychologists and heads of grade in order to assess learners' behavior and enhance their learning and development. Inconsistency may emerge between the academic and social development of special needs and other learners. Educators managing inclusive education classes need to give special attention to special needs learners, but should not allow them to become overly dependent on their educators (Trump and Hange 1996).

2.8 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION:

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM AND THEORY OF VYGOTSKY (1896–1934)

The theoretical underpinnings of multicultural education are based on the cultural characteristics of diverse social problems of affected groups and characteristics of schools (Enoch 2009). Social constructivism is seen as the development of social behaviour aimed at promoting teaching and learning concepts applied within a multicultural environment, based on social interaction in a cultural environment. Social constructivism argues that social interaction, cultural tools and activities affect the learning development of an individual. In order to improve multicultural education, social constructivism draws on issues of social learning and theory, zone of proximal development and cognitive learning (Enoch 2009).

The social constructivism concept developed from the work of constructivists, such as Vygotsky and others, who took a social and cultural perspective of knowledge creation, leading to a theoretical synthesis centred on the concept of mutual knowledge shared by others (Lowenthal and Muth 2008). Vygotsky's theory is linked to the concept that the intellectual abilities of the learner is specific to their culture, which places much emphasis on building social bridges to learn common values within cultures and over cultural boundaries (Beaumie 2008).

The Vygotsky Sociocultural Theory assumes that learning occurs through the construction of meaning within social interactions and emphasises the developmental role of discussions between children and more conversant community members. There is a link between multicultural education and the social constructivism concept. Social constructivism deals with knowledge construction through cultural interactions, while multicultural education emphasises learning about other cultures and allowing one to understand other cultures (Beaumie 2008).

On the other hand, Banks (2008) describes multicultural education as an "idea serving all ethnic, racial and economic classes by providing equal educational opportunities". Banks' definition of multicultural education shows that having a school curriculum with a multicultural approach would permit educators to deal with educational challenges through discussions, and participating in the construction of new meaning in an integrated school environment. The challenge in effectively managing the challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools lies with the educators whose responsibility it is to assure and facilitate the development of all learners.

2.9 CONCLUSION

Educational leaders, school staff members and the Department of Basic Education have an important role to play in supporting educators of inclusive education. The aims should be to interpret and implement an inclusive education policy that promotes quality teaching and learning. School staff and other stakeholders need to alter their attitude towards learners with diverse needs and propose actions to meet their needs.

Policies for promoting inclusive education and for meeting individual learners' needs within all educational sectors should be integrated. Such policies should encourage co-operation to ensure that plans facilitate and support an interdisciplinary approach in all phases of lifelong learning. Educational needs should be given the same degree of focus in the pre-primary as in the primary sector to facilitate the sharing of good practice and support.

The SBSTs of different schools should develop new educational approaches, methods and tools to identify suitable indicators that can be used to monitor development in the teaching of inclusive education. Finally, there should be partnerships between schools, local policymakers and parents to ensure greater accountability for the services provided.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH APPROACH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the steps taken during the data collection and analysis process. A qualitative research design was used to gather information about educators managing inclusive teaching in multicultural classrooms in primary schools. In this chapter, a brief theoretical review of qualitative research is presented and the methodology that was chosen for this study is explained. The review is followed by a discussion on the sample and methods used to gather information from the participants who taught in different school settings. The various stages of data analysis are presented, followed by a discussion of processes that are important to ensure rigor, reliability and validity.

By using qualitative methods, it was possible to obtain an in-depth understanding of educators managing inclusive teaching. The researcher probed for clarity and depth during data collection with detail-orientated probes aimed at ensuring that the researcher understood the “who, where and what” of the answers given by the participants. Qualitative data collection methods are usually interactive and humanistic (Rossman and Rallis 2003), which allow the researcher to develop rapport with the participants during interviews.

Subsequent to the literature review in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 presents and describes the research design, sampling techniques and methodology used. The chapter also provides the research design description for the research study, gives a detailed explanation of the research approach and data collection methods used, and explores the appropriateness of a qualitative approach and interpretative paradigm. The sampling of the research sites (schools) and the reason for the selection of participants and justification for the methodology used is explained. This chapter also explains the process in which the data required to answer the research question was collected and analysed. It explains the procedures followed when collecting and analysing data.

Creswell (2005) maintains that documents are an essential sources of information in qualitative research as they provide valuable information to the assistance of the researcher to understand relevant phenomena, they represent a good source for text and are available for analysis without the transcription that is required in the case of observational or interview data.

Over and above analyzing the legislative documents such as the Constitution's Bill of Rights, South African Schools Act (SASA 1996) and the White Paper 6 (2001) on the rights of learners to learning and development, other documents such as the inclusion policy, government gazettes, circulars, memos and minutes of the SBST meetings and evaluation reports from the schools, were analysed and then triangulated with the data from interviews as a means of acquiring information on how teachers manage challenges of inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. The purpose was to gain insight into the legislative and policy environment regarding the educational rights of learners with barriers to learning and development and on how educators of public primary schools should manage inclusion of multicultural classes in schools.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND PHILOSOPHICAL ASSUMPTIONS

Johnson and Christensen (2009) define the research paradigm as “a perspective about research held by a community of scholars or researchers that is based on a set of shared assumptions, concepts, values and practices”. Myers (2013) asserts that “every research study is based on some philosophical assumptions about the nature of the world and how knowledge about the world can be obtained, and these assumptions must be made explicit”, even before the study unfolds and the researcher's point of departure is known to readers, supervisors and other scholars. These assumptions provide the foundation for everything that follows in any research process.

The philosophical assumptions that guide a study can be discussed in terms of the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions of the study (Creswell 2003). The stance taken on the philosophical assumptions guide the research by shaping the questions asked and how these are answered. Ontological assumptions are concerned with what is believed to constitute reality; the nature of social reality; and how what exists is described (Grix 2001). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000) pp 15-18, “ontology raises basic questions about the nature of reality and the nature of human being in the world.”

The qualitative researcher assumes that there are multiple and dynamic realities that are content-dependent and embrace an ontology that denies the existence of an external reality. In the study the data collected from the participants regarding their lived experiences of managing inclusive teaching in a multicultural classroom presents the multiple realities of the phenomenon being studied. The study use mainly the philosophical assumptions since the researcher shaped the questions asked and sought for clarity on those answers given.

The other philosophical assumption is epistemology which is concerned with the theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods and the possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality (Grix 2001). According to Whitehead and McNiff (2009) pp 11-17, “epistemology refers to a theory of knowledge which involves theories of knowledge and knowledge acquisition”. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) pp 15-18 believe that epistemology asks the question “how do I know the world and the relationship between the inquirer and the known?” Every epistemology, therefore, implies an ethical-moral stance towards the world and the self of the researcher. In research it has to be acknowledged that researchers’ epistemological stance is influenced by their ontological position. Therefore, how researchers understand the nature of reality influences what they regard as knowledge (Creswell and Clark 2007).

In terms of this study, the researcher believes that knowledge of managing inclusive teaching could be generated by interpreting the experiences of participants. The research was carried out in line with the principles of an interpretive paradigm that includes inductive reasoning (Devetak *et al.* 2010). Inductive qualitative research focuses on examining the subjective experiences of individuals, recognising the importance that they attach to occurrences and their responses to specific events.

3.3 THE QUALITATIVE APPROACH AS A RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative research method is used in this study to better grasp the subject matter at hand, which is the management of multicultural classes in primary schools in Gauteng. Historically, quantitative research has been considered to hold empirical reality as truth based on objectivity. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1998), qualitative methods were observed with cynical scrutiny as subjective, and unrepresentative, or at best treated as a source of circumstantial material which could only be secondary to quantitative methods. Qualitative research is multi-methodical in focus and is described by many researchers as naturalistic, interpretive, holistic and inductive (Guba and Lincoln 1998).

3.3.1 Data collection site

Data collection was done in primary schools within the Gauteng province. The schools are mostly historically advantaged ones and have learners from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. These schools use English as the main language of instruction and are accessible, even when using public transport, as they are all located in geographical areas previously assigned to the white population group. The history of South Africa means that most of the historically model C and advantaged schools were well-equipped, since the previous South African government allocated resources to schools based on discriminatory factors. The selected primary schools used to cater mostly for white learners and have abundant resource allocation, such as libraries and computer centres; school halls; and sporting facilities.

The physical environment, including the grounds of the schools, is fairly neat and well-tended. The schools have playing fields and sport facilities and the surrounding houses could be described as conforming to middleclass standards and are in good condition. The majority of learners at these schools are mainly from the surrounding areas, although some do come from outside of the immediate community. These schools generally have learners from different racial groupings, varied backgrounds, different religions and whose mother tongue is not necessarily the language of instruction of the school. This presents the schools with both challenges and opportunities to deal with multicultural learners.

The description of the settings of the schools is worth noting in terms of the context in which teaching takes place in the Gauteng province, South Africa. This qualitative research study tried to intensify and understand the experiences of educators in managing challenges relating to inclusive education in public primary schools. The participating schools were purposefully selected, as they are conveniently located in Gauteng and administered by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE). The identified schools are former model C primary schools where the researcher also taught at one of them and took his children to two of them.

The schools' communities are just as diverse as the schools themselves. The schools provide learning and teaching in English and Afrikaans, and are very old, with very strong cultures and traditions. This made them an even more interesting study subject. The selected schools are well maintained, and are known and respected for their vision and mission within the communities. The purpose of the research study was to understand and interpret educators' perspectives on the challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. Both the University of Pretoria and the GDE granted permission for the researcher to carry out the research in these schools.

3.3.2 Selection of participants

Purposive and convenience sampling was used to select participants who are involved in managing inclusive teaching. The selected participants comprised ten post level one

educators from five primary schools. These participants were chosen because they have both the experience in and responsibility for managing inclusive teaching in the selected schools. The ten educators are teaching and managing foundation phase and intermediate phase learners, and have qualifications and lived experience in managing inclusive teaching at their schools. At times they are requested to mentor newly-appointed educators and their experiences could contribute valuable information about the challenges involved in managing different cultures in schools. The educators participating in this study all live in close proximity to their schools, and do not spend a lot of time travelling to and from work.

The participants are educators between the ages of twenty five and fifty, and are members of multiracial teaching staff who meet regularly as colleagues at cluster meetings to share school and classroom experiences. They also happen to be a group of educators who often meet to discuss good practice in relation to the new curriculum. They had indicated an interest in the area of multicultural classes and were therefore approached for interviews given their insights. These educators were seen as key informants in the research study, due to their active engagement with the issues under discussion.

