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**Exploring Full-Service School teachers' self-efficacy  
within an inclusive education system**

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Vanderbijlpark

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MAY 2015

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Isabel Payne-van Staden, hereby declare that this thesis is my own work. This thesis is submitted for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor in Learner Support at the North-West University (Vaal Triangle Campus, Vanderbijlpark). The information within this thesis has not been used for any other degree or assessment. The information acknowledges the sources used.

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To whom it may concern

This letter serves to confirm that this document has been edited by the *Centre for Translation and Professional Language Services* (CTrans). CTrans is a registered corporate member of the South African Translators' Institute (SATI) that makes use of qualified and experienced language practitioners to provide professional translation and language editing services.

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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacques Heyns', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jacques Heyns  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The study aimed to explore full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system. This study formed part of a follow up qualitative phase of an international collaborative research project between South Africa, Finland, China, Slovenia, Lithuania and England. The main purpose of this comparative project was to produce a knowledge base that sheds light on the nature of the development of inclusive education in different countries from a teacher's perspective. The data from the first quantitative phase indicated that many South African teachers experience a lack of self-efficacy in the implementation of inclusive education.

Inclusive education has brought many challenges for full-service school teachers. Classrooms now have a wider range of diverse learning needs and this impacts significantly on classroom practice. This situation often creates stress and can exacerbate feelings of inefficiency.

When teachers acquire abilities, skills and professional expertise they often accept the responsibilities of inclusive education and subsequently become more confident about inclusion which in turn empowers them to be more effective in teaching. Adequate professional development and sufficient support can, therefore, help teachers to feel more equipped to address and consequently experience positive self-efficacy beliefs. Teachers with improved self-efficacy will, therefore, become more motivated to implement inclusive education successfully.

Consequently, in this research teachers' sense of self-efficacy within an inclusive education environment with specific reference to South African teachers was further explored. The purpose of my research was to explore factors that influence full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy, enabling or disabling them to implement inclusive education successfully. Bandura's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy as well as Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological framework formed the theoretical framework of this study.

To achieve this purpose, a qualitative interpretive design was decided upon by employing a multiple case study (two full service schools) as strategy of inquiry. Twenty one teachers voluntarily participated in this research, eleven from the first

school and ten from the second school. Data was collected through qualitative data generation methods which included focus group and individual interviews, collages and an open questionnaire.

The findings from the literature review as well as the empirical data revealed that self-efficacy as a concept was best described and understood in relating low with high teacher self-efficacy. A teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy can be viewed as a person who exhibits and portrays certain traits and skills. It was evident that sufficient knowledge about what inclusive education entails, intra- and inter-personal skills, as well as values that take the best interest of the learner into consideration, are essential for teachers to experience a high sense of self-efficacy in an inclusive education environment. The findings also indicated that certain ecosystemic factors are currently enabling and disabling teachers' sense of self-efficacy to implement inclusive education successfully. These factors were reflected in the specific needs of teachers to be more self-effective in an inclusive education system. This included more and effective continuous professional development opportunities (CPD) for professional and personal development; increased and improved support from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) (provincial and district) as well as the school and peers; improved collaboration with parents, NGO's and HEI's; a more flexible curriculum; and more acknowledgement for achievements from the school, parents and the DBE. These needs were addressed in recommendations for teachers themselves, the schools and the DBE in order to develop and enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy, within an inclusive full-service school.

Keywords: Teacher self-efficacy, full-service schools, inclusive education

## OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie studie is om voldiensskoolonderwysers se sin van self-effektiwiteit ten opsigte van onderrig binne 'n inklusiewe onderwysstelsel te ondersoek. Die studie maak deel uit van 'n internasionale koöperatiewe navorsingsprojek tussen Suid-Afrika, Finland, Sjina, Slowenië, Litawe en Engeland se opvolg kwalitatiewe fase. Die hoofdoel van dié vergelykende projek is om 'n kennisbasis te produseer wat lig op die aard van die ontwikkeling van inklusiewe onderwys in verskillende lande vanuit 'n onderwyser se perspektief sal werp. Die data van die eerste kwalitatiewe fase toon aan dat baie Suid-Afrikaanse onderwysers 'n tekort aan self-effektiwiteit in die uitvoering van inklusiewe onderrig ervaar. Inklusiewe onderrig bied baie uitdagings vir voldiensskoolonderwysers. Klaskamers het nou 'n wyer verskeidenheid van diverse leerbehoefte en dit het 'n beduidende impak op klaskamerpraktik. Hierdie situasie veroorsaak dikwels stres en kan gevoelens van ondoeltreffendheid vererger.

Wanneer onderwysers vermoëns, vaardighede en professionele deskundigheid ontwikkel, aanvaar hulle dikwels die verantwoordelikhede van inklusiewe onderrig. Hulle voel dan meer selfversekerd oor insluiting, wat hulle bemagtig om meer doeltreffend in onderrig te wees. Voldoende professionele ontwikkeling en genoegsame ondersteuning kan onderwysers dus meer toegerus laat voel om positiewe self-effektiwiteitsoortuigings te hanteer en gevolglik te ervaar. Onderwysers met verhoogte self-effektiwiteit sal daarom meer gemotiveerd wees om inklusiewe onderrig suksesvol te implementeer.

Onderwysers se sin van self-effektiwiteit in 'n inklusiewe onderrigomgewing is derhalwe verder in hierdie navorsing ondersoek met spesifieke verwysing na Suid-Afrikaanse onderwysers. Die doel van my navorsing is om te ondersoek watter faktore voldiensskoolonderwysers se sin van self-effektiwiteit beïnvloed en hulle in staat stel of strem om inklusiewe onderrig suksesvol te bewerkstellig. Bandura se sosiale kognitiewe teorie van self-effektiwiteit sowel as Bronfenbrenner se bio-ekologiese raamwerk vorm die teoretiese raamwerk van die studie.

Om hierdie doel te bereik is daar op 'n kwalitatiewe interpretatiewe ontwerp besluit deur van 'n meervoudige gevallestudie gebruik te maak (twee voldiensskole) as strategie van ondersoek. Een-en-twintig onderwysers het vrywillig aan die navorsing

deelgeneem waarvan elf by die eerste skool werksaam is en tien by die tweede skool. Data is ingesamel deur kwalitatiewe datagenereringsmetodes in te span, insluitend fokusgroep- en individuele onderhoude, collages en 'n ope-vraelys.

Die bevindinge van die literatuuroorsig asook die empiriese data toon aan dat self-effektiwiteit as 'n begrip die beste omskryf en verstaan word deur lae met hoë onderwys-self-effektiwiteit te vergelyk. 'n Onderwyser met 'n sterk sin van self-effektiwiteit kan beskou word as 'n persoon wat oor sekere eienskappe en vaardighede beskik. Dit is duidelik dat genoegsame kennis oor wat inklusiewe onderrig behels, intra- en interpersoonlike vaardighede, sowel as waardes wat die leerder se belange in ag neem, noodsaaklik is vir 'n sterk sin van self-effektiwiteit in 'n inklusiewe onderrigomgewing. Die bevindinge toon ook aan dat sekere ekosistemiese faktore tans onderwysers se sin van self-effektiwiteit om inklusiewe onderrig te bewerkstellig, moontlik maak of strem. Hierdie faktore word weerspieël in die spesifieke behoeftes van onderwysers om meer self-effektief in 'n inklusiewe onderrigstelsel te wees. Dit sluit in meer en effektiewe geleenthede vir voortgesette professionele ontwikkeling (VPO) vir professionele en persoonlike ontwikkeling; toenemende en verbeterde ondersteuning van die Departement van Basiese Onderwys (DBO) op provinsiale en distriktvlak, asook verbeterde samewerking tussen die skool en mede-onderwysers met ouers, nieregeringsorganisasies (NROs) en hoëronderriginstellings (HOIs); 'n buigsamer kurrikulum; en meer erkenning van die skool, ouers en die DBO vir prestasies. Hierdie behoeftes is in aanbevelings vir onderwysers, die skole en die DBO aangespreek om sodoende onderwysers se sin van self-effektiwiteit in 'n inklusiewe voldiensskool te ontwikkel en verhoog.

**Trefwoorde:** Onderwyser-self-effektiwiteit, voldiensskole, inklusiewe onderrig

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

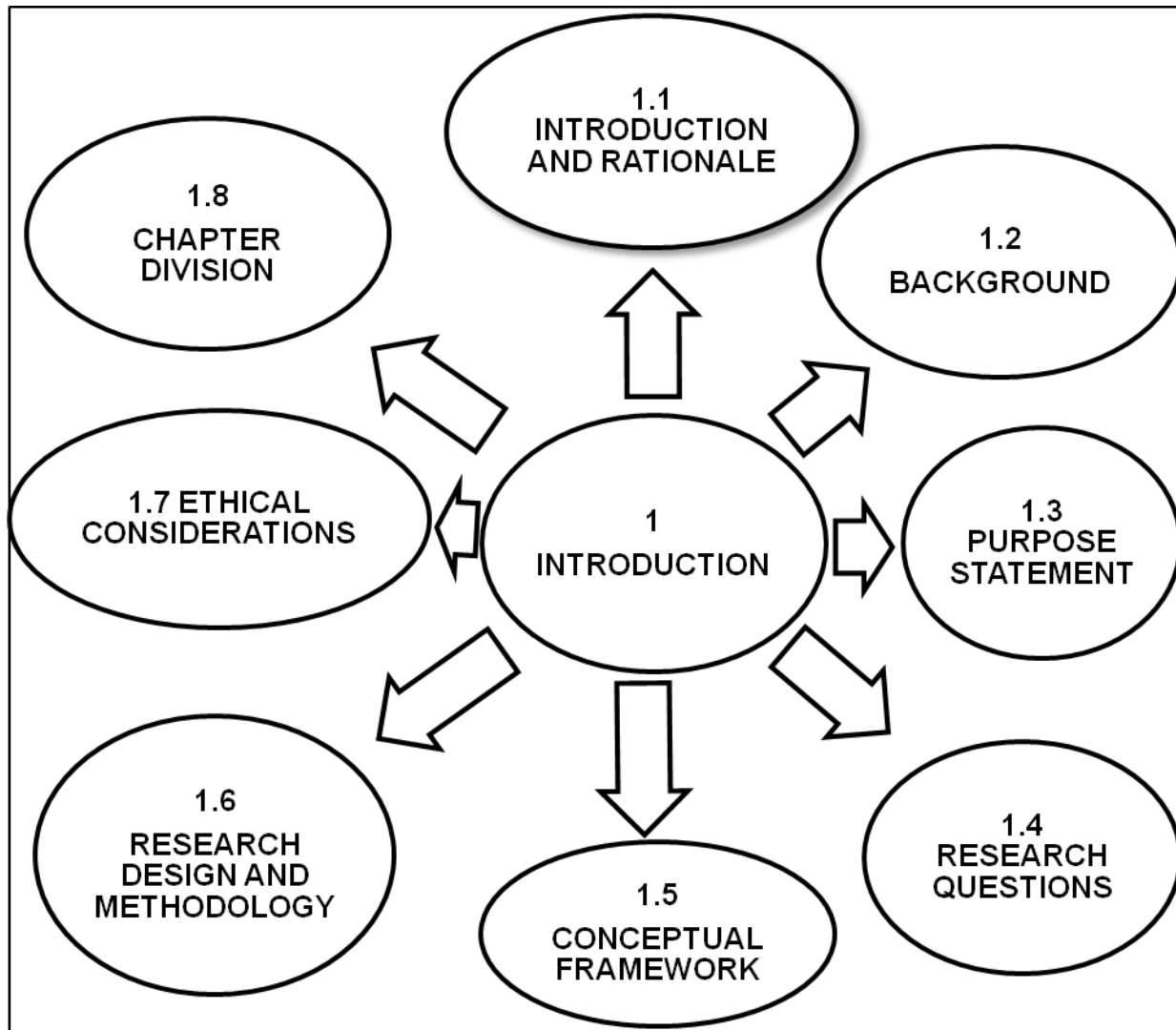


Figure 1.1 Overview of Chapter One

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Globally, the concept of inclusion in education embraces the democratic values of liberty, equality and human rights, as well as recognising and accommodating diversity, thereby respecting the rights of all members of schools, as well as wider communities

(Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:30). The move towards inclusive education has shifted the traditional focus from the learners who are experiencing difficulties in learning and having to adjust to the demands of the system to the system being capable of accommodating the diverse needs of all learners as inclusively as possible (DoE, 1999:3). According to a former Minister of Education in South Africa, Professor Kadar Asmal, the ultimate challenge in the creation of inclusive education in South Africa is to “create the conditions of learning and teaching in all our learning institutions so that all learners can be fully accommodated, can flourish and contribute effectively to the regeneration of our society, our economy and our country” (DoE, 1999:11). Inclusive education is about including everyone regardless of ability, gender, language or disability, so that all learners can belong at school and have access to the educational outcomes that the schools offer (Swart & Pettipher, 2011:4). It is thus about more than “special needs” or disabilities– it is concerned with comprehensive education, equality and the collective belonging of all (Thomas & Loxley, 2001:118).

Effective inclusive education systems must recognise and respond to the diverse needs of their learners; accommodating both different styles and rates of learning, and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organisational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities (UNESCO, 2009). The implementation of an effective inclusive education system therefore requires a setting where a variety of individuals and essential elements are required to work together. These elements include school reform, changing of attitudes, collaboration and improved classroom and teaching strategies (Swart & Pettipher, 2011:19-20).

Individuals who play a vital role in the effective implementation of inclusive education include, among others, parents, teachers, principals, specialists in different areas and departmental support teams. Research affirms the view that, among all these individuals, teachers are the key to the success of inclusionary programmes (DoE, 2001) and that inclusive education can only be successful if teachers are part of the team driving this process (Malone *et al.*, 2001:578). Consequently, teachers’ personal engagement as a primary resource is integral to the effective implementation of

inclusive education (Haskell, 2000; DoE, 2001; Forlin, Cedillo, Romero-Contreras *et al.*, 2010:724; Donald *et al.*, 2010:27).

Teaching within an inclusive education system has challenged the process of traditional teaching in many ways. All areas of education have changed during the past decades, especially with regard to the roles of teachers, together with the continuous introduction of new approaches to curriculum and assessment (Rouse, 2011:9). In addition, legislation has seen changes in how difficulties in learning are conceptualised from special educational needs to barriers to learning. These changes have involved the development of new understandings about the interactive nature of learners' needs and a shift in focus from 'what is wrong with the child' to 'what does the child need to support his or her learning'. Such developments have substantially affected the professional identity as well as the roles and responsibilities of many teachers. It also has implications concerning how teachers are trained and supported in their professional development (Chataika *et al.*, 2012; Brand *et al.*, 2012; Rouse, 2011:9; Dalton, 2005; Hall *et al.*, 2003).

Teachers in South Africa are, therefore, currently challenged to adapt to a different way of approaching barriers to learning. In the past, it was commonly accepted that when a teacher was confronted with learners experiencing barriers to learning, removing such learners from the classroom was the stratagem to manage such 'problems' (Kujwana *et al.*, 2010:3). However, now teachers need to acknowledge that any factor that may cause a breakdown in learning is a barrier to learning and that it is not only the 'deficit-within-the-learner' that is the problem (Nel *et al.*, 2012:15). White Paper 6, *Special Needs Education: Building an inclusive education and training system* (DoE, 2001) distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic barriers to learning. Intrinsic barriers, on the one hand, are located within the learner, for example, a medical condition (e.g. HIV/Aids or Attention Deficit Disorder) or a disability (e.g. physical, sensory or learning impairments). Extrinsic barriers, on the other hand, refer to conditions outside the learner, including factors emanating from the learning environment, for example, pedagogical causes such as insufficient support from teachers due to improper training

or poor socio-economic circumstances (Nel *et al.*, 2012:15; Department of Education, 1997:55).

In order to accommodate the unique needs of a diversity of learners in present-day inclusive classrooms (Berry, 2010:76), teachers face increased pressure to diversify their roles (Avramidis *et al.*, 2000:278; Patterson & Graham, 2000). This requires them to refine their knowledge and skills and, where necessary, develop new knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles as open-minded educators in order to adapt the curriculum in such a way that all learners achieve the relevant learning aims. This necessitates continuous professional development, as well as the ability to collaborate with other role-players such as special schools as resource centres, full-service schools, district support services and other health professionals (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:19-20). Thus, in order to effect inclusive education, teachers need to adapt to their changing roles and this will require a high sense of self-efficacy (Engelbrecht, 2007:176).

Effective teaching is consequently related to self-efficacious teachers. The effectiveness of teaching is influenced by teachers' own personal evaluation of how capable they are of teaching (Wood & Olivier, 2010:162). Belief in own abilities to execute given attainments or challenges can be conceptualised as self-efficacy and can therefore be defined as the belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the course of action required to produce results (Henson, 2001:4). Self-efficacy belief has been identified as the major mediator for behaviour, and importantly, for behavioural change (Goddard *et al.*, 2004:7).

Teacher self-efficacy can be defined as teachers' beliefs or convictions that they can influence how well learners learn, even those learners who may be considered difficult or unmotivated (Guskey & Passaro, 2012: 52). This requires of a teacher to be able to judge his or her capabilities in order to bring about the desired outcomes of learner engagement and learning. It is also important to note that the importance of teacher efficacy develops from its spiral nature; capability in performance creates a new successful experience which then affects the efficacy beliefs (Zimmerman & Cleary, 2006:48).

Founded on social cognitive theory, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs have repeatedly been associated with positive teaching behaviours and higher learner performance (Henson, 2001:2). Self-efficacious teachers persist with struggling learners and criticise learners' incorrect answers less (Margolis & McCabe, 2004:242). They are more likely to agree that learners who traditionally have been labelled as learners with barriers to learning and development, should be placed in a mainstream education setting and are less likely to refer learners for special education (Kosko & Wilkins, 2009:3). Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy tend to experiment with methods of instruction, seek improved teaching methods and experiment with instructional materials (Bogler & Somech, 2004:277-289).

It is, therefore, clear that self-efficacy is important for teachers to teach effectively within an inclusive education system, because the belief in their own abilities powerfully affects behaviour, motivation and, ultimately, success or failure (Bandura, 1997:37). For a teacher to experience self-efficacy in an inclusive system it is necessary that teachers should be prepared, trained and supported. However, regardless of all the support and training that have already been provided regarding inclusive education, teachers still feel disempowered and ineffective in the implementation of inclusive education (Prinsloo, 2005:455; Kujwana *et al.*, 2010:3, 11). This results in negative attitudes and demotivation due to a need for more effective training and support to be able to teach effectively in an inclusive classroom and, at the same time, experience a sense of self-efficacy as a teacher. A belief in, and perception of, one's own abilities can create a specific attitude which supports the idea that there is a positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their attitudes towards inclusive education (Weisel & Dror, 2006:158; Chester *et al.*, 2011:236-247; Savolainen *et al.*, 2012:52).

Numerous studies show that the successful implementation of inclusive education largely depends on the teacher's positive attitude towards it (Cagran & Schmidt, 2011:172). When teachers experience positive feelings of self-efficacy within an inclusive education system, it will produce a more positive attitude to the whole approach. Berry (2010:80) also reports a connection between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and the conviction that they can influence the learning performance of

learners with barriers to learning and development; teachers with a more positive view of inclusion are more confident in their ability to support learners in inclusive classrooms and adapt aids and procedures according to the learners' needs. Savolainen *et al.* (2012:52) suggest that attitudes may be changed gradually by offering newly-trained teachers more concrete tools to meet diverse needs in their classrooms. According to Daane *et al.* (2000:332); Burke and Sutherland (2004:164); as well as Cagran and Schmidt (2011:172), teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are often not based on ideological arguments, but rather on practical concerns about how inclusive education can be successfully implemented. The more teachers believe that they are able to implement inclusive practices at a concrete and pragmatic level, the more positive their attitudes are towards inclusion. Negative feelings are enhanced by the size of the class, inappropriate adaptations and insufficient preparation of teachers for inclusion, as well as having doubts about the usefulness and advantages of inclusion for other learners when learners with, for example, disabilities are included in the mainstream classroom (Nel *et al.*, 2013; Wood & Olivier, 2008:240).

Teachers have to deal with complex dilemmas both in and out of the classroom in the process of delivering the curriculum in a way which is relevant to the diverse needs of their learners. This situation often creates stress and can exacerbate feelings of loneliness, isolation and disempowerment for teachers (Kujwana *et al.*, 2010:11) and consequently a feeling of inefficiency. Teachers are often so discouraged by this loss of control that they lose their enthusiasm and motivation, and as a result, the entire learning process can be hampered (Prinsloo, 2005:455). When teachers acquire abilities, skills and professional expertise they often accept the obligations of inclusive education and subsequently become more confident about inclusion (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011; Sharma *et al.*, 2009; Cagran & Schmidt, 2011:172; Chan, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007) which in turn empowers them to be more effective in teaching. Adequate professional development and sufficient support can, therefore, help teachers to feel equipped to address and experience positive self-efficacy beliefs. Positive self-efficacy beliefs are clearly related to an internal locus of control and motivation (Wood & Olivier, 2010:162; Henson, 2001:5). Teachers with improved self-

efficacy will, therefore, become more motivated to implement inclusive education successfully.

Hence, it is obvious that more effective teachers, within an inclusive education system, will be developed by enhancing their self-efficacy. However, in the current education situation, there is a need for intervention to empower teachers to develop a sense of belief in their own ability to cope within the teaching environment. By developing a sense of self-efficacy, teachers will feel more empowered and equipped to teach effectively (Adalsteinsson *et al.*, 2014; Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Hsiao *et al.*, 2011; Wood & Olivier, 2010:162; Hadre, 2003; Pajares, 2003).