The sample population was intentionally small in order to acquire an in-depth knowledge and explanation related to managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. Qualitative research usually involves a smaller sampling for in-depth study and thorough analysis that continues until no new themes emerge from the data. Documents on inclusive education, including White Paper 6, were analysed to explore a deeper understanding of the way in which educators are supported in dealing with challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

Research conclusions and the degree to which a study is useful are based on sampling (Trochim 2001). Participants were purposely sampled for the study and based on this purposive sampling, only the specific educators from the selected schools were allowed to answer the research study questions and provide relevant information (Cohen *et al.* 2004). The data collection methods were as per the selected sample.

Research participants were all given consent forms requesting them to participate in the research study with the aim of obtaining a deeper understanding of their experiences in managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. The selected participating educators returned the requested consent forms.

3.3.3 Semi-structured interviews and transcribing

The use of powerful means, such as interviews, helps people to make sense of their understanding of the particular topic, and to verbally express their perceptions (Arksey and Knight 1999). The advantages of interviews are that interviewees enjoy talking about their work and are not simply filling in questionnaires, hence often divulging more valuable information. Participants in this study were given the opportunity to reflect on events, without committing themselves in writing. According to Cohen and Manion (1994), interviews can serve a number of purposes, including the fact that they can be used as a means of gathering personal information, such as knowledge, values, preferences and attitudes. Furthermore, interviews can be used to identify variables and their relationships. The interviewer becomes a neutral facilitator who provokes the interviewee's forthcoming information. The interviewee, with the help of questions and prompts in an atmosphere of trust and accountability, gives his/her responses.

The investigator in this research study interviewed post level 1 educators who are phase and grade coordinators and managing inclusive education in their primary schools. The interviews were conducted after school to avoid interfering with the learners' contact time. The interviews were scheduled for approximately 30 minutes per person. No incentives were offered to the interviewees taking part in this research study, apart from snacks that were provided during the interview. Data were gathered directly from individuals by using one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. This approach allowed for probing questions which resulted in clarity and depth (Creswell 2009).

Follow-up interviews were used to build on information received (Rossman and Rallis 2003). In this study the researcher employed standardised interview questions where he was in control of the interview process, to ensure that participants did not deviate from the topic and that no leading questions were asked (Henning *et al.* 2004). The participants' perspectives on the phenomenon of interest, unfolded. The interviews were recorded on audiotape. All participants are kept anonymous and the information that was recorded is confidential. The participants were assured of their ability to withdraw from the interview process at any given time during. The recorded information was transcribed to make it meaningful.

Marshall and Rossman (2006) are convinced that interviewing has limitations. This is true, as in some cases the participants were either uncomfortable or reluctant to share all information the investigator hoped to attain. The researcher would assure the participants that they needed not be uncomfortable since their participation is anonymous. At times they were unaware of recurring patterns of behaviour in their lives as educators practising inclusive education. In such cases, more participants were sampled according to their role of managing inclusive education. Sometimes the question asked by the interviewer evoked long narratives from participants because of a lack of fluency or skill in expressing themselves. In order to settle the interviewees during this study, the researcher used both English and Setswana, which is spoken by most of the educators. The interviewer exercised listening skills and personal interaction in framing questions clearly and gently – even when probing for elaboration.

All interviews were recorded on audiotape to ensure that everything that the participants said is captured. Wengraf (2001) maintains that when data are transcribed, it is no longer raw data but rather 'processed data'. Therefore, in this study, the taped interviews were transcribed as accurately as possible (verbatim) to minimise bias and the manipulation of the data. The researcher wrote and typed out everything said by participants verbatim and recorded what was said according to the way in which he understood the participant. Recording interviews; optically perusing the data; typing up field notes; and sorting and arranging the data were but some of the steps that were followed to organise and prepare the data for analysis. The

researcher went through all the collected data to get an overall informational sense, thereby replicating its general meaning to detect participants' emerging ideas and tones from the data.

3.3.4 Data analysis

A content analysis was done to transform raw data into new knowledge. The researcher preferred to use an inductive approach to data analysis in order to assist participants detect the numerous realities. The assumption that there is not one reality, but many, is the focus of interpretivism. Interviews were therefore held to reach the best conceivable thought of how educators get support in dealing with challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. According to Creswell (2009), the data analysis process includes finding logic in text and image data by preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper into understanding the data and identifying and establishing related themes.

In the case of this research study, the data were analysed to develop an understanding of educators managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. Scholars in the same field of study maintain that the principles of constructive theory were applied to identify themes from emerging data, and how it would assist educators in managing inclusive teaching. When doing data analysis, the researcher reflected continuously on the data at hand by asking analytic questions and writing memos throughout the coding process.

The process of transforming raw data into a standardised format for data analysis is referred to as coding. Those who wrote about the same subject would describe coding as a process of careful, line-by-line reading through the recorded data and separating data into significant logical units. Coding can further be defined as a process of marking data segments with symbols, descriptive words, exceptional names and detecting recurring words, concepts or themes (Ryan and Bernard 2003). Researchers in the same field further argue that coding schedules are structured schemes that use predetermined categories for recording observable events. These events range from

quite simple approaches, such as a system based on time, to quite complex event systems. The researcher developed coding schedules by using the Flanders System of Interval Coding, where a code is selected for every three seconds of interaction. A coding sheet was used, which showed that three minutes of interaction had been logged with a code number noted for every three seconds (Ryan and Bernard 2003). Literature points out that the use of open-coding assisted in breaking down, scrutinising, matching, hypothesising and classifying data. A method of generating ideas by close and detail inspection of the coded data is offered by the open-coding.

After coding the data, the codes were grouped into categories. In generating categories of information, for example, the researcher followed certain steps, including category selection and positioning the categories within a theoretical model, and then creating a story from the categories that were consistent. The final phase involved integrating the analyses even further around the core category, which was selected to achieve the right integration of categories. In tracing connections, the categories were written on notecards and spread out on a table (Ryan and Bernard 2003). The researcher kept this core category in mind across the data analysis process and asked questions relating to what seemed more important. The researcher was also mindful of possible contradictions, paradoxes, conflicting themes and evidence that seemed to be a challenge. The emerging categories were thematically grouped.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics would according to several scholars suggest that essential ethical considerations include protection of participants' identities, confidentiality of the results and the findings of the study. Ethical procedures, as stated in the ethics agreement, were observed by the researcher and the consent letters were given to participants before their interviews (Flewitt, R., 2005). Participants were made aware that they could withdraw from the interview process if they were in any way not happy with the research study. In addition, participants' consent was obtained to record the interviews, including a rejection and exclusion clause that allowed participants to exclude themselves at any time.

All research study participants signed the consent form agreeing to participate. The researcher's responsibility to the participants in the research study included avoidance of harm, ensuring confidentiality, reciprocity and providing feedback on the research outcomes. Adherence to confidentiality was ensured by making sure that participants' names as well as the sites were only known to his supervisor. The educators were willing participants to whom the ethical considerations of the research were explained. The participants were told that they were under no obligation to participate.

Specific permission is needed in order for the research and data collection to be done from individuals and research sites. Such permission was attained from the school principals, school governing bodies (SGB) and the participants who provided data. The Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria, as well as the Gauteng Education Department (GDE) gave permission for the researcher to carry out the research study. In addition, all information obtained was regarded as confidential. All participants' names have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

The researcher is ethically accountable for defending the welfare and rights of the research study participants. Research involves selection of informants, effective research strategies and adhering to research ethics. The participants need the researcher's assurance of their confidentiality and anonymity and describe the intended use of the data, placing the researcher in the position of having a dual responsibility to protect the individual's privacy (McMillan and Schumacher 2010).

Research that is ethically acceptable should have principled values, such as respect for research participants, for the research study to achieve significant outcomes. All necessary measures were taken to avoid any form of harm to the participants in the course of the interviews and in the way questions were directed. Harm can embrace a wide range of issues ranging from physical to mental and emotional harm (Gray 2009). Research is considered harmful, for example, if it produces anxiety or stress to participants and any negative emotional reactions, causes a participant to be uncomfortable, mocked, rubbished or generally exposed to mental distress.

Ethics is the principled values and rules that help the researcher to uphold the things they value as significant. In addition, ethics are generally concerned with beliefs about what is right or wrong from a moral perspective. Research needs to be conducted in an ethical manner, informing participants concerned by allowing them to know the purpose of the research study, divulge information and replying to enquiries about the planned topic. In line with the principle of full disclosure, the researcher clearly defined the purpose and process of the research study.

It is necessary to understand the ethical and legal responsibilities of conducting research, especially because educational research deals with human beings. Collected information was therefore treated with the strictest of confidence as a matter of adhering to the principle of privacy. Those participants who chose not to partake in the study were excused without any prejudice.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design provides procedures and guidelines to follow in addressing the research problem. The research design serves as a plan that described the research sites, sampling, and data collection procedures aimed at improving reliability and credibility of the research findings. The study used interviews to gain a deeper understanding of educators managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

Credibility is the process of establishing whether the results of a research are true from the perspective of the participants (Trochim 2001). One of the strategies used to enhance credibility was member-checking. It was done by giving the participants transcripts and drafts of findings to obtain their agreement or disagreement of how the researcher had portrayed them. In this study, the participants were given the interview transcripts to verify accuracy and interpretation (Patton 2002).

3.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Naidoo (2007), research methodology refers to the research process and the tools and processes employed in the research study. Since the research study was aimed at an in-depth analysis and understanding of the thoughts, feelings and experiences of educators regarding their understanding of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools, the researcher primarily took a qualitative approach.

The study explores one phenomenon – the perceptions of educators managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in Gauteng. It enabled the researcher to view the research topic from a particular angle and to understand the phenomenon as no single truth. Truth is therefore viewed from interpretivist and constructivism epistemological theories (Lincoln 1998). People will always interpret reality as it comes in time and context, and their truth changes.

Interpretivists believe that reality consists of people's subjective knowledges of the outside world. Thus they may adopt an inter-subjective ontological belief and epistemology that reality is communally created. According to most of the interpretivists, they believe that there is no right way or specific process to information and knowledge; there are no right or wrong philosophies. Instead, these philosophies should be adjudicated based on how interesting they are to the researcher, as well as in further research study (Hudson and Ozanne 1988).

Interpretivists derive their theories through a comprehensive investigation of interesting phenomena, and they assume that knowledge and meaning are acts of understanding. Therefore there is no objective knowledge which is autonomous of human thinking and reasoning (Hudson and Ozanne 1988). Scholars would argue that the premise of interpretive researchers is that access to socially given and constructed reality is only through social constructs such as language, consciousness and shared meaning. The interpretive paradigm is supported by observation, thought and explanation, thus to observe is information collection about events, while interpretation is a way of making sense of the collected information by drawing extrapolations

between the information and some abstract design. Interpretivists endeavour to comprehend phenomena through the meanings that people give to them (Hudson and Ozanne 1988).

The interpretivist paradigm stresses the need to put analysis in context, and is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the subjective experiences of individuals. They use meaning-oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and the research subject. Interpretive researchers pay attention to the full complexity of the human psyche, and making sense of things as the situation emerges. The interpretive approach therefore aims to explain the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social action.

Interpretivists are not interested in the generation of a new theory, but rather in judging or evaluating and refining interpretive theories. According to Walsham (1995) there are three different uses of theory in interpretive case studies:

- Theory as an iterative process of data collection and analysis
- Theory as an outcome of a case study
- Theory guiding the design and collection of data.

The use of theory as an iterative process between data collection and analysis was applied in this research study (Walsham 1995).

Ponterotto (2005) maintains that interpretivism is not a single paradigm, but a large family of different paradigms. The philosophical base of interpretive research is phenomenology and hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is a major branch of interpretive philosophy and can be treated as both a fundamental philosophy and a specific mode of analysis. As a philosophical approach to human understanding, hermeneutics provides the philosophical grounding for interpretivism. As a mode of analysis, hermeneutics suggests a way of understanding the meaning, or trying to make sense of textual data which may be unclear in one way or another.

Hermeneutics' most fundamental principle is that all human thoughts are attained by considering the co-dependent meaning of parts and the whole that they form. Modern hermeneutics encompasses issues involving the written text and everything in the interpretative process, including verbal and nonverbal methods of communication and prior aspects that affect communication, such as suppositions, and pre-understandings (Ponterotto 2005).

According to some scholars, hermeneutics is a circular relationship that attempts to understand human beings in a social context. This principle is introductory to all interpretive work that is hermeneutic in nature. Although the study is not predominantly phenomenological, some of its features are underpinned by the principles of phenomenology, which highlights discovery and essential expression of certain phenomenal characteristics (Myers 1997).

Phenomenology is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view. It is therefore the study of how things seem and happen in our experience, the ways we experience things. In its most basic form, phenomenology attempts to create conditions for the objective study of topics usually regarded as subjective – consciousness and the content of mindful experiences, such as conclusions, observations and emotions (Wikipedia 2009).

The research methodology used in this study was that of interviews with the identified sample of educators from multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province. The research study used semi-structured interviews and interview schedule as a form of data collection. The interview schedule allowed each participant their turn and afforded them a unique opportunity to participate in the study. The semi-structured questions and questionnaire provided a high degree of objectivity and uniformity as well as clarification of responses.

The following subsections explain the methodology chosen for the study and orientate the reader in terms of the basic premise, epistemological position, research approach, data collection strategies and instruments.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

A flexible, open-ended and semi-structured questionnaire was used to compile demographic profiles of the participants and their schools (Cohen *et al.* 2002). Interviews were used for data collection across many social sciences disciplines for research study purposes. Interview questions were aimed at obtaining useful information and needed to be clear and unambiguous. They also needed to be uniformly workable and well understood by participants. The researcher recorded, transcribed and coded the interviews.

The interview schedule contained sections of personal and academic details, classroom management styles, and interaction between educators and learners within the classroom. Participants were asked open-ended questions which they were to answer in terms of their understanding of the process involved in the management of inclusive education in multicultural public primary school. The other section of the interview schedule comprised a self-defined question regarding participants' understanding of what multicultural education is.

Interviews were used as part of the research study data collection process to allow social interaction between participants and the researcher when capturing the inherent complexities of participants' opinions. The use of interview questions, provided opportunity for explanation and for comments from the interviewees. Interviews were important to the research study, as they allowed communicative interaction and an analysis can be done within an interpretive framework (Mason, as cited by Nesamvuni 2009).

Through interviews, participants are allowed to offer their own perceptions, understandings and thoughts on the research topic. According to Soga (2004) participants in research are allowed to talk freely on the topic and therefore contribute

strongly to defining the content of the interview. The researcher is able to obtain more information about the challenges educators face in effectively managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools with the use of open-ended questions during the interview process. Data were collected by means of an interview schedule consisting of a series of questions, constructed by combining the questions from the questionnaire.

The research participants were guaranteed that their anonymity and confidentiality would be upheld throughout the process. Interviews were conducted after school hours, in keeping with the rulers set out by the GDE when requesting permission to conduct research in GDE schools, which stipulate that interviews be conducted after school in order not to interfere with any teaching time. The time allocation for the interviews varied between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on participants' responses and the researcher's discretion. The research study interviews were conducted as a way to investigate how educators experience the challenges effectively managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools to improve the schools' social culture of tolerance.

3.8 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews in the form of words were used as the principal data collection method within the schools in the Gauteng province, and were aimed at understanding the research topic. This data collection method was used to address the main research question in this research study. The study drew on a more structured approach, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), where questions are chosen, a decision is taken as to who should be interviewed, and the interview schedules are prepared prior to doing the field work.

An in-depth one-on-one interview was conducted with ten educators and all the conducted interviews were recorded on audiotape. The semi-structured interviews lasted for 30 to 60 minutes each. The interview method was consistent with qualitative research and with the paradigms adopted for this study. Qualitative research mainly

relates to the need to understand the way people think about their world and how definitions are formed (Bogdan and Biklen 2007). Given the qualitative research approach background, it is clear that the researcher needed to get close to the subjects of the research study in order to hear them talk about their everyday life experiences.

The planned interviews provided participants with the opportunity to engage in verbal and conversational responses. The interviews enabled the researcher to clarify any confusing questions and gather different views from which to understand and develop a category. The use of this interview data collection instrument yielded large amounts of textual data that were systematically prepared and analysed.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The data analysis in this study was done inductively through conservative qualitative methods, such as study of the text; the transcription of field notes made during interviews; and the coding of answers to open-ended questions in the interview schedule. The researcher read and re-read all interview responses to seek patterns, categories and relationships in an effort to identify themes within the body of data. The open-ended questions in the interview schedule were coded and categorised into themes (Yin 2009). A code book assisted in theme identification, and as the themes developed, the researcher began the process of evaluating the credibility and understanding of the themes across the findings of the three data collection methods (Kodish and Gittelsohn 2011). After a period of intense interrogation and analysis of the themed data, the process of interpretation of the findings started.

A constant comparison was made with the codes emerging from the data, while the color-coded data in the form of phrases and statements were collated verbatim as evidence of the phenomenon (Lincoln 1985). The data are presented qualitatively as narratives developed around themes that emerged from the data that have been collected through interviews. There is no one right way to analyse qualitative data, and there are numerous available approaches. However, most qualitative analyses fall under the overall title of 'thematic analysis' and it is this thematic analysis procedure which characterises most aspects of the present study (Braun and Clarke 2006).

3.10 CREDIBILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness in a qualitative inquiry aims to support the argument that the research findings are worth paying attention to (Trochim, 2001). Trustworthiness involves establishing constructs that correspond with the criteria employed by the positivist researcher and include transferability, credibility, reliability and conformability. Credibility, as a term used in qualitative research, deals with the integrity of the research process (Lincoln and Guba 1985). The trustworthiness of a qualitative research project can be judged by adhering to standards for acceptable and competent practice and by complying with the standards for ethical practice. Information should be gathered over time and shared with participants (Rossman and Rallis 2003).

An overall standard of trustworthiness is when research is conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the complex interpersonal situations and politics that encompass being in the field (Rossman and Rallis 2003). Patton (2002) defines trustworthiness as the extent to which the findings of the researcher can be trusted. Therefore, in this research study, trustworthiness was adhered to by keeping an audit trail.

Credibility is the process of establishing whether the results of a research study are true from the perspective of its participants (Trochim 2001). One of the strategies used to enhance credibility during this research process was member-checking. It was done by giving participants transcripts and drafts of findings to obtain their agreement or disagreement of how the researcher had portrayed them (Patton 2002). In this study, the participants were given the interview transcripts to verify accuracy and interpretation (Patton 2002). In order to determine dependability, the researcher relied on an audit trail which documented data, approaches, and decisions made during the research process, and also including verbatim accounts of participants' perspectives (Trochim 2001).

A detailed record was kept of the chosen participants; follow-up interviews; how the data were analysed and verified; the findings; and the conclusions. The process of member-checking was also done at various stages of the research study. Participants

confirmed the accuracy and interpretation of the interview scripts to reduce bias (Merriam 2009). The researcher also did self-reflection and kept notes on all the results of his thoughts during data collection and analysis.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter gives a comprehensive overview of the qualitative approach that framed this study. It also outlines the research design and explains the method used to gather data on how educators manage inclusive teaching in a multicultural classroom. Qualitative data collection and data analysis methods were used. Chapter 3 also describes the interpretivist/constructivist epistemology, which underpins certain assumption in this research study. In the next chapter, the research findings, as garnered from the information provided during all the participants' interviews, are presented.

Legislative documents such as the Constitution's Bill of Rights, South African Schools Act (SASA 1996) and the White Paper 6 (2001) as well other policy guideline documents such as the inclusion policy, government gazettes, circulars, memos and minutes of the SBST meetings and evaluation reports from the schools, were analysed and then triangulated with the data from interviews.

The study revealed the challenges encountered by educators managing inclusive teaching in a multicultural classroom. Schools do not have systems in place for implementing inclusive teaching and aspects that address the support of educators are not dealt with. Some teaching staff do not have the understanding and skills to manage inclusive teaching. Schools rely mostly on the guidelines provided by the Department of Basic Education and their own discretion in managing inclusive teaching. Data revealed a lack of training to manage inclusive teaching, and most educators just apply common sense when it comes to managing inclusive teaching.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 discussed the methodologies, research design and the choices regarding strategies and research instruments aimed at answering the theme of the research study. The main purpose of the research study is to probe the understanding of the role of educators managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

In Chapter 4, the researcher formulates the data collected through semi-structured interviews with ten educators from five primary schools in the Gauteng province. The selected schools have an enrolment ranging from 750–1 230 learners. Data collected from the sampled schools were used to bring about an understanding of how educators manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. Data from the interviews were analysed and linked to the relevant literature on the topic.

The researcher then presents the collection of data during the semi-structured interviews with the educators managing inclusive teaching in primary schools. The research study findings are deliberated within its aims and consider the main research question “What are the challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province?”

4.2 SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS THROUGH SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

4.2.1 Overview

This section aims to give an exposition of the data on the definition and understanding of multicultural education by educators and how this is effectively managed, collected during the interview process. The section also looks at the contribution by the educators to the transformation of schools by affording their culturally diverse learners equal educational opportunities.