I have chosen full-service schools for my research. A full-service school is part of a strategy of Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) and can be viewed as a mainstream school which provides quality education for all learners by meeting the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner. It is envisaged that full-service schools will provide education for regular learners as well as those with disabilities in an inclusive setting (DoE, 2010:7). However, these schools have been transformed recently and are experiencing various challenges to make inclusion work (Walton *et al.*, 2014). Since full-service schools make provision for all learners with and without barriers, I found it suitable for my research.

The aim of my study has, therefore, been to explore what influences full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy to successfully implement inclusive education in these schools and subsequently develop recommendations for teachers to enhance their sense of self-efficacy in order to contribute to more effective teaching within an inclusive education system.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

My study forms part of an international collaborative research project among South Africa, Finland, China, Slovenia, Lithuania and England. The main purpose of this comparative project was to produce a knowledge base that sheds light on the nature of the development of inclusive education in different countries from a teacher's perspective (Engelbrecht, 2012). During Phase One of the international study, data

were collected by using *The Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices* (TEIP) scale (see Forlin *et al.*, 2011:50). The TEIP scale is designed to measure perceived teacher efficacy to teach in inclusive classrooms. The version of the scale used has eighteen statements assessed by a Likert-type scale with six response anchors of *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, *Disagree Somewhat*, *Agree Somewhat*, *Agree*, and *Strongly Agree*. The data on the South African teachers' self-efficacy indicated that many teachers experience a lack of self-efficacy in the implementation of inclusive education (Savolainen *et al.*, 2012:65).

In this doctoral study, I have sought to further explore the research question that focuses on teachers' sense of self-efficacy within inclusive education with specific reference to South African teachers. It formed part of the qualitative phase of the project. Participants from the above sample have been requested to take part in this study exploring the issue of South African teachers' self-efficacy in inclusive education in more depth.

### **1.3 PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The purpose of my research was to explore what influences full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy, enabling or disabling them to implement inclusive education successfully. These findings have been used to provide recommendations for teachers, schools and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to enhance the sense of self-efficacy of teachers teaching within an inclusive education environment (*cf.* 6.2.2).

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION**

My research was guided by the following research question: what influences full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy, enabling or disabling them to implement inclusive education successfully?

The main research question was operationalised by the following secondary questions:

- What is self-efficacy?

- What knowledge, skills and values are regarded as essential for teachers' sense of self-efficacy in inclusive education?
- What are the factors that enable or disable teachers' sense of self-efficacy to implement inclusive education successfully?
- What are the needs of teachers to be self-effective in an inclusive education system?
- Which recommendations can be developed to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in an inclusive education system?

## **1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The following central concepts are defined to enhance the understanding of the focus of this study: self-efficacy; a teachers' sense of self-efficacy; effective teaching; and inclusive education.

### **1.5.1 Self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy can be defined as the belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments (Dimopoulou, 2012:508). It is also described as people's beliefs about what they are capable of and what their abilities are to define their actions as individuals (Kosko & Wilkins, 2009:3). Self-efficacy belief is characterized as the major mediator for our behaviour and, importantly, for behavioural change (Bandura, 2006; Pajares, 2007; Bandura, 1997:03).

### **1.5.2 Teachers' sense of self-efficacy**

Teacher self-efficacy can be viewed as the perceived competence of teachers, on a subjective level, of their self-efficacy to deal with all demands and challenges that are deemed as essential in teaching. Consistent with the general formulation of self-efficacy, Goddard *et al.* (2004:2) define teacher self-efficacy as a teacher's personal belief of his or her own capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of learner

engagement and learning, even among those learners who may be difficult or unmotivated (Guskey, 2012:628; Schaefer, 2010; Pajares, 2009; Ryan, 2007:12).

### **1.5.3 Effective teaching**

Effective teaching refers to the competencies needed to teach effectively (Sakarneh, 2010:1). Markley (2004:2) affirms that effective teaching is related to the ability to provide instruction to different learners of different abilities while incorporating instructional objectives and assessing the effective learning mode of the learners.

According to the literature, being an effective teacher in inclusive education requires teachers to address the diversity of needs in the classroom; being able to work in multicultural settings; and to respect difference (Darling-Hammond, 2010:12). Developing the necessary skills to be able to identify specific individual needs of each individual learner and to know how to respond by using a wide range of teaching strategies are skills that are also needed for effective teaching within an inclusive education classroom (Savolainen *et al.*, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Klassen *et al.*, 2009; Chan, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007; Malinen & Savolainen, 2008). Donald *et al.* (2010:133-134) identify specific characteristics such as the efficient use of time; good relationships with learners; providing positive feedback; having a high learner success rate; and, in general, providing support for the learners with and without disabilities.

The effective teacher in inclusive education is also able to work in close collaboration with colleagues, parents and the wider community; possesses subject knowledge and pedagogical skills; the capacity to work effectively with a wide range of learners and colleagues; to contribute to the school and the profession; and to continuously develop personally and professionally (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2010: 16, 39).

### **1.5.4 Inclusive education**

There is general consensus that inclusive education is about including everyone within a mainstream education setting by means of physical access, acceptance and

participation in mainstream classrooms, regardless of ability, gender, language or disability, so that all learners can belong at school and have access to the educational outcomes that the schools offer (Savolainen *et al.*, 2012; Kozleski & Waitoller, 2010; Kozleski *et al.*, 2007).

Inclusive education is about more than “special needs” or disabilities – it is concerned with comprehensive education equality and collective belonging of all learners in a mainstream school (Nel *et al.*, 2012:4; Thomas & Loxley, 2001:118). Inclusive education must reflect the values, ethos and culture of an education system committed to excellence by enhancing educational opportunities for all learners (DoE 2001, 2005, 2008; DoBE, 2010; Kinsella & Senior, 2008; Horne & Timmons, 2009; Sharma *et al.*, 2012; Chiner & Cardona, 2013; Florian & Spratt, 2013; O’Toole & Burke 2013; Brennan, 2000:23).

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **1.6.1 Research paradigm**

A research paradigm can be referred to as a perspective or framework which provides the researchers with a broad overview and direction for the research (King & Horrocks, 2010; Taylor *et al.*, 2007:5; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Weaver & Olson, 2006:460; Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2007; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006:2; Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). For the purposes of this study I have worked within a constructivist research paradigm (Merriam, 2009:8-9). This research paradigm asserts that participants “make meaning” of a phenomenon or situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:200). The strategy is inductive, the outcomes descriptive and the meaning is mediated through the researcher herself, as an instrument (Merriam, 2009:15). A thorough discussion regarding the research paradigm is provided in Chapter Four.

### **1.6.2 Research design**

A qualitative research approach was chosen for this study. Qualitative research is an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that “help us understand and explain

the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption to the natural setting as possible” (Merriam, 2009:13). Other terms often used interchangeably are naturalistic inquiry, interpretive research and inductive research (Merriam, 2009:9).

A number of key philosophical assumptions underpin qualitative studies. The following four characteristics are identified by most as being key to an understanding of the nature of qualitative research (Merriam, 2009:14). Firstly, it is assumed that “reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds”. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meanings people have constructed, i.e. how they make sense of their world and their experiences of it (Henning *et al.*, 2004:5). Secondly, it is assumed that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:3), and, thirdly, that qualitative studies involve fieldwork. Fourthly, it is assumed that an inductive research strategy will be employed. “Qualitative researchers build towards theory from observations and intuitive understandings gained in the field”. Finally, the product of a qualitative study is “richly descriptive” (Merriam, 2009:14-17).

I therefore found it suitable to make use of a qualitative research design in my research, located within a constructivist research paradigm, that focused on the meaning which teachers gave to their perceived sense of self-efficacy in order to understand their feelings and experiences, instead of a quantitative approach, which would rather instead predict its nature (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:274).

### **1.6.2.1 Strategy of inquiry**

In my research I made use of a multiple case-study approach. Qualitative case studies share with other forms of qualitative research the search for meaning and understanding. This includes the researcher as primary instrument of data collection and analysis, an inductive investigative strategy and the end product being richly descriptive (Merriam, 2009:39).

A case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam, 2009:40) in which the exploration of a small number of participants’ living experiences of

a phenomenon, as described by the participants, is identified and explored to help the investigator to understand the phenomenon (Stake, 2006:134; Yin, 2008:18; Creswell, 2009:13). The researcher investigates and explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple-bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g. observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports) and reports a case description as case-based themes (Merriam, 2009:43).

One of the most strongly defining characteristics of case study research lies in delimiting the object of the study, namely the case. It is therefore less of a methodological choice than “a choice of what is to be studied”. The “what” is a bounded system, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries (Merriam, 2009:40).

A multiple or collective case study approach refers to a co-ordinated set of case studies, more commonly described as multiple case studies (Yin, 2008:18; Stake, 2006:6). In this research I conducted two case studies in which I explored selected participants’ feelings and experiences of their self-efficacy within an inclusive education system. The bounded system in this case was purposefully selected teachers in two school contexts (*cf.* 6.2.2). Participants who took part in Phase One of the international comparative research project (*cf.* 1.2) participated voluntarily in this study.

### **1.6.2.2 Participant selection**

Convenience sampling combined with purposive sampling was used. Since the multiple case study design demanded the need for me to visit the schools multiple times, travel costs and time constraints had to be taken into consideration – therefore the inclusion of convenience sampling. The willingness of schools and teachers to take part in the study also played a part in the selection of the schools. “Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most must be learned” (Merriam, 2009:78). Purposive sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the research population (Strydom, 2005:202). For this reason, and

because I wanted to explore teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system in more depth, I purposefully selected two full-service schools as case studies, who took part in Phase One of this research project. Full-service schools were chosen because they must provide access to and support for a wide range of learners experiencing barriers to learning and development within an inclusive education setting (DoE, 2005a:5). As mentioned earlier, the teachers participated voluntarily.

### **1.6.2.3 Data-collection methods**

In qualitative research knowledge is not only constructed by observable phenomena, but also by descriptions of people's intentions, values and reasons, meaning-making and self-understanding (Henning *et al.*, 2004:5). I made use of multiple qualitative data-collection methods in order to explore the experiences, perceptions and views of the participants in relation to their sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system. In this study I made use of primary and secondary data collection. Data collection methods included semi-structured individual and focus group interviews, as well as collages and field notes and a personal journal that I kept as the researcher (Creswell, 2009:181; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Pitney & Parker, 2009). Secondary data consisted of the findings of the completed questionnaires during Phase One of the international research project as discussed earlier (*c.f.* 1.6.2.1) which indicated a need for further exploration into teachers' sense of self-efficacy within an inclusive education system. In the primary data-collection phase I started with a pre-determined number of participants in every data-collection method. Since data saturation is one of the key factors in qualitative research (Creswell, 2009:175-176; Greeff, 2005:294), I kept the option open to include more participants, which turned out not to be needed. The primary data collection of this study is discussed in Chapter Four (*cf.* 4.5).