An interview is a social interaction that allows the researcher to assess the characteristic difficulties of individual sentiments through questions, and giving interviewees the opportunity to explain unforeseen answers and attitudes observed during the interview process (Mastropieri *et al.* 2007). The participants' collected data are situational, circumstantial as well as interactional. According to Cohen *et al.* (2009), interviews can promote extensive thoughtfulness of the subject within the research study.

Participants should be allowed to offer their own insights, justifications, understandings and thoughts on the research study subject. In total, 14 educators responded that they would take part in the research study interviews, however not all of them were able to keep to their commitment due to unexpected personal situations. The compiled interview schedule consisted of a sequence of queries, which were articulated as open-ended questions.

Interview participants were guaranteed that their confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained throughout the research study process. The interviews happened after the school contact hours to allow participants enough time for further questions where need arose. The time allocation was 30 to 60 minutes per interview, but at times the responses of the participants dictated otherwise. During the interviews, notes were taken and later transcribed to gain a better understanding. The main focus of the conducted interviews, as previously mentioned in Chapter 3, was to investigate how school educators experience challenges in managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in order to improve the schools' functionality.

4.2.2 Discussion of the responses to the interview questions

What is your understanding of the term multicultural?

The question is aimed at gaining insight into what educators understand by the term 'Multicultural' from their own perspective.

Many of the research participants could identify with the multicultural classroom concept, which really goes further than racial and ethnic matters. These participants understood the concept of multicultural classroom just as many other authors do. The understanding is that multicultural and inclusive education is about transforming the classroom and creating equal educational opportunities for all learners. Further, multicultural education aims to get learners ready to progressively contribute to the society. Some participants were not able to identify with this statement, and indicated that they were not ready to accept the changes which are taking place within the classroom system and were not convinced that the concept of a multicultural classroom really goes beyond racial and ethnic issues.

Some of the definitions and explanations of the term '*multicultural classroom*' as given by the interviewed educators were as follows:

"Cultural diversity should confirm the ethnic groups' historical and cultural backgrounds."

"Diversity should confirm human dignity."

"A multicultural classroom is composed of learners from different ethnic or racial groups, irrespective of language, culture, race, colour or religion."

"Multilingual people, uniquely carrying out things in their own way."

"Acceptance of every child in the spirit of Ubuntu and showing respect."

"Diverse cultural groups getting together as many."

"Many diverse people of many different cultural backgrounds."

"Multicultural backgrounds allowing people equal opportunities in all aspects of life."

In their responses, some of the participants used the term 'multicultural education' to mean the following:

“A multicultural environment wherein schools allow learners to impart their experience and improve character and ability to face the real challenges.”

“School curriculums should be developed based on the multicultural education principles.”

“Knowledge of more diverse cultures should be encouraged among educators and learners. Multicultural education should further raise discussions about diverse learners’ viewpoints.”

“This should be seen as the ability to teach diverse learners, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds and being able to understand and tolerate those various cultures.”

Participants’ responses to the above definitions exposed multicultural education to have diverse meanings to different people, depending on their individual situation. Each and every educator has their own culture. They might have certain cultural characteristics in common with others in the school, but some are specific to the cultural community in which they live (Gollnick *et al.* 1990). The significance of the participants’ diverse responses to the purpose of the research study is the fact that the various customs and societal backgrounds learnt in educators’ respective communities are brought with them into the school setting.

The perspectives of educators can affect their learners’ instruction and education within the school and can further increase the challenges faced by educators in managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. The use of semi-structured interviews within the research study allowed for follow-up questions by the researcher, thereby engaging participants to further explain themselves. The interviews also uncovered possible approaches that can be of value in developing multicultural and inclusive educational schools. The results from the research study

interviews can also support stakeholders, such as educators and the school management team, in developing strategies to satisfy the diverse needs of all learners.

How do you interpret/understand the term/concept inclusion?

The aim of this question was to ascertain what educators understand under the term 'inclusion'. Most interviewed participants said that inclusive education aims at promoting education for all children irrespective of their cultural backgrounds so that they can be educated in the same classroom with other diverse learners. Some people due to misunderstanding of inclusive education believe that learners from different cultures need to be placed in separate schools and according to race, colour, and various cultural backgrounds.

What were your expectations in managing a multicultural class?

The participants also indicated that the government was undertaking a positive step in ensuring inclusive education and that every parent needs their child to be accepted in the education system as per the constitution, that no one should be discriminated against based on race, gender or disability. "I expected respect and collaboration from my learners." "Learners need to tolerate one another and know others cultures."

What are your experiences in managing an inclusive multicultural class?

Over the years, I had varying experiences with regard to inclusive education and multicultural environment. It had been challenging and with little support. Inclusive education is about including all learners, irrespective of their greater or lesser difficulties, in gaining access to education system. Inclusive education means response to the diverse learners' needs and guaranteeing excellent education system through suitable educational programmes.

What are the challenges of managing an inclusive multicultural class?

It is very important that educators acquire much needed skills in managing inclusive classes by attending workshops where clarity can be obtained on many issues relating

to diverse cultures. Such training should be sufficient to provide educators with the necessary skills of managing inclusive classes.

How do you embrace the challenges to effectively managing a multicultural class at your primary school?

Most of the time learners do remain true to their diverse identity and as the educator, I allow them to bring diversity into a classroom setting. Teachers who have a burning desire and a passion to teach have the ability to lead and draw out the good in a student. To teach one is to reach one.

To what extent were you prepared to manage multicultural class?

In order to include all learners one needs to correct past discriminatory practices by addressing equity. Such change will enable everyone a sense of belonging to the classroom system and to serve as a channel in overcoming discrimination on the basis of culture. Educators would need to teach learners coping skills so that they can be able to respect diverse cultures.

How do you manage inclusion in a multicultural class at your primary school?

People need not be stereotype but be able to co-exist and get along with others in peace and harmony in order to create a better civilized nation. There is also a need to create a more conducive environment that allows for equal rights and good morals.

How would you advise educators to manage multicultural classes in primary schools?

People need to understand of the inclusive and multicultural concepts for them to teach and learn better. Educators need to comprehend children's learning and potential development. Mistakes of the past such discriminating against others need not be repeated. People need to learn to tolerate differences and be skilled to work with people from different backgrounds.

Which skills and strategies would you recommend for effective management of an inclusive multicultural class?

Engage in positive interactions with learners and introduce “meet-and-greet” sessions that enable learners and educators to gain information about the cultural backgrounds of others, and the diversity of experience in the classroom. For example, consider a “name activity” that encourages learners to talk about the origins of their name, how they came to be given it, or what it means. It is also important to celebrate similarities, as well as discovering differences between learners. Promote computer and information technologies as an easily accessible method of student lecturer interaction, particularly electronic bulletin boards, WhatsApp groups, and so on.

How do you go about ensuring that you create an inclusive and multicultural class environment?

The school needs to work towards building one culture and discourage any form of discrimination. Treat all languages equal, thereby providing all learners with an equal learning and developing opportunities.

How do you regard support from the school management and administration in managing your inclusive and multicultural class?

The support I get from the SMT isn’t adequate as I believe that the SMT is also not well equipped can assist me and other educators in the school. Therefore, I would say that the support is not there and managing such an inclusive and multicultural classroom would really need resources which unfortunately aren’t there at my school. The school management and administration doesn’t have budget for this very important role that the school has to play.

Are you given enough space to transform your classroom in order to give learners from culturally diverse backgrounds equal learning opportunities?

As an educator I am given the space to arrange the classroom the way I want it and put pictures on the walls. Some of these pictures will be reflective of different cultures. During the heritage month children are allowed to wear as per their cultural way and

bring to school some of the cultural food to share with others. An understanding of multiple learning styles allows one to focus on individual learners' own learning styles; sub-groups within a learning classroom and learning community.

Please explain your view on the importance of school principals and educators learning about different cultures?

Tolerance and value for other cultures are important aspects of ensuring an inclusive education. Further, this kind of knowledge will enable one to be globally and culturally aware. Both the technology and travel increase chances of meeting other people and so being able to tolerate others, is not only an important thing of living in a global community, but it is also an indication of a well-rounded individual.

How can schools become agents of change and bring about multicultural societies?

Most participants agreed that schools can become agents of change, and motivated their views by saying that there is a need for the promotion of a quality classroom for all, and for being open-minded towards all activities from which the school community as a whole would benefit. Introspection, being more open to change and to learning from other cultures is key. Educators should become more conscious of diversity and should participate in educator development programmes, thereby influencing the redesigning of the curriculum.

What are your views regarding skills and strategies recommended for effective management of multicultural classroom?

Regular development-orientated workshops, concentrating on matters such as cultural conflict management, may bring about functional classroom management. The socioeconomic circumstances of learners must be taken into account in order to bring about harmony. The interpersonal skills are also important as they would enable people to learn to work better with one another. Educators benefit from skills and societal values gained from directing developmental training.

What, in your opinion, is hindering our schools from becoming multiculturally inclusive?

A big challenge seems to be the language barrier and educators are underqualified to manage learners in an inclusive and multicultural environment. Educators are not afforded enough exposure by the government to participate in the curriculum development process. Focus should be on local content and how we can go about and implement it.

Advise on the type of programmes aimed at professional development you would need to assist educators in managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools?

Educators need to learn about learner behaviour and discipline processes. There is a need for language and cultural programmes for learners so that they can learn to tolerate one another.

In your opinion, do schools provide all culturally diverse learners equal learning opportunities?

Opportunity to participate is given to all learners in all extra- and co-curricular activities. Mixed classes are provided for learners, irrespective of their racial and/or cultural background.

Several significant findings arose from the research study regarding the multicultural classroom and its management in public primary schools in the Gauteng province. In this section the researcher attempts to summarise these findings. Semi-structured interviews were used to interview educators from five selected primary schools on the research topic. The findings revealed managing of the school regarding multicultural classroom is a challenging and complex issue requiring a variety of approaches and skills.

The findings revealed that managing the challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools is a multifaceted and thought-provoking subject demanding a diversity of methodologies and expertise. Educators said that, in order to embrace all learners the school as well as society need to redress past discriminatory

practices. Such change will allow all people to feel like they are part of the society and school system. Educators will need to teach learners coping skills so that they can respect and tolerate cultural diversity. Both society and then schools should celebrate cultural diversity and teach people life skills to survive in a diverse and ever-changing environment.

4.3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), a literature review is significant to every research study as it aims to link past research studies and theories to the topical issues within the current research study. The literature review can also be connected to a larger research project in the field of study, filling in gaps. The review of literature offers a background for motivating the significance of the research study, including a standard for likening the research outcomes with other conclusions (Nesamvuni 2009).