### **1.6.2.4 Data-collection process**

The processes of data collection and analysis are usually repetitive and continuous (Merriam, 2009:169). Therefore it is important not to follow a planned data-collection

process too rigidly, like a recipe, but rather to view these steps as guidelines. For this reason I kept the possibility of adjustment, development and change in mind when I formulated a plan to collect the data. This plan included eleven steps in the data-collection process and is discussed in Chapter Four (*c.f.* 4.5.2).

#### **1.6.2.5 Data analysis and interpretation**

Qualitative analysis transforms data into findings and constructs a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal (Patton, 2002:432; De Vos., 2005:333). This involves a continuous process where patterns which emerge are identified and interpreted (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:462).

The data obtained were analysed by means of the constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009:175) using inductive content analysis (Creswell, 2009:175; Ellingson, 2009:55; Merriam, 2009; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:37). I took the data from the collages, as well as the transcribed content of the focus-groups and individual interviews, and analysed and constructed all of these into themes and sub-themes which relate to the teachers' feelings and experiences of their sense of self-efficacy within an inclusive education setting. This method led to a deeper understanding of teachers' sense of self-efficacy (see Chapter Five, *cf.* 4.6).

#### **1.6.2.6 Quality criteria**

I took care to conduct a reliable study by taking into consideration the five aspects which contribute to the reliability of a study. They include credibility, transferability, triangulation, dependability and conformability (Ismail *et al.*, 2012:112). These aspects are discussed in Chapter Four (*cf.* 4.7).

#### **1.6.2.7 The role of the researcher**

As Merriam (2009:28) points out, a qualitative researcher is regarded as the primary instrument in the collection of the data (Lichtman, 2012:21; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:3). I explain my role as qualitative researcher in more depth in Chapter Four (*cf.* 4.5.3).

## **1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical considerations can be viewed as important concerns about values or convictions and personal views in research (Mack *et al.*, 2005:7). Qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, is more likely to be personally intrusive and, as such, ethical guidelines regarding informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, deception and care were undertaken in the study (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:334). The researcher's responsibility towards the participants is viewed by these authors as central to the research. The researcher's ethical code of conduct is, therefore, considered as extremely important, not only in terms of permission from participants to participate in the study, but also in terms of the kind of behaviour of the researcher towards them (Hatch, 2002:65).

The way in which informed consent from participants was approached, as well as the process of obtaining permission for conducting the study, is discussed next.

### **1.7.1 Informed consent**

A basic ethical consideration in the planning of all research must be whether the research can harm the participants or community members in any way. I considered gathering informed consent from the participants as the important first step in engaging in appropriate ethical behaviour during the research (Henning *et al.*, 2004:73). Therefore I gave a detailed description to the participants of what would be expected of them during the research process (Gibbs, 2007:10; Hatch, 2002:51).

Information about the goal of the study, as well as information about the procedure of the study, was given to each participant before commencement of the research (Strydom, 2005:59). This was handed out in the form of a letter and all content included in the letter was also personally discussed by me with the participants. The letter included specific information about the study and also explained the expectations of the study. Any research study should respect participants' right to privacy (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:101). Included also in the letter, therefore, was an agreement with each participant that any information would be managed with total confidentiality and that no names or

personal information would be disclosed. I also explained in the letter and in person to them that full confidentiality between the participants especially in the group interview, could be difficult. Therefore I asked them to respect each other by keeping whatever was said and mentioned in the interviews to themselves. They gave me their word, and I trusted them. Participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they would have the option to discontinue if they should choose to do so. The participants were required to sign the letter as proof that they understood the procedure and expectations and as confirmation of their voluntary participation in the project. No participant was, therefore, treated unfairly or included in the study under false pretences (Christians, 2011:65).

### **1.7.2 Permission to undertake the study**

In any research project the purpose of obtaining voluntary consent for participation is done to ensure that no participant will be harmed, either physically or psychologically (Henning *et al.*, 2004:73). Hatch (2002:67) views the signed documents in which participants give informed consent to participate in the research as most important in a qualitative study. The protection of participants' interests was ensured in this way.

#### **1.7.2.1 Ethical approval**

This research is part of a project (*A Comparative Analysis of Teachers' Roles in Inclusive Education*) which obtained permission from the North-West University Ethical Committee.

## **1.8 CHAPTER DIVISION**

The thesis is divided into the following chapters:

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Chapter Two: Self-efficacy</b>	A theoretical framework of self-efficacy and possible contributing factors to self-efficacy is discussed.
<b>Chapter Three: Inclusive Education</b>	A theoretical framework for inclusive education systems in South Africa is discussed.
<b>Chapter Four: Research design and methodology</b>	This includes a detailed discussion of the research methodology, design and paradigm used in this study.
<b>Chapter Five: Data analysis and interpretation</b>	The findings arising from all data collected in the data collection procedure are presented, discussed, analysed and interpreted
<b>Chapter Six: Guidelines for enhancing teachers' self-efficacy</b>	The guidelines for enhancing teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system, based on the findings of Chapter five, are presented.
<b>Chapter Seven: Summary, limitations and recommendations</b>	This includes a summary of the thesis as well as addressing limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### SELF-EFFICACY

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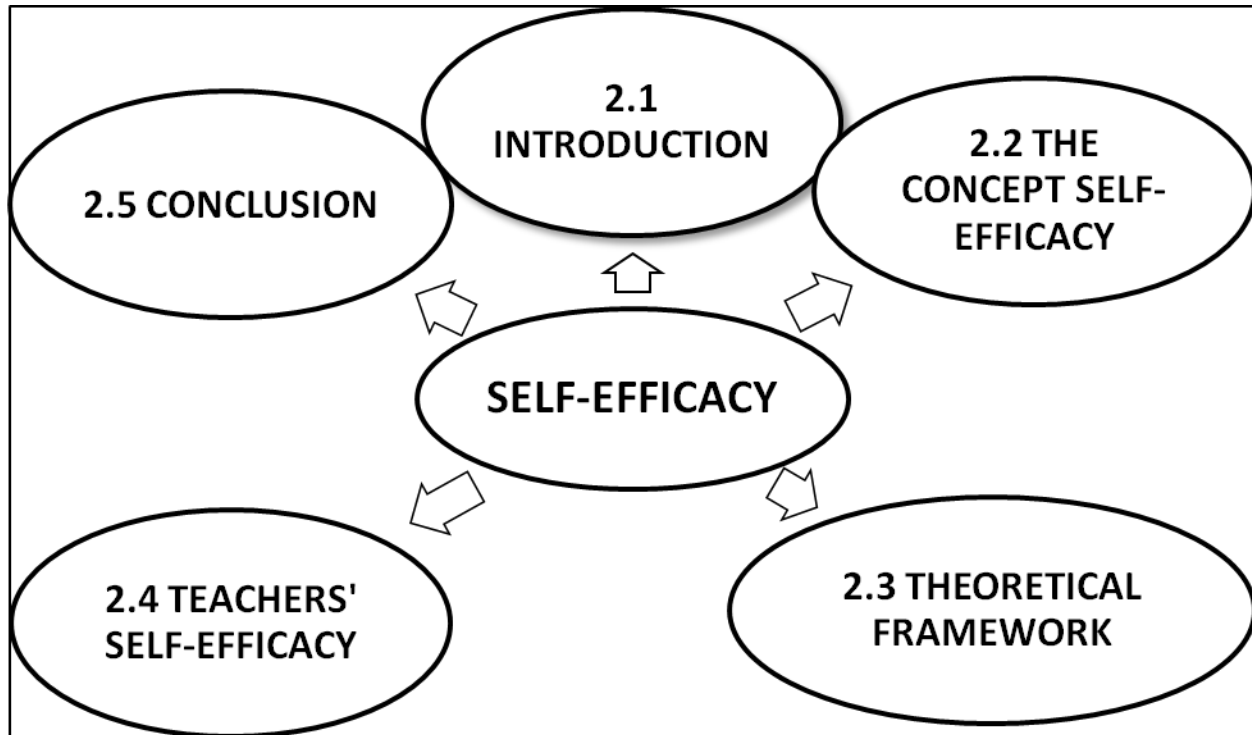


Figure 2.2 Overview of Chapter Two

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the main bodies of existing knowledge and literature on self-efficacy theory and teacher self-efficacy are reviewed. I aim to form a clear understanding of teachers' self-efficacy in this chapter. Therefore it is essential to understand the basic theory of self-efficacy first, before continuing with teachers' self-efficacy. The chapter starts with constructing self-efficacy as a concept in order to understand its meaning. A theoretical framework of self-efficacy theory is subsequently summarised to broaden the understanding of how self-efficacy develops together with possible positive influences of

self-efficacy. This is followed by a discussion of teachers' self-efficacy regarding the meaning, importance and developmental aspects of what it entails.

## **2.2 THE CONCEPT SELF-EFFICACY**

Self-efficacy embraces two global concepts, namely self-definition and efficacy. Self-definition is viewed as the identity of a person. This includes a personal perception about one's character, abilities and attitudes, especially in relation to persons or things outside oneself (Zulkosky, 2009:95). Efficacy on the other hand is defined as the power to produce an effect or the quality of being successful in producing an intended result. Synonyms for efficacy include effectiveness, efficaciousness and productiveness (Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary, 2006).

The combination of self-definition and efficacy results in self-efficacy as a concept and implies a conscious awareness of one's ability to be effective and to control actions. This specifically includes the belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. This belief mainly refers to a personal conviction that one has about one's abilities, including having the necessary skills and resources required for one to succeed in a particular situation. These beliefs are described as determinants of how people think, behave and feel (Bandura, 1997:95). Pajares (2004) therefore asserts that self-efficacy occurs when people decide how to behave based more on their belief in their own capabilities of accomplishment than in their knowledge or skills about a situation.

Self-efficacy forms part of a self-system. This system includes a person's attitudes, abilities, and cognitive skills and plays a major role in how individuals perceive situations and how they behave in response to different situations (Bandura, 2005).

For this study I aim to elucidate self-efficacy and how it develops in order to enhance a proper understanding of teachers' self-efficacy. This requires an understanding of self-efficacy from a broader theoretical background. Theories and models help to explain behaviour, as well as suggest how to develop more effective ways to influence and

change behaviour (Reeves, 2008:337). For this reason, a theoretical framework of self-efficacy is discussed next.

## **2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Theories which explain and study self-efficacy focus on the specific behaviour and the influence of a person's cognition as well as environmental aspects involved in this behaviour. With specific reference to a person's cognition, cognitive processes can be described as thinking processes involved in the acquisition, organization and use of information (Bandura, 1994:72). Environmental aspects involved are drawn from the social context such as communication and feedback from others (Schwarzer, 2008:27).