Based on the reviewed literature, it is apparent that this research topic has been broadly researched and that a lot has been written on this subject. There are different views on different aspects of multicultural classrooms and how it is managed at schools. This theme is viewed from many angles and perspectives by many scholars. The literature review was valuable, as the researcher gained insight into what the different scholars have written about this topic. The research study findings exposed the inclusive education management in multicultural public primary schools as a multifaceted and challenging issue requiring diversified skills.

Social change through education is central to multicultural education, as there is no question that schools have become cultural diverse. Both multiculturalism and diversity can be the basis of competitive disadvantage and advantage. Diversity and multiculturalism are to be managed by schools, as this will generate a better learning environment within the school setting. The inability to manage diversity is at the core an undesirable school atmosphere. Lee (2010) suggests an institution with a diverse and multicultural staff complement, as learners then tend to be more imaginative and innovative.

The former American education system was one of religious teaching and education and mostly available to only the wealthy members of the community. Not all Americans benefitted from this education system, as it excluded Blacks, disabled people, etc. As a result, change to the education system was demanded by many activists who exerted pressure on education authorities to transform the curriculum to reflect the historical and cultural experiences and perspectives of all American cultures, including those who were previously oppressed.

Both society and schools have since become inclusive. It is therefore imperative that schools instill in learners a consciousness and gratefulness for all diverse values, and to provide learners from many different cultural circumstances the same opportunity to socially and academically excel. Educators, with the help of school management, need to implement approaches towards managing diversity in their schools. The education system in South Africa has developed a lot and underwent numerous changes. Many South African learners were historically separated during the apartheid era based on race and culture. The past education system did not in any way improve learners' education; instead it denied them the opportunity to a better life.

With the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990, apartheid was abolished, which brought about many changes for historically disadvantaged South Africans. Schools, previously separated by race, began a process of integration by allowing learners of all racial and cultural groups to enrol in former white schools. This integration process gave many children access to a better education through which they could acquire much needed skills, attitudes and knowledge to work within society that is ethnically and racially diverse. It became significant that South Africa schools and educators allow learners an opportunity to interact with others who are different from them through a process of teaching and learning of skills.

Having multiple perspectives is characterised by a diverse and multicultural environment, which is likely to produce fresh thoughts and different ways of doing things. Diversity and multiculturalism can also be accompanied by an increased pool

of information. Everyone is well informed and within a very diverse organisation, the exclusive information is greater and can be used to better solve problems (Lee 2010).

Driving diversity should be taken up as an important challenge by school managers and educators on how to effectively manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools through the best solutions. The many diverse stakeholders within the school need to explore the issues at hand and get a sense of different aspects and perspectives. When analysing collected data, one gains insight into the factors inhibiting the application of inclusive multicultural education within the school. These challenges can be resolved through collaboration between school management and educators in providing a quality education where both the learners and educators would benefit from.

The researcher, through his literature review found a number of factors, such as the current curriculum, which inhibits the effective management of a multicultural teaching environment. The interview questions and responses of participants are summarised and presented in the following table:

Interview questions	Participants' responses
How do you go about ensuring that you create an inclusive, multicultural class environment?	Make an effort towards creating one culture. Reduce and discourage discrimination by applying a third or fourth language, thereby providing all learners with equal opportunities to learn and develop.
What is your understanding of the term multicultural?	The aim should be to teach learners from different cultural backgrounds in one class, thoughtfully understand diverse cultures and give all learners an equal opportunity to succeed.



<p>Please explain your view on the importance of learning about different cultures by the school principals and educators</p>	<p>Knowing other cultures will allow people to treat others better as well as empathise with others who are different. Educators need to teach communication method that would not disadvantage others. Diversity need to be celebrated and life skills should be taught to enable learners to cope in a diverse world.</p>
<p>Interview questions</p>	<p>Participants' responses</p>
<p>How would you advise educators to manage multicultural classes in primary schools for an effective teaching and learning process?</p>	<p>Understanding of the concepts that would allow educators to teach better and understand how children learn in order to develop their potential. Educators need not repeat previous mistakes by discriminating against others, but must be able to deal with learners appropriately. There is a need to learn to accommodate differences and gain skills to deal with diversity.</p>
<p>What are your experiences in managing a multicultural classroom and learners' interaction with one another?</p>	<p>Enable learners to get along and co-exist with others in a peaceful and harmonious way. No need to be stereotyped, but create a better society and nation that lives in an environment conducive to equal rights and good morals.</p>
<p>How do educators become transformational agents and create a classroom that is more culturally accepted?</p>	<p>Educators need to change and become more positive, open-minded, embrace change and learn new things. They need to influence the redesigning of the curriculum by becoming more conscious of diversity and participating in educator development programmes. Educators need to accept and tolerate people who are different from them.</p>

<p>What, if anything, would you change (including curriculum) about your classroom to make it an all-inclusive multicultural environment?</p>	<p>Educators would need to include all learners by correcting discriminatory practices of the past and becoming a tool to address inequality. They should afford all space to feel part of the school system and serve as a bridge to overcome racial discrimination. Educators need to educate learners to cope with diversity and to respect all cultures.</p>
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4.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

When it comes to the developmental changes taking place within the South African education system, multicultural classrooms seems like an inevitable subject. The literature review used in the research study outlined the development of multicultural classrooms in the USA, with an emphasis on provision and transformation of equal teaching for all diverse learners. The schools where the research study was carried out are viewed as culturally diverse and able to bring multicultural people together, including those from neighbouring countries.

Most of the interviewed research participants agreed that there are certain challenges to the management of a multicultural classroom and that South African learners should be afforded equal learning opportunities within a multicultural educational environment to learn about diverse racial and cultural groups in order to realise that everyone has similar needs and wants. Educators have to be socially mindful and more open-minded to the diverse learner population within the school. Additional impression was that educators are trying several approaches to assimilating content from learners of diverse cultural circumstances, and are working towards achieving the objective of multicultural classrooms, which is *“a multicultural classroom aims for inclusion of cultures and all aspects of life, creating equality among people. It is not to separate*

cultures, but to create cultural fairness in a way that no one group dominates the public scenario” (Naidoo 2007).

Multicultural classrooms are regarded as the process of mixing and bringing together different cultural groups in the same school environment. Even though the research participants agreed that multicultural classrooms seem inevitable, they stressed that some fundamentals are needed for a multicultural classroom system to work in South African primary schools. These fundamentals include:

- Making provision for training of school management teams and educators aimed at the management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural schools
- There is a need for life skills programmes to enable educators to create attentiveness and thoughtfulness of the various races, religions and languages
- Educators must support each other and communicate amongst themselves to maintain a positive view on multicultural classrooms in South Africa.

Management challenges were similarly recognised by the participants during this research study, which can be categorised into personal and educational challenges. The changes to the South African education system in relation to multicultural schools seem unavoidable. This is supported by the literature review conducted by the researcher, which revealed that the development of multicultural classrooms in the USA focused on transformation and providing equal opportunities for all learners.

The research sites (which are the schools where the research study took place) are regarded as multicultural and multi-racial – bringing together people of different cultures, including those from neighbouring countries. According to the transcription of interviews, the participants were in agreement on the existence of certain challenges regarding the management of multicultural classrooms. In their opinion, South African learners should have equal learning opportunities within a multicultural education environment. These opportunities will allow learners to learn about different racial groups and cultures, and to realise that everyone has the same sociocultural needs and wants.

Educators must become more tolerant and culturally aware of the diverse learner population within their school. Based on the research data, it is clear that educators are making numerous attempts to incorporate learners' different cultural backgrounds into their teaching content, and are working towards realising the multicultural classroom aim of "inclusion of cultures and all aspects of life, creating equality amongst people" (Feinberg, as cited by Naidoo 2007).

The aim should be the creation of cultural fairness in a way no single group dominates, irrespective of separate cultures. Educators regarded multicultural classroom as socialising different cultures in the same school and classroom. Participants agreed that multicultural classrooms are unavoidable, and therefore need certain prerequisites to make it work, including providing training for school management teams and educators on the management of a multicultural classroom.

Skills programmes to allow South African educators to create awareness of all the different cultural backgrounds are also needed. Furthermore, educators need to support each other, and communicate amongst themselves, while maintaining an optimistic view regarding multicultural classrooms.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS STRATEGIES

Data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews with primary school educators based at five schools in the Gauteng province. These educators all have experience in managing challenges relating to inclusive education in the foundational and intermediate education phases. Responses were given in different languages. Most participants responded in English, while a few responded in Sepedi (in which the researcher is fluent) when explaining certain concepts.

Data obtained from the interviews conducted were transcribed verbatim. The investigator started by coding the data and then categorising the codes to identify the various themes that answered both the main and sub research questions.

4.6 THEMES

4.6.1 The SBST understanding of inclusive education in white paper 6

Most participants acknowledged that they understood inclusive education and stated that they were practicing it in their schools by including all type of learners with different learning abilities in the mainstream. In their responses they indicated that:

“Inclusive education stipulates including all learners in the mainstream education and supporting all their needs.”

“It means not discriminating against learners in class, teaching all learners, disabled or not, with learning barriers or not, all races in one class.”

“Inclusive education, I think, is education where all children are catered for, that is learners with barriers and learners that are doing well, in one school.”

The participants understand inclusive education, as explained in the literature and the Constitution of South Africa (1996), as that all learners should be taught at the same ordinary public schools, despite their capabilities and abilities. The Bill of Rights, as contained in the Constitution, states that each and every learner has a right to basic education (RSA 1996). Most participants are aware of inclusive education because government requires schools to comply and implement this policy in all ordinary South African public schools. Inclusive education requires all learners to be taught together in one classroom. Inclusion, therefore, caters for more than just mainstream education as it is considered a moral issue of human rights and values. Although the research participants had different explanations, they all agreed on their understanding of inclusive education and their explanation can be summed up as “the non-discrimination of learners”.

In talking with the participants, it was discovered that although some of them had seen White Paper 6 (Department of Education 1996), they had never had an opportunity to read it. Participants complained about the large number of learners in class and their

heavy workload. They also complained about the Department of Basic Education giving them too many handouts to read and that there was no time to read them. Participants said:

“I have heard about the White Paper, but I know very little about the contents of the White Paper. The policy talks about many things, especially the special needs of learners who have to be in the mainstream. Before a particular child can be admitted to a special school, you need to follow particular requirements and procedures as indicated in the White Paper.”

“White Paper 6, I think, talks about everything about inclusive education – what is to be done to the learners, how schools must admit without discriminating and then what must be done with learners that got barriers in their schools.”

“Yes it’s a document that outlines what you should do, which steps you should follow in helping those learners and the way you should do it.”