Theories about self-efficacy include social cognitive theory, social learning theory, self-concept theory and attribution theory, but various researchers affirm that self-efficacy is best understood in the context of social cognitive theory (Maddux, 2000:6; Pajares, 2004; Redmond, 2010; Locke & Latham, 2002). The social-cognitive theory expounds the understanding, nature and causes of human behaviour and motivation (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009:1059). It specifically emphasises how cognitive, behavioural, personal, and environmental factors interact to determine motivation and behaviour (Crothers *et al.*, 2008). For a clearer perspective and a basic understanding of how self-efficacy theory works, self-efficacy as embedded in a social cognitive theory is discussed next.

### **2.3.1 The social cognitive theory of self-efficacy**

The theoretical foundation of self-efficacy, as found in social cognitive theory, has been developed by psychologist Albert Bandura (1977:192, 1997:402). His concept of self-efficacy was specifically developed as part of a larger theory, Social Learning Theory (Ashford & LeCroy, 2010), which has progressed into Social Cognitive Theory (Levin *et al.*, 2001). This theory was presented by Bandura in response to his dissatisfaction with the principles of behaviourism and psychoanalysis, for in these two theories, the role of cognition in motivation and the role of the situation are largely ignored (Bandura, 1977).

According to Bandura (2005:1) social cognitive theory takes on an agentic perspective on change, development and adaptation. Bandura (2005:1) describes an agent as

someone who intentionally influences one's own functioning and life circumstances. As a result, people become self-organizing, proactive, self-regulating, and self-reflecting. They are contributors to their own life circumstances, such as their own motivation, behaviour, and development within a network of reciprocally interacting influences, and not just products of them (Bandura, 2005:1; Bandura, 1999, p. 169). Nevid (2009) confirms that social cognitive theory illustrates the fact that individuals do not simply respond to environmental influences, but are rather actively seeking and interpreting surrounding information. Therefore the role of observational learning, social experience and reciprocal determinism in the development of personality is emphasised in Bandura's theory.

As mentioned earlier, social cognitive theory assumes that people are capable of human agency or intentional pursuit of courses of action. Such an agency operates in a process called triadic reciprocal causation (Henson, 2001:3). This is a tri-modal action which forms an interplay between the individual, behaviour, and the environment. Bandura proposes this as a multi-directional model suggesting that a person's agency results in future behaviour specifically as a function of three interrelated forces: i) environmental influences; ii) behaviour; and iii) internal personal factors such as cognitive, affective, and biological processes (Mahto, 2006). This trinity mutually impacts on its members, determines what individuals come to believe about themselves, and affects the choices they make and actions they take. Consequently, people are not products of their environment and their biology. Instead, they are products of the dynamic interplay between the external, the internal, and their current and past behaviours (Nevid, 2009). In reaction to more reductionist theories (Henson, 2001:3), Bandura noted that dualistic doctrines that regard mind and body as separate entities do not provide much enlightenment on the nature of the disembodied mental state or on how immaterial mind and bodily events act on each other (Bandura, 1986:17).

Self-efficacy is an important aspect of social cognitive theory, because it is developed from external experiences as well as self-perception and is influential in determining the outcome of many events. It therefore represents the personal perception of external

social factors (Bandura, 1988; Mischel & Shoda, 1995). Self-efficacy, as grounded in the theoretical framework of social cognitive theory, emphasizes the evolution and exercise of human agency in order for people to have some influence over what they do (Bandura, 2006a). Bandura (2006a) maintains that in this conception, people are self-organizing, proactive, self-regulating, and self-reflecting. From this perspective, self-efficacy affects one's goals and behaviours and is influenced by one's actions and conditions in the environment (Schunk & Meece, 2006). Efficacy beliefs determine how environmental opportunities and impediments are perceived (Bandura, 2006a) and affect choice of activities, how much effort is expended on an activity, and how long people will persevere when confronting obstacles (Pajares, 1997). Self-efficacy theory, as centred in social cognitive theory, focuses on the role of observational learning and social experience in the development of personality. It places emphasis on the role of cognition; on issues like a person's perception of reality and the ability to self-regulate, of which an individual's perception of his/her self-efficacy is a key component (Pajares, 2004).

In 1986, when psychologist Albert Bandura propounded a social cognitive theory of human functioning, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*, he painted a portrait of human behaviour and motivation in which individuals' self-beliefs are critical elements. His subsequent work, *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control* (1997) advanced the discussion. People hold beliefs about themselves that affect their daily functioning. Located at the core of social cognitive theory, these beliefs are described by Pajares (2009) as self-efficacy beliefs, because they define the judgments that individuals hold about their capabilities to learn or to perform courses of action at designated levels. Self-efficacy beliefs are by their nature the self-perceptions that individuals hold about their capabilities (Pajares, 2009). The developmental aspects of self-efficacy beliefs within self-efficacy theory are subsequently discussed.

### **2.3.2.1 Self-efficacy as a developmental process**

Self-efficacy beliefs begin to form in early childhood as children deal with a wide variety of experiences, tasks and situations. However, the growth of self-efficacy does not end

during youth, but continues to evolve throughout life as people acquire new skills, experiences, and understanding. It forms part of personal development and is an ongoing open process of growth (Gordon *et al.*, 2011). Processes involved include five aspects: affective processes, cognitive processes, motivation, perceived self-efficacy and self-regulation. These five aspects affect the level of self-efficacy a human being may experience (Bandura, 2005), which are: i) Affective processes: processes regulating emotional states and elicitation of emotional reactions; ii) Cognitive processes: thinking processes involved in the acquisition, organization and use of information; iii) Motivation: activation to action. The level of motivation is reflected in the choice of courses of action, and in the intensity and persistence of effort.; iv) Perceived self-efficacy: people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce effects; and v) Self-Regulation: the exercise of influence over one's own motivation, thought processes, emotional states and patterns of behaviour.

### **2.3.2.2 Sources of self-efficacy beliefs**

People's beliefs about their efficacy can be developed by interpreting information primarily from four main sources of influence. Bandura (1977:192) outlined these four sources of information that individuals could employ to judge their efficacy, namely mastery experiences (performance outcomes or accomplishments), vicarious experiences and social modelling, social (verbal) persuasion, and psychological responses (physiological feedback or emotional arousal). These components help individuals to determine whether they believe that they have the capability to accomplish specific tasks and are briefly discussed next.

#### **2.3.2.2.1 Mastery experiences (performance outcomes / accomplishments)**

The most effective way of developing a strong sense of efficacy is through mastery experiences. Performing a task successfully strengthens the individual's sense of self-efficacy. However, failing to adequately deal with a task or challenge can undermine and weaken self-efficacy. According to Bandura (2005), performance outcomes, or accomplished/non-accomplished past experiences, are the most important source of

self-efficacy. Past positive and negative experiences can influence the ability of an individual to perform a subsequent task. If one has performed well at a task previously, one is more likely to feel competent and perform well at a similarly associated task (Williams & Williams, 2010; Yildirim, 2011; Frank, 2011; Vancouver *et al.*, 2002; Bandura, 1977:195).

#### **2.3.2.2.2 Vicarious experiences and social modelling**

Social modelling, as a result of witnessing other people successfully completing a task, is another important source of self-efficacy. People can develop high or low self-efficacy vicariously through other people's performances. When a person watches another's performance he or she compares their own competence with this individual's competence. If a person sees someone similar to them, for example the same job, skills, age and/or interests, succeed, it can increase their self-efficacy. Bandura (2005:10) states that "Seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises observers' beliefs that they too possess the capabilities to master comparable activities to succeed". An example of how vicarious experiences can increase self-efficacy in the workplace is through mentoring programmes, where one individual is paired with someone on a similar career path who will be successful at raising the individual's self-efficacy beliefs. This is even further strengthened if both have a similar skills set, so that a person can see first-hand what he or she might achieve. However, the opposite is also true; seeing someone similar fail or quit at a task can lower self-efficacy. The observation of these failures may decrease individuals' sense of own belief in their chances of succeeding (Griffin *et al.*, 2010; Ellis *et al.*, 2010; Nevid, 2009; Pajares, 2009; Pajares, 2004; Bandura, 1977:196; Bandura, 1999:156).

#### **2.3.2.2.3 Social persuasion (verbal persuasion)**

Bandura (2005:8) also asserted that people could be verbally persuaded to believe that they have the skills and capabilities to succeed. Self-efficacy is therefore influenced by encouragement as well as discouragement pertaining to an individual's performance or ability to perform. The level of credibility of a person giving the verbal persuasion, for

instance a person in a higher position, directly influences the effectiveness of verbal persuasion; where there is more credibility there will be a stronger influence. For example, a school principal encourages a teacher by saying that “you can do it, I have confidence in you” will improve the teacher’s belief in his/her own capabilities. Using verbal persuasion in a positive light leads individuals to expend more effort; therefore, they have a greater chance at succeeding. Getting verbal encouragement from others helps people overcome self-doubt and instead focus on giving their best effort to the task at hand. However, if the verbal persuasion is negative it can lead to doubts about one’s self, resulting in lower chances of success (Bandura, 1999:156; Redmond, 2010).

#### **2.3.2.2.4 Psychological responses (physiological feedback / emotional arousal)**

The fourth major source of self-efficacy is the state of physiological and/or psychological/emotional arousal. This source of efficacy information is important, because people tend to perceive physiological and/or psychological emotional activations as signs of vulnerability and dysfunction. Since, for example, high levels of stress at work are likely to impair work performance, employees may be more inclined to feel efficacious about successful performance when not preoccupied by fatigue and/or emotional agitation (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2002). Individuals’ own responses and emotional reactions to situations also play an important role in beliefs of self-efficacy. However, Bandura (2005:8) asserts “it is not the sheer intensity of emotional and physical reactions that is important but rather how they are perceived and interpreted”. Moods, emotional states, physical reactions and stress levels can all impact on how a person feels about personal capabilities within a particular situation. For example, a person who becomes extremely nervous before speaking in public may develop a weak sense of self-efficacy in these situations. By learning how to minimize stress and elevate a mood when facing difficult or challenging tasks, people can improve their sense of self-efficacy (Hickton, 2014; Redmond, 2010; Bandura, 1977:197).

Physical and emotional states such as anxiety, stress, arousal, and mood states also provide information about efficacy beliefs. People can measure their degree of confidence by the emotional state they experience as they contemplate an action.

Strong emotional reactions to a task provide cues about the anticipated success or failure of the outcome. When they experience negative thoughts and fears about their capabilities, those affective reactions can themselves lower self-efficacy perceptions and trigger additional stress and agitation that help ensure the inadequate performance they fear. Of course, judgments of self-efficacy from somatic and emotional states are not necessarily linked to task cues. Individuals in a depressed mood lower their efficacy independent of task cues. One way to raise self-efficacy beliefs is to improve physical and emotional well-being and reduce negative emotional states. Because individuals have the capability to alter their own thinking and feeling, enhanced self-efficacy beliefs can, in turn, powerfully influence the physiological states themselves (Pajares, 2002; Bandura, 1997). Although this source is viewed as the least influential of the four, it is important to emphasize that if a person is more at ease with a specific task he or she will feel more capable and consequently have higher levels of belief in their self-efficacy (Redmond, 2013:8).

### **2.3.2.3 Judgements of self-efficacy**

Judgments of self-efficacy are generally measured along three basic scales: magnitude, strength, and generality (Redmond, 2013:6; Lunenburg, 2011:5). Self-efficacy magnitude measures the difficulty level (e.g. simple, moderate, or difficult). The perception of a task's difficulty is specifically affected by the level of task demand necessary to accomplish the task (Lewandowski, 2005:19; Van der Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett, 2002). For example, teachers can ask themselves: 'How difficult is my class work?' or 'Are the quizzes easy or hard?' Self-efficacy strength refers to the amount of conviction an individual has about performing successfully at different levels of difficulty (Van der Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett, 2002). For instance, the following kinds of questions demonstrate that a person is able to make judgements about their own self-efficacy: 'How confident am I to excel at my work tasks?' or 'How sure am I that I can climb the ladder of success?'

Bandura (1997) has identified several conditions under which judgments of competence can generalize across activities, i.e., the extent to which they relate to, or transfer

across, different performance tasks or domains. Lunenburg (2011:5) also describes generality of self-efficacy as the "degree to which the expectation is generalized across situations". An employee's general sense of capability influences his perception, motivation, and performance (Bandura, 1997). People rarely attempt to perform a task when they think it is expected that they will be unsuccessful. For example, one teacher may believe that she can learn how to accommodate learners with barriers by taking courses online on her own. Another teacher may have strong doubts about his/her ability to learn how to accommodate learners with barriers by taking courses online and would choose to rather do more formal training. Because people try to learn and perform only those tasks that they believe they will be able to perform successfully, self-efficacy has powerful effects on learning, motivation and performance (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2011; Luthans *et al.*, 2007; Bandura, 2004).

### **2.3.2 Positive influences of self-efficacy**

Since Bandura published his seminal 1977 paper, "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioural Change", the subject has become one of the most studied topics in psychology. As Bandura (2001) and other researchers (Redmond; 2013:5; Lunenburg, 2011; Pajares, 2009; Gecas, 2004) have demonstrated, self-efficacy beliefs can affect every area of human endeavour and have an impact on behavioural and motivational inputs which can influence a result of behaviour. Pajares (2009) declares that it provides the foundation for human motivation, well-being, and personal accomplishment. Redmond (2013:5) confirms that self-efficacy influences all aspects of human functioning such as social, emotional and physical wellbeing (Redmond, 2013:5). Consequently, high self-efficient individuals are generally more content with their work and lives (Judge *et al.*, 1998 as cited in Redmond, 2010). Gecas (2004) agrees that people behave in the way that gives expression to their initial beliefs; thus, self-efficacy functions as a self-fulfilling prophecy. He explains it with the following example: Employee A has high ability and a great deal of experience in creating graphs, but does not have confidence that he can create a high quality graph for an important conference. Employee B has only average ability and only a small amount of experience in creating graphs, yet has great confidence that she can work hard to

create a high quality graph for the same conference. Because of Employee A's low self-efficacy level for graph creation, he lacks the motivation to create one for the conference and tells his supervisor he cannot complete the task. Employee B, due to her high self-efficacy, is highly motivated, works overtime to learn how to create a high quality graph, presents it during the conference, and earns a promotion (Gecas, 2004). Therefore, self-efficacy has an influence over people's ability to learn, their motivation and their performance, as people will often attempt to learn and perform only those tasks in which they believe they will be successful in (Lunenburg, 2011).

Research has found that there is a positive link between high self-efficacy and high performance (Redmond, 2010; Conner & Norman, 2005; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005:128). High self-efficient individuals succeed often and better than individuals with low self-efficacy (Redmond, 2010; Van der Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett, 2002). Self-efficacy is thought to be a task-specific version of self-esteem (Lunenburg, 2011) and therefore, plays a major role in the approach of individuals towards goals, tasks, and challenges (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005:128). People with a strong sense of self-efficacy view difficult tasks and problems as challenging tasks to be mastered rather than threats to be avoided. They are consequently more likely to set more challenging goals for themselves and are more committed to the activities in which they participate to achieve the goals. They develop a deeper interest in topics, strive to obtain a higher amount of knowledge and increase their efforts in order to overcome their failures and setbacks (Bandura, 1995; Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Redmond, 2010). High self-efficient individuals generate more effective task strategies to facilitate goal attainment and respond more optimistically to negative feedback than low self-efficient individuals (Locke & Latham, 1990; as cited in Redmond, 2010). They persist longer in the face of difficulty and are therefore extremely resilient in the face of failure (Bandura & Locke, 2003). Strengthening self-efficacy thus augments, expands and supplements goal attainment motivation (Bandura, 1986; as cited in Redmond, 2010; Williams & Williams, 2010:455). People with low self-efficacy may decide the task is impossible and tend to avoid challenging tasks due to a belief that these difficult tasks and situations are

beyond their capabilities. They rather focus on personal failings and negative outcomes with the result that they quickly lose confidence in their personal abilities.

Self-efficacy has several effects on thought patterns and responses. Low self-efficacy can lead people to believe tasks to be harder than they actually are. This often results in poor task planning, as well as increased stress. People can become erratic and unpredictable when engaging in a task in which they have low self-efficacy. People with high self-efficacy tend to take a broader view of a task in order to determine the best plan. Obstacles often stimulate people with high self-efficacy to greater efforts, where someone with low self-efficacy will tend toward discouragement and giving up. Lastly, people with high self-efficacy attribute failure to external factors, where a person with low self-efficacy may more readily blame a lack of own ability (Pajares, 2009).

Researchers have demonstrated the positive effects of self-efficacy beliefs on effort, persistence, goal-setting, performance, motivation and ability to learn, as people will often attempt to learn and perform only those tasks in which they believe they will be successful (Pajares, 2009; Lunenburg, 2011:10). Self-efficacy beliefs can affect motivation in both positive and negative ways. In general, people with high self-efficacy are more motivated to make an effort to complete a task, and to persist longer in those efforts, than those with low self-efficacy. As noted before, individuals with high self-efficacy habitually work harder and persevere while low self-efficacy individuals frequently get demotivated and quit as a result (Bandura, 1986).

Furthermore, self-efficacy beliefs can influence physical wellness regarding the specific health behaviour, such as choices made regarding smoking, physical exercise, dieting and others (Conner & Norman, 2005; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005:128).

In the following table distinguishing characteristics of people with high self-efficacy versus low self-efficacy are illustrated.

High self-efficacy	Low self-efficacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View challenging problems as tasks to be mastered.</li> <li>• Develop deeper interest in the activities in which they participate.</li> <li>• Form a stronger sense of commitment to their interests and activities.</li> <li>• Recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid challenging tasks.</li> <li>• Believe that difficult tasks and situations are beyond their capabilities.</li> <li>• Focus on personal failings and negative outcomes.</li> <li>• Quickly lose confidence in personal abilities.</li> </ul>

Table 2.1 High self-efficacy versus low self-efficacy

Self-efficacy has been especially prominent in educational research, where it is reported that, regardless of previous achievement or ability, self-efficacious learners work harder; persist longer at tasks; persevere in the face of adversity; have greater optimism and lower anxiety; and consequently achieve better. Learners who believe they are capable of performing academic tasks and are academically self-sufficient also use more cognitive and metacognitive strategies which is associated with more self-regulated learning (Pajares, 2009). Self-regulation is essential to a learning process in terms of creating better learning habits and strengthening study skills; by applying learning strategies to enhance academic outcomes; and monitoring own performance and evaluating own academic progress (Jarvela & Jarvenoja, 2011; De Bruin *et al.*, 2011; Wolters, 2011; Zimmerman, 2008; Harris *et al.*, 2005). Self-regulation is not a mental ability or an academic performance skill; rather it is the self-directive process by which learners transform their mental abilities into academic skills (Harris *et al.*, 2005; Zimmerman, 2002:65). The process of self-regulated learning assists learners in managing their thoughts, behaviours, and emotions in order to successfully navigate their learning experiences. This process occurs when a learner's purposeful actions and processes are directed towards the acquisition of information or skills (Wolters, 2011; Pintrich & Zusho, 2002).

Caparara *et al.* (2008:526) found that confident learners who take control of their own learning experiences are more likely to participate in class, and prefer hands-on learning experiences, while those with low self-efficacy seem to shy away from academic interactions (Caprara *et al.*, 2008:526). Research conducted on Australian

high school science learners affirms the above by finding that those with high self-efficacy showed better academic performance than those with low self-efficacy (Carroll *et al.*, 2010:22). The significance of self-efficacy in a teaching and learning scenario is important for this study. Teachers' self-efficacy plays a major role in order to promote learners' self-efficacy. Low teacher efficacy could lead to low learner efficacy and consequently low academic achievement, which in turn can result in further declines in teacher efficacy (Bandura, 2001:05). For the purpose of this study, aspects centring on teachers' self-efficacy regarding what it is, its importance and how it can be enhanced are discussed next.

## **2.4 TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY**

Since self-efficacy exists in many domains of human functioning, including both professional and private behaviour, it is an important factor when it comes to successful teaching and learning. Educational research has long been focused on attempting to identify factors that affect, and specifically improve, teacher effectiveness (Gavora, 2010:17). Questions addressed in research have included what personal qualities teachers actually possess; what the ideal qualities of an effective teacher are; and what the nature and extent of the differences between the ideal and real qualities of teachers are. A large portion of this research stream has also been devoted to determining what educational and subject matter knowledge as well as skills the teacher has, or should have, to be effective and successful (Kolektív Autorov, 2006; Lukášová-Kantorková, 2003). Teachers' self-efficacy as a concept, the importance of self-efficacy for teachers and developing teacher self-efficacy are issues expanded on in the following paragraphs.

### **2.4.1 What is teacher self-efficacy?**

Gavora (2010:17), describes teacher self-efficacy as a self-regulatory, relatively broad psychological belief system that influences most teacher behaviour, including teaching performance. Teacher self-efficacy can also be defined as follows: It's a teacher's personal self-perceived belief, conviction or judgement in his/her own ability and capability to:

- affect their own teaching behaviour positively or negatively (Dimopoulou, 2012:509);
- plan, organise and carry out activities (organise and execute a course of action) that are required to attain given educational goals (successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular educational context ) (Tschannen-Moran *et al.*, 1998:233); and
- efficiently enhance learner performance (Dellinger *et al.*, 2008:755) by means of effectively completing the tasks that teaching requires that will support learners to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills, required for learning (Gavora, 2010:17; Bandura, 2006:5).