4.6.2 Types of support given by the SBST and parents to educators teaching in inclusive classrooms

The second research question explores the support given to educators by SBST members. In the schools selected for the study, the SBSTs are responsible for supporting educators in inclusive classrooms. Educators are divided according to phase representatives and assigned roles in order to assist other educators teaching inclusive classrooms. Educator who participated in the interviews related the following:

“As educators, we must support each other by giving each other strategies that we can use in our classes in order for us to help learners with learning difficulties.”

“So I do help them identify those learners and to support them and deal with their problems. I have attended special needs tertiary training through the ACE

programme and sometimes do some workshops for the educators so that they are able to cater for those learners.”

“It’s like teamwork at our school, we meet twice a week and mainly our aim is to develop the programmes or the activities that we can use to help learners with problems or barriers.”

The above extracts seem to suggest different ways in which the SBSTs support educators practising inclusive education. Educators rely on support and information from other colleagues. Most of the participants spoke about ways of developing intervention strategies for learners with special educational needs suggesting that there is a gap in educator preparation for practising inclusive education. Therefore recommendation is that regular classroom educators need to be capacitated with the necessary skills to adequately address the discipline of diverse learners.

Some participants found it necessary that supporting educators in inclusive classrooms need to be compared with some countries who have attended to the inclusive education support using intervention strategies such as task forces, short term professional development, long-term studies and short-term payment incentives. Some authors advocate that the support that educators need includes community support, parental involvement, as well as appropriate training. Some experts suggest that one of the barriers to practising inclusive education is the educators’ attitude in accepting diverse learners and that inclusive education requires educators to adapt to a different teaching.

The researcher wanted to find out from the SBST participants what ways they were supporting educators in implementing inclusive education. This is what they responded:

“We meet twice a week and we deviate from our work schedules, because honestly speaking, the department doesn’t send two types of work schedules which say that one was to help with learners’ problems and the other one with developing intervention programmes. We meet twice a week to develop such

programmes. I'm part of that; we help one another in how to deal with such cases.”

“As I'm a member of the SBST, I assist the educators by giving information about what is inclusive education in a class and I let educators identify learners with different problems, including health issues, so that when the school nurse comes we can give the school nurse names of the learners in need of support.”

“We also intend to introduce what we call remedial education. Our only barrier now is that we have not started because we don't have enough classrooms, but we intend to start it as soon as mobile classes have come because we want to help the educators. We don't want to discriminate against any child because there is something that every child knows. The only problem is that they need learning support and they need to learn and study at their own pace.”

The SBST structure that supports educators experiencing challenges of practising inclusive education in their classrooms seems to be knowledgeable about the intervention strategies in order to address learners' needs. Such interventions should aim at school transformation and developing curriculum initiatives so as to address learners' diverse needs.

4.6.3 Support given by the principal to educators practising inclusive education

The responses from principals about their support for educators practising inclusive education were as follows:

“Educators are given support by allowing them to attend courses or workshops related to teaching learners with barriers to learning. The principal sometimes communicates with the district office unit that deals with issues of learners experiencing barriers to learning to support educators of inclusive education.”

“Educators teaching inclusive education are supported by giving them fewer classes so that they can give further support to such learners, but this is not

always easy. As a principal I sometimes call the parents of these learners to make them aware of the difficulty the educator faces. If the situation is one that demands the child to be referred to a special school for barriers to learning, we refer the child.”

“As a principal, I also encourage educators teaching inclusive education to enrol for short courses which are funded by the SGB. On completion of the course, the principal will monitor progress through the reduction or increase of the learning barrier. If the barrier is reduced, this will be an indication that there is progress; if it persists this indicates that there is a challenge in addressing the problem. Specialists are then brought on board to assist the educator.”

4.6.4 What do other educators expect from educators teaching in inclusive classrooms?

Under this theme, the researcher wanted to find out what other educators’ expectations are of educators practising inclusive education. The responses suggest that there seems to be a general feeling that educators should be more prepared in terms of teaching and to be empathetic towards learners with special needs. The interview data indicated that some educators go to class unprepared, while others have a negative attitude towards special needs learners. Educators are expected to be more committed to helping and including learners with different abilities and coming from diverse backgrounds. The participants’ responses included the following:

“Educators should understand that learners are not the same, they must treat each child as a unique individual. I think my expectations of those educators are to go an extra mile. By that I mean, they must have preparations for those learners. Educators who are teaching inclusive education should understand learners that they are dealing with and they should have expertise to do that as well.”

“As educators, we expect them to work hard to love all these learners, to make them aware that they belong to the school like any other learner that we have,

that is why we don't allow that they should be taken to special schools. They should be included in the schools, play with the learners and we try very hard to give them love and support.”

Educators' beliefs about learners' special needs and their responsibilities should not affect the way in which they teach diverse learners. A change in the educator's beliefs and attitudes may lead to a more positive approach to supporting learners in inclusive classrooms.

Participants expect educators practising inclusive education to be caring and to cater for learners' special needs. Even though training has not been sufficiently provided, such skills and character traits are not something that could easily be learnt. However, some educators still expect these educators to be cognitive and affectionate in inclusive classrooms.

In terms of educator preparation, the SBST members expect the educators practising inclusive education to have basic training in skills required in an inclusive classroom.

“I do not expect them to be experts, because they did not specialise in that field, but I expect the educators to help learners in any way they can because I also assist them.”

“The expectation is that if we are trained or the Department of Basic Education is training more educators, then we can be able to better support children with learning barriers.”

“My expectation of general staff is that they must be accepting – accept these learners and start to know more about White Paper 6, because in the past educators clearly mentioned that they can't teach children with disabilities and that they must be referred to special schools.”

Inclusive education educators need to plan responsive lessons that cater for diverse instruction for all learners. According to authors in this subject, this means that the educator should be able to skillfully prepare one lesson that integrates aspects that will accommodate differentiated learning styles. It is very important to acquire the necessary skills to engage all learners through inclusive practices.

4.6.5 Leadership role of the principal in inclusive education

The researcher wanted to discover what the feelings of other staff members were regarding principals' leadership in inclusive education. Some of the educators suggested that the system should be changed so that principals could also attend training. It would assist them in implementing a good management system regarding inclusive education. Principals would know the relevant type of resources to buy and could manage the school with a more directed programme. Educators said:

“Maybe if the principal can apply for a mobile teaching class or have a centre for remedial education or some teaching aids facilities we may have educators who can be available in that class to give support to these learners, I think...”

“The principal must look at the schedule of the school to see how many learners need additional support and he must make a follow-up to each and every learner that needs additional support, and he must go to all classes and see what intervention strategies are being given to those learners that are not achieving.”

“I expect that the principal should do follow-ups and make sure that as educators we do accommodate all learners according to their needs.”

“If principals can be workshopped, they could be able to see how serious this is, maybe it would be easier for us as educators as well, but because they don't have information about inclusive education they are not so supportive.”

“My expectation is that the principal must be updated on a daily or monthly basis, and then the principal must know the parent of the children because if I can't deal

with the child, or if I don't get the support about the child, I'm expecting the principal, as the head of the institution, to call the parent or to go to parents to seek support.”

Judging from the above, it seems that the SBSTs expect principals to know what is happening in class through regular follow-up with SBST members. There is a general feeling that principals lack skills in their support of inclusive education educators, and there is a call for principals to support inclusion. They require a special type of training in special needs education, and need to work collaboratively with educators and parents to provide support to learners in their classrooms. Principals need to play a central role in supporting and nourishing change in their schools especially in their role as heads of schools. The successful implementation of inclusive education requires teamwork and commitment from all stakeholders.

A central role of the principal is to ensure that relevant resources are available at school level and that relevant policies are adhered to by both educators and parents of learners. It appears that principals find it difficult to implement changes because of a lack of skills. Principals in inclusive schools should play the role of cheerleaders, mediators, coaches and emotional supporters to those involved in the process of change, as it is, fundamentally, a team effort. It is difficult for principals to meet all the demands of inclusion.

4.6.6 Resources available and needed for teaching in inclusive classrooms

The researcher discovered that most of the participating schools are well-resourced. The only problem is that most participants do not know how to best utilise these resources. Others were not sure whether these resources were available at school or not. This is how they responded:

“We've got lot of resources, such as books, but educators at times don't make use of them. They do have materials that can be read so that they can be in a position to implement inclusive education. We lack a special place, maybe like a

remedial class, where these learners can be given special time to catch up and then go back to the mainstream class.”

“Yes we have physical facilities at the sportsgrounds for those learners who use wheelchairs and even the learners’ toilets cater for learners with disabilities.”

“I think our resources are limited. We wish we could have some more resources to help these children, because some of the desks we are using are not user friendly. You wished they can have desks that are comfortable enough. Those with a problem of eyesight, you also wish that they can get something that can help their vision – spectacles or something like that. Even the toilets, we need toilets that are be accessible to learners who’ve got disabilities or who are using wheelchairs. So our resources are not up to standard.”

Section 21 schools are allocated a grant according to the learner-educator ratio. Both schools have a learning teaching support materials (LTSM) committee that identifies the physical resources that the school needs. It convenes meetings and orders all the materials that the school needs for inclusive education. These resources are paid for by a grant from government.

“Educators are encouraged attending workshops, which sometimes require the school to purchase extra resources that will make it easier for the educator to assist the learners. The school governing body and the LTSM committee will provide money to buy the necessary resources.”

Support should include teaching equipment and materials, staff and parent support and professional development by experts to make sure that inclusion is successfully implemented. Engelbrecht *et al.* (1999) support the above statement by pointing out that educators teaching learners with special educational needs require a support structure that is responsive not only to the particular requirements of an individual educator, but also to the needs of the learners. Thus, the suggestion by Arbeiter and Hartley (2002) that inclusive education support requires appropriate training. Within

South African educational context a useful way to describe and explain the process of practising inclusive education is through creativity and interaction between the SBST and inclusive education educators.

4.6.7 Do schools provide all culturally different learners equal learning opportunities?

All learners are afforded the opportunity to actively partake in all extra- and cocurricular activities. They are also placed in mixed classes, irrespective of their racial, cultural or linguistic background.

4.7 PERSONAL AND EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES

Probably the most important role inclusive educators need to play is to eradicate all forms of prejudice by instilling an understanding of and tolerance for other cultures in order to live together as one society, despite our different backgrounds, values and norms. Research participants identified multicultural, educational as well as value challenges which exposes the national school system to innumerable changes. It is thus significant for school and educational institutions to develop approaches that will ensure dealing efficiently with the many issues of multicultural management.

Educators must embrace the opportunity to foster productive discussions and teach multiculturalism values about classroom racial identity and differences. It is critically important for learners to respect the characteristics of groups and people with whom they are involved. These characteristics comprise and are not limited to gender, disability, racial, ethnic, social and religious class.