Although teacher self-efficacy cannot be easily defined, as teaching is complex and constantly evolving, and self-efficacy involves many traits and factors (*cf.* 2.3.4) Tai *et al.* (2012:77) identified the following components: i) Personal teaching self-efficacy: teachers' belief in the efficiency of their own teaching, understanding of their learners and belief that their methods can overcome the harmful effects of the external world on the learners and on their own teaching; ii) General teaching self-efficacy: teachers' belief in their own impact on learners' individual differences, as well as on learners in general. This can also include the teacher's belief that he/she can overcome the harmful effects of a learners' family circumstances as well as negative impacts from society on learning; and iii) Teachers' professional teaching self-efficacy: the belief in own skills and knowledge of subject field and practice that could result in learners learning effectively. Teacher self-efficacy should be distinguished from teacher competence, which is usually interpreted and/or applied to refer to only the teacher's professional knowledge and skills. Teacher self-efficacy is, however, a broader concept, and assumes that high self-efficacy underlies and enables successful use of professional knowledge and skills, or conversely, low self-efficacy inhibits effective use of professional knowledge and skills (Gavora, 2010).

However, it is important to add that there are other teacher characteristics besides professional knowledge and skills that are important in teaching. Essential teaching skills required to create productive learning environments include positive attitudes,

skills in organisation, feedback, questioning and effective communication, being able to work in a focused manner and being able to review and summarise. Other characteristics include enthusiasm, modelling, caring and having high expectations (Wynd *et al.*, 2011; McMillan, 2011; Eggen & Kauchak, 2009). These examples all increase learners' motivation and achievement. Being approachable, knowledgeable and available to learners' needs will generate a positive response from learners (Eggen & Kauchak, 2009).

#### **2.4.2 Importance of self-efficacy for teachers**

The development of self-efficacy in teachers is a vital prerequisite in enabling them to successfully demonstrate and apply appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour to be effective teachers (Wood & Olivier, 2008:240). Perceived self-efficacy of teachers is claimed to be a strong predictive power of productive teaching behaviour. This specifically involves the degree or extent of inputs and efforts of teachers and how they will behave and respond to whatever they are challenged with, resulting in a positive or negative reaction (Dimopoulou, 2012:509). A growing body of research on teacher self-efficacy suggests that it may account for individual differences in teacher effectiveness (Gavora, 2010:17). High teacher self-efficacy beliefs have been repeatedly found to be related to positive teaching behaviour in the classroom and consequent successful learner achievement as well as learner satisfaction and motivation (Tai *et al.*, 2012:77; Barnes, 2005:2; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). As a result, high teacher self-efficacy beliefs do not only positively influence teachers' own personal performance, achievement and motivation, but also those of the learners they teach (Huangfu, 2012:68).

When a teacher is highly self-efficient he/she is more likely to use a variety of teaching methods that develop learners' ability to think more critically and creatively and will support learners' autonomy to a greater extent (Brouwers & Tomic, 2003; Henson, 2001; Ross & Bruce, 2007). For example, these teachers employ more open-ended questions, inquiry methods, or allow more interaction in group learning. They will take

more risks in trying not-yet tested teaching strategies, and are more likely to use innovative elements in their teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007:945).

Highly self-efficient teachers will attempt to keep to the goals they set and will be more resilient when encountering obstacles to achieving these goals (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007:945). Persistence is a key characteristic of highly self-efficient teachers. This includes the amount of effort they invest in their teaching and their commitment to it (Henson, 2001:2; Wood & Olivier, 2008:241) as well as their devotion to prepare and deliver good instruction (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007:945). Teacher self-efficacy is also related to perseverance; the stronger the self-efficacy, the greater the perseverance and the likelihood that teaching behaviours will be successful. Thus, teacher self-efficacy is a strong self-regulatory characteristic that enables teachers to use their ability to enhance learners' learning (Gavora, 2010:17).

Teachers with high self-efficacy are more enthusiastic about teaching and have greater commitment to teaching and consequently exhibit lower levels of absenteeism and are better able to manage stress and avoid burnout (Wood & Olivier, 2008:241). Low self-efficacy results in experiencing greater difficulties in teaching and higher levels of job-related stress (Betoret, 2006), as well as lower levels of job satisfaction (Klassen *et al.*, 2009; Klassen *et al.*, 2010:742; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Research studies clearly indicate a strong relationship between teacher self-efficacy and burnout (Sarıçam & Sakız, 2014; Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). Burnout is conceptualized as resulting from long-term occupational stress, particularly among service workers which includes teachers (Jennett *et al.*, 2003). All teachers may experience stress in their work and most of them cope successfully with such stress. However, for many teachers burnout may be the endpoint of coping unsuccessfully with chronic stress (Jennett *et al.*, 2003). Low teacher self-efficacy plays a specific role in emotional exhaustion; reduced personal accomplishment; and depersonalization are consequences of burnout (Sarıçam & Sakız, 2014). Reduced personal accomplishment refers to a tendency of teachers evaluating themselves negatively as well as experiencing a general feeling that they are no longer doing a meaningful and important job (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009).

Depersonalization involves negative, cynical attitudes and feelings about one's learners or colleagues. An effective way of decreasing burnout among professionals is therefore to enhance self-efficacy (Sarıçam & Sakız, 2014; Moreno Rubio, 2010).

Furthermore, Klassen *et al.* (2010:742) as well as Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2009:1066), found a positive relationship between teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009:1066). Job satisfaction, which is composed of perceptions of fulfilment derived from daily work activities, is associated with higher levels of job performance (Judge *et al.*, 2001). Caprara *et al.* (2003) considered job satisfaction a "decisive element" influencing teachers' attitudes and performance and found self-efficacy to be an important contributor to teachers' job satisfaction. In a study of Cockburn and Haydn (2004) teachers reported that job satisfaction was gained from the nature of daily classroom activities, such as the opportunity to work with children; seeing learners making progress; working with supportive colleagues; and an overall positive school climate. However, teachers who are dissatisfied with their work display lower commitment and are at greater risk of leaving the profession (Evans, 2001; Ingersoll, 2001).

Teachers who work with learners who experience barriers to learning have an intensive level of emotional involvement in terms of their sense of accomplishment and engagement. It is, therefore, especially important to develop high self-efficacy beliefs and not experience burnout or job dissatisfaction (Sarıçam & Sakız, 2014).

#### **2.4.3 Developing and establishing teachers' self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy beliefs influence thinking patterns and emotions, which in turn, enable or inhibit actions. According to Bandura's theory, self-efficacy has two components: efficacy expectation and outcome expectation. Efficacy expectation is the conviction that one has in their ability, knowledge, and skills to successfully execute the behaviour or actions required to produce the desired outcomes. Outcome expectancy represents a person's estimate of the likely consequences (impact) of performing a task at the self-expected level of performance and the consequent belief that a given behaviour or

action will indeed lead to expected outcomes. Therefore, to be successful, the teacher must have both high efficacy expectations and high outcome expectancy. If the teacher has the former and not the latter, it is unlikely that the teacher will be a successful teacher even if the teacher is professionally well-qualified (Gavora, 2010: 17). To fully understand this, it is essential to elaborate on the development and establishment of teachers' self-efficacy.

#### **2.4.3.1 The development of teachers' self-efficacy**

Wood and Olivier (2008:245) proposed a model to develop teachers' self-efficacy. The model is based on a theory-generative research design to promote self-efficacy within the framework of four continuous reflective practices. These reflective practices include intrinsic growth; the development of an internal locus of control; interaction with the environment; and reflective practice. Based on this model, Wood and Olivier (2008:236) explain that in order for the teacher to develop self-efficacy, these four separate but overlapping and interdependent processes need to be facilitated. Various researchers agree with these processes and consider them as essential criteria for the development of self-efficacy (Cascio *et al.*, 2013:99; Niehaus *et al.*, 2012:120; Tangeman, 2008:25; Schunk & Meece, 2005:77; Pajares, 2002).

##### **(a) Intrinsic growth**

In order to inculcate a love of learning in learners, the teacher has to become a lifelong learner who continually strives for personal and professional self-improvement (Zimmerman & Cleary, 2006:45). Intrinsic growth therefore entails an improvement of the individual's knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to empower him/her to complete tasks and attain goals. This brings about changes at the cognitive, affective and behavioural levels (Niehaus *et al.*, 2012:130). It also necessitates the acquisition of life skills, including the formation of a healthy self-concept. The most important way to improve self-efficacy is to develop the life skill set that a person need to be effective (Frank, 2011). Strong life skills are helpful in dealing with environmental obstacles to teaching. Environmental obstacles, for example, can include a teacher experiencing a

lack of cooperation or conflict with other colleagues, or the inability to teach a learner with a specific need such as a visual barrier. The teacher consequently needs to acquire the necessary life skills such as interpersonal communication skills; conflict management to positively work with colleagues; as well as teaching skills to support diverse needs. This will help the teacher to effectively overcome these obstacles and experience higher levels of self-efficacy (Wood & Olivier, 2008:236).

(b) An internal locus of control

This is the perception one holds about personal responsibility for success or failure. With a well-developed internal locus of control, a person believes he/she is in charge of his/her own destiny, and that his/her actions can make a difference in the outcome. As a teacher develops personal skills and a healthy self-concept, he/she should start taking personal responsibility for his/her actions and then feel more in control of their actions (Woolfolk Hoy & Milner 2003:273). Personal skills can include interpersonal skills. If a teacher develops interpersonal skills such as improved communication with his/her learners, it will help to not only manage discipline problems better, but create a feeling of being in control of the class (Stronge *et al.*, 2004; Wolk, 2002). Any obstacles may be viewed as less insurmountable problems, and more as challenges to be overcome. Failures could be regarded as learning experiences and, due to this perspective, motivation should be increased and sustained. The process which represents the development of an internal locus of control intertwines with the processes representing intrinsic growth and interaction with the environment (Wood & Olivier, 2008:236).

(c) Interaction with the environment

This refers to a process of positive interaction with others in the immediate environment as well as constructive and creative use of available resources. Interaction with the environment helps the teacher to identify and analyse how he/she interacts with the infrastructure and environment of the school. This includes relationships with learners, colleagues, management and parents, with whom the teacher will be encouraged to form collaborative links with in order to gain support in the goal of preparing learners for

life (Smith & Guarino, 2005; Oplatka, 2004; Barnett, 2004; Parker *et al.*, 2003). It also enables the teacher to reflect on his/her relationships with learners and consequently to identify ways to improve their teaching skills in order to meet learning needs (Jungert & Rosander, 2010; Wood & Olivier, 2008:236). Gurney (2007), points out that when teachers show enthusiasm, and there is interaction in the classroom, the learning process is turned into a pleasurable experience, which motivates learners and subsequently increases achievement (Stronge *et al.*, 2004).

Teachers who collaborate with other teachers enhance their self-efficacy, because they feel less isolated and more supported (Buns, 2010). Collaboration within a supportive environment has been shown to increase self-efficacy among teachers (Kaczynski *et al.*, 2012; Henson, 2001:830). This process overlaps with the process of intrinsic growth, in that the development and exercise of communication, conflict resolution and problem-solving skills, for example, could aid in the formation of positive relationships with others, resulting in constructive interaction (Wood & Olivier, 2008:236). A supportive environmental network in which the teacher receives positive feedback will also encourage ongoing personal and professional growth (Moreno Rubio, 2010). According to Bandura's and Rotter's perspectives interaction with the environment will contribute to the internal locus of control, since positive interaction could lead the teacher to attain the desired outcomes (Boundless, 2014; Hock, 2013). This, in turn, could give more control over what is happening in the environment.