Educators in particular must appropriately answer to learners' ethnicity and racial identity, and have a clear understanding of the complex process of racial identity development in learners. Multicultural classrooms pull from many fundamental values within teaching approaches that educate learners on diversity. According to some literature these fundamental values help learners to work together in challenging bias and prejudice, and create schools settings that reflect learners' culture and aspects of their home language.

Multiculturalism has become a necessary tool in constructing a new classroom system, which respects and represents the diverse cultures of its learners and educators.

4.8 CONCLUSION

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the interviews conducted with research study participants regarding their understanding of and attitudes towards their role in managing inclusive teaching in a multicultural classroom in primary schools in the Gauteng province. This chapter further discussed the data obtained and the findings in response to the research question, “What are the challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province?” The collected data was presented in narrative format and the researcher deliberated on educators’ perception and understanding of effective management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

All participants interviewed in this study understand inclusive education and acknowledged that they understand the principles outlined in White Paper 6, and that they are practising those principles in their schools by including all types of learners from different cultural backgrounds.

Although inclusive education is a good policy that addresses human rights, most educators find it difficult to manage inclusive teaching in their primary schools because of the number of learners in their classrooms. Several broad approaches to inclusive teaching can be used if there is enough and sustained support from all stakeholders.

Inclusive education is a legislated joint-activity that requires the planning of lessons from the onset so that they are open to all learners, even though the instruction is differentiated according to learning capabilities. With appropriate support, all educators of inclusive education classes will be able to attend to every learner’s individual needs by using welcoming class activities dependent on individual performance. The new focus in instruction supports the basic right to access to education by everyone.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARISED FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, SIGNIFICANCE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated in the previous chapters, particularly Chapter 1, the aim of this research study was to determine the experiences of purposefully selected educators and how they manage challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. The purpose of Chapter 5 summarise the findings, recommendations and conclusions of the study. The chapter outlines the findings of this research study according to themes and sub-themes, where applicable. As indicated in Chapter 4, semi-structured, one-on-one interviews were the data collection instrument in this study.

Managing a multicultural classroom is a complex, multidimensional and time consuming process. Today's increasingly multifaceted and diverse classrooms, especially in former model C primary schools, comprises groups with different demographic backgrounds, languages, values, religions and many other cultural aspects. Multicultural classrooms are, however, a reality in South African schools.

The themes emerging from the study regarding the suggestions to the management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province formed the basis for generating these recommendations. Chapter 5 therefore provides a summary of key issues, discusses the findings, limitations of the research, recommendations and conclusion emanating from the literature review and data analysis of this research study. These research findings are expanded upon and in the concluding stages recommendations and possible solutions for improvement are made. This study was undertaken with the aim of contributing to the plethora of literature in connection with management of multicultural class in primary schools in Gauteng Province.

Chapter 5 also offers recommendations on inclusive education challenges and their management in multicultural public primary schools. The recommendations present possible solutions and further suggestions provided by those educators who participated in the research study and were interviewed. The emerging themes regarding the suggestions to the management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural schools formed the basis for generating these recommendations.

5.2 REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

Chapter 1 comprises the introduction; problem statement and its context; background to this research study; aims and objectives of this research study; ethical considerations; clarification of concepts; research design; and methodology. The orientation, research question, purpose of this study, research method and data analysis and interpretation were discussed. Definitions of terms used in this research study and the research programme were given.

Chapter 2 contains a focused literature review, which provides the framework for the empirical investigation of this research study. It includes discussions on the rationale for managing multicultural classrooms, highlights the dimensions of multicultural classrooms and possible issues relating to multicultural classroom management, and points out to the importance of thinking strategically when managing multicultural classrooms. The theoretical frameworks underlying multicultural classroom management and the South African legislative framework is briefly outlined, discussed and explained with practical guidelines for educators in managing multicultural classroom.

Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology of this research study. Discussions around the empirical investigation are included in this chapter. The research methodology and research process were outlined and discussed. Interview protocol and designs were developed and implemented during this study to create a suitable interview situation that clearly distinguished semi-structured interviews.

In Chapter 4, an analysis and interpretation of data collected from purposively selected primary schools through means of semi-structured interviews, was given. The analysis, findings and interpretation of the results of this study, i.e. the responses elicited during the semi-structured interviews, were presented. In this chapter, conclusions are drawn from the literature review in Chapter 2, the empirical investigation in Chapter 3 and the research analysis in Chapter 4.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS

The researcher approached the discussion of the research findings by examining how far the findings answered the original research question, namely: “What are the challenges of managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools in the Gauteng province?” This primary question led to several secondary questions, namely:

- What are the challenges relating to inclusive education?
- What are educators’ experiences in managing an inclusive multicultural class?
- What were their expectations in managing an inclusive multicultural class?
- What are the challenges of managing a multicultural class?

The literature review and the data analysis in previous chapters revealed very important findings. It would therefore be advisable for primary school educators and all parties concerned with managing a multicultural classroom to consider these findings.

5.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to assist schools in developing tools and strategies to support educators who are practising inclusive teaching by working in collaboration with other stakeholders to get an in-depth knowledge of inclusive education. Various ways of improving the teaching of inclusive education may be developed to support educators who cannot cope with inclusive education. The findings of this study may serve to inform policymakers and assist programme designers to develop intervention

strategies that support educators practising inclusive education and reinforce their teaching skills in assisting learners of different capabilities in the mainstream schools. The different stakeholders, such as educators, social workers, psychologists and parents, should work together to establish a strong relationship. The findings of this study may add to the existing literature on inclusive education and teaching in an inclusive classroom.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research study was of limited scope with data collected from but few selected primary schools. Since the research sample included only limited grouping of educators managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools, it was too small to generalise findings. Future studies will therefore need a more representative sample from primary schools from across South Africa. This will ensure that the inferences drawn from the data can be generalised.

The sampling was way too small for qualitative research as it involved few primary schools and excluded secondary schools. Therefore, the researcher cautions that the findings of this study should be interpreted with care, as all schools and educators in the country were not fully represented in the findings. Although the researcher promised and assured participants of confidentiality and anonymity, the participants were very uncomfortable with the use of the tape recorder during their interviews. The researcher hence resorted to taking notes, which took some time given the number of participants.

The study has a broad focus, which requires extensive data collection and analysis. The weaknesses of the study methodology were addressed in the methodology section – the study involves one case that is not typical, which can therefore not be generalised. In addition, the study does not employ triangulation or various means of data collection, except semi-structured interviews. The researcher faced some additional challenges along the way, such as a short timeframe within which to conduct the study, as well as a language barrier between the researcher and participants. Data

were collected during the first school term when schools had just reopened and educators were still in the holiday mood.

This research study has significant weaknesses, and should therefore be used to serve as the starting point for further research. No guarantees can be given that the responses from the study participants are be impartial and truthfully reflect their attitudes regarding the cultural issues explored in this research study. The value of this work is limited by a reliance on perceptual measures, therefore the management of these perceptions is worthy of constant attention by school principals and other education officials.

Despite all these limitations as mentioned, the research findings would contribute to a better understanding of educators managing inclusive teaching in a multicultural classroom in primary schools.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS STUDY

The research study explored educators' challenges in managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools. The study found that multicultural classrooms in primary schools are an issue and the researcher believes that the study successfully contributed to the knowledge gap that has not been fully addressed in the past namely that management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher has a number of recommendations to enhance the management of multicultural classrooms in primary schools. These recommendations are as follows:

- Effective management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools requires looking at the issues of diversity

- Accepting South Africa as being multicultural, multiracial, and multi-linguistic with different racial groups, 11 official languages and a long history of apartheid where people were denied equal opportunities
- The implementation of inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools is accompanied by many challenges for which school managers and educators are not fully prepared,
- The misunderstanding with regard to the management of challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools is a serious concern and needs urgent government and community intervention
- Educators cannot properly manage inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools and this impacts negatively on effective teaching and learning
- Educators find it difficult to understand their role in managing inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools
- Noting that multicultural classroom seems a fairly new South African concept, there is an enormous scope for future research.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

After carrying out the research study, recommendations for methodology and further studies include the following:

- First and foremost, more studies on multicultural classrooms should be undertaken and the research team that conducts these studies should include a member(s) of the sector
- The context that multicultural classroom study is conducted in should be considered. A proper analysis of the environment that the study is planned to be conducted should be done to provide variables that may be encountered during the study. A follow-up study, looking at data generated in the reverse order to the current study, should be conducted
- An interview protocol that allows an alternating follow-up interview by both researchers should be included and designed in the research protocol to avoid one-sided and monotonous comparison.

The results presented here may facilitate improvements to inclusive teaching. Therefore this study recommends the following ways of improving the challenges faced by educators:

- Multiculturalism as a concept has many dimensions and is complex as it pertains to everybody and cannot be limited to language, race, religion and gender only. An expanded context is needed in order to gain a fuller understanding of multicultural phenomena. It should encompass differences and similarities, as managing multicultural classroom entails dealing with both simultaneously. Managing multicultural classrooms may be seen in the inclusive definition where multiculturalism is seen as the collection of many similarities and differences that exist among people
- A training and diversity management programme should be developed for educators and principals with regard to matters of multicultural classrooms. Recommendation to school managers and educators is that they agree to the significance of teaching learners to interact with different learners and people. Educators in particular need to engage in a process of self-discovery, as this would allow them to teach learners the skills and strategies needed to deal with aspects of multiculturalism. The school management team needs to put mechanisms in place for cultivating and unfolding educators' potential, in order to enhance effective teaching and learning (Mathibe 2007).
- Education stakeholders should seek ways to improve cultural relations at schools, especially between educators and learners, in order to improve the culture of teaching and learning. They should allow for dialogue on the broad definition of multiculturalism and the value of multiculturalism, and devise interventions to address a changing school environment. The cultural interactions might comprise classroom walls decorations, reaching out and learning another language, and allow learners to freely express themselves. Most of the classrooms can be decorated with learners' work or aspects of particular themes. The culture of the school and its culturally conducive environment should be represented by the classrooms' atmosphere

- School management need to know the school's multicultural situation (by analysing the demographics of the school) and managing multicultural classrooms must form part of the school's strategic management process. It is recommended that school managers and educators continually examine their prejudices, biases and perceptions affecting the teaching and learning experiences of learners (Sharma 2005). The school managers and educators need training in the history of race relations and educational anthropology to make the connection with educational outcomes. Teaching effectively in a multicultural classroom requires culturally sensitive strategies and content to provide equal opportunities for academic success and the individual growth of all learners (Sharma 2005).
- Educators need to know for sure that their cultural beliefs, perspectives and behaviours are not necessarily a world view, or the only right one. Educators should obtain multicultural capability and be functional in cross-cultural settings, thereby interactively communicating with culturally diverse learners and society (Sharma 2005). Staff development programmes should afford much needed time and space for self-reflection and enable educators to realise that people are different. Educators need to dedicate more time to building trust, and deep deliberation on transformation is needed for educators to learn about themselves and others in building communities (James Edwards 1999).

Inspired by its vision, schools have to create a trustful and mutually respectful climate to allow fairness, inclusivity and using people's ideas and insights. Since the research study focused on educators managing multicultural classrooms in primary schools, the following are suggestions and recommendations for further research:

- Further research should be conducted to investigate learners' experiences in attending multicultural classrooms in primary school, and beyond that, in high school and tertiary institutions
- Researchers should be aware of the fact that their own biases, such as status, beliefs and attitudes, exist in the research interview process. It is therefore important for them to recognise that this might affect their research and

influence the manner in which they relate with participants. It is important to note such cues before interpreting data

- Researchers should be aware of their own cultural background and the fact that their own background might influence the semi-structured interviews with regard to which questions to follow up on and which data to record as important, therefore losing or reading too much into the data generated during a cross-cultural interview
- When conducting a multicultural study, it is important for researchers to be aware of the culture that they are studying and to be prepared to work with people who might view him/her as different, or the researcher themselves and viewing the people they are studying as different. Researchers should be at peace with the knowledge that there is nothing wrong with being different and not agreeing with the population being studied
- Researchers should be aware and honest about their limitations with regard to the culture that they are studying and should consult with colleagues who might know or might be from the culture being studied or where the study is being conducted
- Researchers should recognise the complexity of the interview situation in which the culture of the interviewer and respondent are similar, but they are from different cultures
- Every multicultural interview situation should be analysed and evaluated in an attempt to ensure that data generated are collected and regarded for interpretation.

5.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the overall findings were discussed in relation to the relevant literature. The limitations of the study were cited, and several recommendations made in respect to proper management of multicultural classrooms in primary schools in Gauteng. It is hoped that, if implemented, the various recommendations cited herein will go a long way to advance the school environment and will enable educators to effectively manage multicultural classrooms in primary schools.

Fundamentally, managing multicultural classrooms is about social change in education that requires deep and critical thinking. It can be seen as an aspect of the continuous human journey towards justice and fulfilment of the promises of democracy. During this study, it became clear that semi-structured interviews generate data that should not be collected and interpreted without reference to the composition of the dimensions of culture of the interviewee, and that the cultural context of such interviews should be taken into consideration during interpretation, and where possible, semi-structured interviews should be explored as much as possible. The researcher argues that culture certainly does not constitute only race, but includes aspects such as rituals, norms, gender, language, beliefs and artefacts. Most importantly, culture is a process happening in a given context.

During the collection of data from the selected primary schools in Gauteng, the researcher used a qualitative research approach and methodology. This approach created opportunities for the researcher and research participants to work together to impart thoughts and experiences. This approach also accorded the researchers and participants the opportunity to freely interact and share ideas and experiences. This freedom allowed for flow of information that boosted the reliability and validity of the collected data. Research participants were therefore welcome and free to divulge full information that improved the reliability and validity of the collected data. In this study all participants were able to share common as well as contrasting viewpoints based on their personal experiences in managing multicultural classrooms. The thoughtful conceptualisation of educators and their role in managing multicultural classrooms was presented in this chapter.

This chapter outlined and discussed the findings of the study based on the data collected. Most of the themes and sub-themes discussed correlate with what has been reported in the literature. However, instances where collected data contradicts literature were highlighted. It should be acknowledged that this study was conducted within the South African context, while most of the literature came from the

international context. Based on the findings, recommendations and conclusions are outlined.

The central aim of this research study was to probe and/or test the understanding of educators of their role in managing challenges relating to inclusive education in multicultural public primary schools, and to make recommendations to enrich their views. The researcher investigated the challenges primary school educators face in effectively managing a multicultural classroom. The study took place within the primary schools regarded as multicultural.

Chapter 5 provides a brief overview of the preceding chapters. The general and specific aims of the study were reiterated. A summary of important findings was provided with regard to findings from the literature study and the empirical investigation. Thereafter, recommendations and suggestions for further research were made. This study shows the importance of managing multicultural classrooms in a changing South African school environment. Managing multicultural classrooms means enabling every school community member to perform to their full potential. South Africans have to recognise that they function among many religions and cultures, as well as eleven official languages. Opportunities for dialogue about multiculturalism must be provided, without coercing those who fear this change into participating or penalising them for their lack of involvement.

This argument stems from the fact that South Africa is indisputably more complex than it was under the apartheid system. The researcher believes that the current democratic dispensation as well as globalisation compounds the challenges South Africans face, although these changes are necessary for the betterment of society. It becomes the responsibility of especially our educators to handle and manage these multicultural changes to realise a true rainbow nation and Ubuntu among individuals from different backgrounds. Educators have the responsibility to occupy front row when developing their schools in line with the South African Constitution.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) state that multicultural education systems present the opportunity to study behaviours within a natural situation. It became clear that

educators gained more insight into the concept of inclusive and multicultural education during this research study. Educators also acquired knowledge about the existence of diverse cultures and are determined to focus on addressing multicultural issues within their respective primary schools.

Given that answers to the research questions provided a refined understanding of how educators manage multicultural classrooms in primary schools, the following conclusion was generated from the findings:

Society and schools need to be optimistic about the prospective changes within education system. It is significant that primary schools need to promote teaching and learning that helps to lessen ethnical tension, support antiracism and fight discrimination.

The main findings reveal that participants did not show a broad understanding of the multicultural classroom. Their conflicting understanding was mostly based on the use of language, and referral was made to language classes and practices. Participants were more supportive of the previous education system, contending that bilingual teaching enhances linguistic and cognitive transfer. The only learners who are to receive mother language and bilingual support are the ones already strong in their mother tongue but weak in English.

The schools use a pedagogical programme, Early Years, which was praised by all participants. Its diverse activities and differentiated material enables educators to vary their methods and address learners' different learning styles. Moreover, collaborative learning proved to be efficient in accommodating newcomers and enhancing learners' language development and overall interaction. However, due to its structure and time rigidity, this programme represents a challenge to learners with special needs and low academic achievement.

The selected schools could be characterised as schools that practice multicultural education and empower learners with diverse cultural backgrounds. The schools

provide certain forms of language teaching, and consider bilingual educators as resources by giving them equal teaching status and employing their bilingual skills.

A comprehensive theoretical framework created the basis for areas of research that could be explored in greater depth in future through the sub-questions of this study.

As far as school practices are concerned, there are several points that this study would like to suggest in order for the schools to improve their practices:

- Agreeing upon the mostly acceptable foundation of what multicultural classroom represents in the school environment
- More time and opportunities for educator collaboration to fully utilise bilingual resources
- Strengthening educators' skills in using English as the medium of teaching and learning.

There is a need for co-operation and good human relations between all educational stakeholders in order to have fully multicultural schools. Societal and collective change is the central aim of the multicultural education system. School managers and educators need multicultural skills and need to develop strategies to become effective in managing the challenges such an environment presents. School management has not been seen as affording educators enough space to make their classrooms fully culturally inclusive. This is also caused by non-availability of cultural and diversity policies.

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Annexure A

INFORMED CONSENT

I (Names) hereby agree to participate in research regarding ***CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS.***

I am participating in this research project out of my own free will without being forced in any way to do so and I also understand that I can terminate my participation of the project at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally and that this consent form will not be linked to my person, institution or the questionnaire, and that all information pertaining to my responses will remain confidential.

I have received the telephone number of a contact person, should I need to speak about any issues, which may arise participating in this research. I understand that if possible, feedback will be given to me on the findings and recommendations on the completed research.

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Signature of Supervisor

Date



Annexure B

REQUEST FOR YOUR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I, MT Phahlamohlaka, registered University of Pretoria student (29615578) request for permission to conduct research interviews with the selected educators on the topic: ***CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS***. If permitted, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the aim of probing the understanding of educators' challenges of inclusive education in multilateral public primary schools.

INTERVIEW SESSIONS

About 10 selected number of educators will be interviewed during the after school time so that no hindrance towards the contact time. As per the ethical requirements of the University of Pretoria, the participants will be interviewed individually with the purpose of promoting anonymity and confidentiality. The interviews are planned for the period July – October 2015 at the participant's convenient venue.

ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Please be assured that your information during the interviews will be kept confidential and anonymous. Your personal details including names and institution will not be used in this research study. The information will be coded for confidentiality and anonymity reasons. This research study is supervised and therefore as the researcher I have to adhere to the ethical guidelines of the University of Pretoria.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND ADVANTAGES OF PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

Participants voluntarily participate and can withdraw from the research study should they feel like not proceeding. Please note that participation is voluntary yet very beneficial to individuals and their institutions in terms of cultural inclusivity. Participants will better understand the inclusive education and how to manage the challenges thereof.

Should you feel free to participate, please indicate accordingly and respond to the provided form.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Student and researcher: MT Phahlamohlaka

Supervised by Dr van Rooyen



Annexure C

PROPOSED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE THIRD/FOURTH TERM 2015/16

SCHOOL	DATE	DURATION
La Montague Primary School	July 2015	1 week after school
Glenstantia Primary School	July – August 2015	1 week after school
Laerskool Lynnwood	August 2015	1 week after school
Pretoria Oos Primary	September 2015	1 week after school
Brooklyn Primary School	October 2015	1 week after school



Annexure D

DATA ANALYSIS

QUESTION	COMMENTS / CODES	THEMES
1. What is your understanding of the term multicultural?		
2. What were your expectations in managing multicultural class?		
3. What are your experiences of managing an inclusive multicultural class?		
4. What are the challenges of managing an inclusive multicultural class?		
5. How do you embrace the challenges facing effective management of a multicultural class at your primary school?		
6. To what extent were you prepared to manage multicultural class?		
7. How do you manage inclusion in a multicultural class at your primary school?		
8. How would you advise teachers to manage multicultural classes in primary schools?		
9. Which skills and strategies would you recommend for effective management of an inclusive multicultural class?		
10. How do you go about ensuring that you create an inclusive and multicultural class environment?		
11. How do you regard support from the school management and administration in managing your inclusive and multicultural class?		
12. What space is given to you as an educator in a multicultural teaching environment to contribute to transforming your classroom so as to give learners from diverse cultural backgrounds an equal chance in school life?		
13. Please explain your view on the importance of learning about different cultures by the school principals and educators?		