These three strands, namely intrinsic growth, interaction with the environment and internal locus of control, are all intertwined, implying that all three processes must occur before self-efficacy can be said to exist. They are interdependent and need to be developed simultaneously, since each process strengthens the others (Wood & Olivier, 2008:236).

#### (d) Reflective practice

This involves a process where teachers analyse their own knowledge, skills and attitudes. This reflection can be based on their current situation or reflecting on what

was learned after an experience or learning event. In order to come to a deeper understanding of themselves and their interaction with the environment, the aim of reflection is to reach a higher level of cognitive, social, emotional and academic functioning. The process of self-evaluating one's abilities or one's progress in strategy or skill acquisition is important for cultivating strong self-efficacy (Schunk, 2003). Under continually changing circumstances (such as curriculum changes), a teacher needs to develop a habit of constantly reflecting on his/her teaching practice (Wood & Olivier, 2008:236). Reflective practice is, therefore, integral to the other three processes. The teacher needs to reflect on his/her own personal behaviour, skills and attitude (intrinsic growth); on how changes can be made in order to control outcomes (an internal locus of control); and on how human and physical environmental factors can be utilised and mobilised (interaction with the environment) in order to reach identified goals (Yost 2002: 196).

The development of these four processes eventually results in the teacher's attainment of high self-efficacy. However, the four processes need to merge to form a circle of empowerment, where the teacher can display positive feelings, behaviours and attitudes (Wood & Olivier, 2008:236).

#### **2.4.3.2 The establishment of teachers' self-efficacy**

The following four sources of self-efficacy in Bandura's theory as discussed in 2.3.2.2 provide a clearer understanding of how teachers' self-efficacy is developed and established.

##### **(a) Mastery learning experience**

Mastery teaching experiences are situations in which teachers demonstrate their own teaching success, thus proving that they are competent teachers. Enacted mastery (teaching) experiences are the most influential source of self-efficacy information because they provide the most authentic evidence of whether one can muster whatever it takes to succeed. Success builds a strong belief in one's personal efficacy (Bandura, 1997: 80). Whenever teachers engage in teaching activities, they interpret their results

and use these interpretations to develop beliefs about their ability to engage in similar activities. If these activities are consistently successful, they tend to raise their beliefs in their own self-efficacy or the converse. However, if these activities produce failure, beliefs in self-efficacy are likely to be lowered. If a teacher initially has a low sense of efficacy, it will inculcate doubt about his/her abilities, which will result in failure in teaching, and low self- efficacy will again be reinforced (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

(b) Vicarious experiences

Vicarious experience in teaching refers to learning from observation of the successes of other teachers. Observing and modelling successful teachers may generate expectations that teachers can learn from successes of colleagues, which in turn, can result in their own positive self-efficacy. In brief, teachers can learn to be effective by watching the behaviours of others who are effective (Gavora, 2010:18).

(c) Social persuasion

Social persuasion by colleagues and superiors can also successfully enhance the teacher's self-efficacy. For example, coaching and giving encouraging feedback are commonly used actions that likely influence teacher self-efficacy positively. Essentially, emotional support builds a teacher's belief in teaching self-efficacy (Gavora, 2010:18).

(d) Physiological and emotional states

Pajares (2007), affirms that physiological and emotional states of teachers influence their self-efficacy judgements. Physiological reactions such as anxiety, stress, fatigue, and emotional mood states also provide information about the level of self-efficacy beliefs. Individuals have the capability to alter their own thinking, self-efficacy beliefs, in turn, also powerfully influence the physiological states themselves (Pajares, 2007). How emotions and physiological reactions are interpreted can add to the feeling of mastery or incompetence. For example, feelings of tension can be interpreted as anxiety and a fear that failure is close, or to the opposite, as a sense of excitement to teach a new

class (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004). A teacher's level of excitement and enthusiasm can therefore provide cues about anticipated teaching success. Negative states such as stress and anxiety can lead to negative judgments of own abilities and skills. Even if a teacher is professionally well qualified he/she may not be a successful teacher if personal negative or inhibiting emotional factors come into play.

Gavora (2010) postulates that this is in part what differentiates teacher self-efficacy, as a broader concept, from teacher confidence. The more narrowly-defined concept of (teacher) confidence is less influenced by emotional factors outside the realm of teaching than is teacher self-efficacy.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented a review of the literature regarding self-efficacy and teachers' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy as a concept was briefly discussed first and thereafter self-efficacy theory was summarised. This included a discussion of social cognitive theory, as the theoretical framework from which self-efficacy is understood best. In the last section of the chapter, teachers' self-efficacy was clarified. This was followed by a description of the importance for teachers to experience high self-efficacy and how teachers' self-efficacy can be developed. Since this study focuses on teachers' sense of self-efficacy, within an inclusive education system it will be discussed in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 3

## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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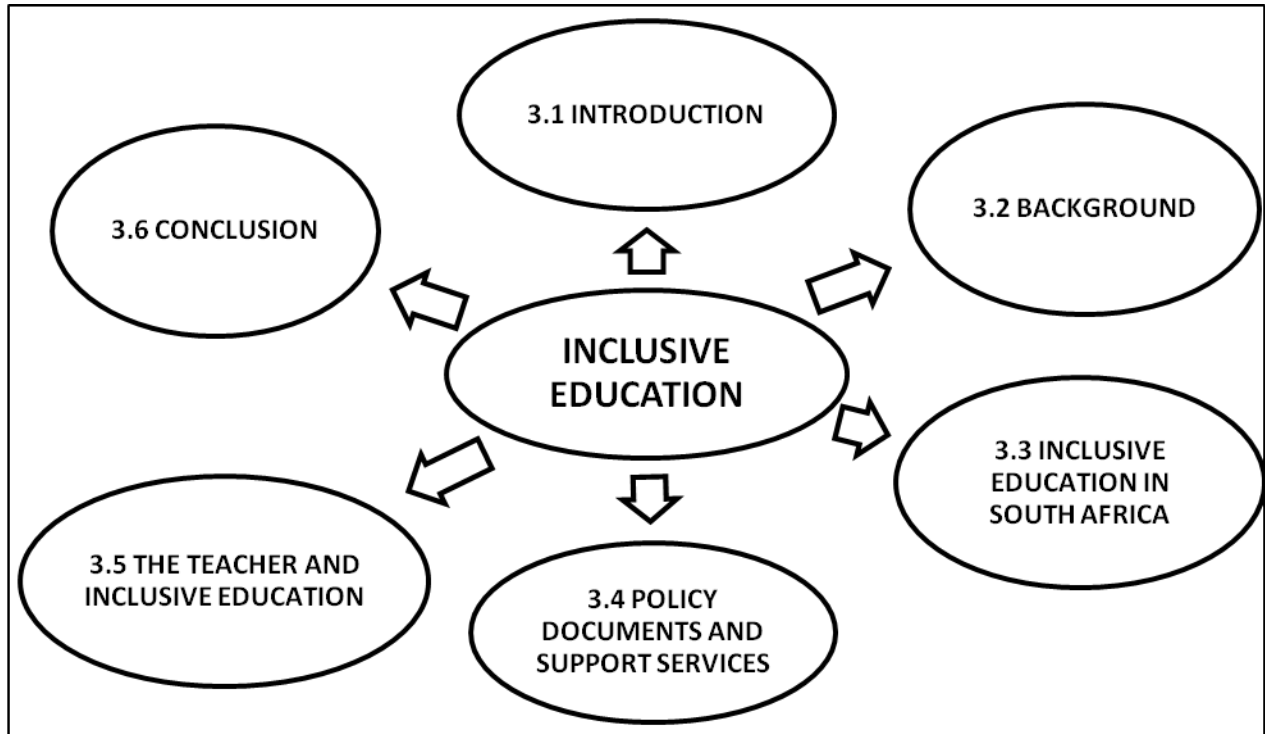


Figure 3.1 Overview of Chapter Three

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I discussed the concept of self-efficacy. Since I aim to explore teachers' self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system, this chapter addresses inclusive education. It provides a background review on inclusive education with regard to the principles, values and different views. This is followed by a discussion about different models, policies and documents related to inclusive education. Finally, the teacher's role within an inclusive education system is discussed in order to relate it to the influence of self-efficacy.

### 3.2 BACKGROUND TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

### 3.2.1 What is inclusive education?

Inclusive education can be viewed as a shared vision and a pairing of philosophy which involves pedagogical practices and processes in an educational system that promotes the building of a more democratic society through an equitable and quality education system. It also embraces the fact that all learners can learn no matter what the difficulty is and that all learners can achieve their optimal potential (Nel *et al.*, 2012:4; Ainscow & Miles, 2008; DoE, 2001). In policy terms, White Paper 6 (EWP6) (SA, 2001a:16) (cf. 3.6.) defines inclusive education and training as acknowledging that all learners and youth can learn and need support. It also emphasizes accepting and respecting that learners have different learning needs that should be equally valued. This requires that education structures must be enabled, through applicable systems and learning methodologies, to meet these needs of learners. This implies that all learners' participation should be maximised in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions by uncovering and minimising barriers to learning. Therefore learners' individual strengths must be developed to enable them to participate critically in the process of learning. However, EWP 6 also appreciates that learning is broader than formal schooling, since learning also occurs in the home and community, as well as within formal and informal modes and structures. EWP 6 also asserts that the implementation of inclusive education necessitates the change of attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environments to meet the diverse needs of learners. This will result in the elimination of social exclusion as a result of exclusionary attitudes and responses to diversity such as race, class, gender, ethnicity, family background, sexual orientation, language, abilities, size, religion etc. (Shapon-Shevin, 2007; Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Booth, 2011; Nel, 2013:2).

Ultimately, inclusive education means that schools need to become inclusive communities where every learner is respected, accommodated and valued regardless of the aforementioned differences (UNESCO, 1994; Potterton *et al.*, 2005; Swart & Pettipher, 2005; Shapon-Shevin, 2007; Links, 2009; Nel, 2013). An inclusive school community will thus be safe, secure and tolerant, accessible to all who join it, will not function in isolation, but will collaborate with other schools and organizations, and will

practise within democratic principles as stated in the Constitution of South Africa (Potterton *et al.* 2005; Booth *et al.*, 2009).

Access, acceptance and participation can be viewed as indispensable parts of an inclusive school community (Göransson & Nilholm, 2014:275). It is widely acknowledged that quality education should be accessible to all learners (UNICEF, 2013). Inclusion in education is recognised as a basic human right and the foundation for a more just and equal society (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2012). Interpretation of inclusive education is, however, an increasingly contentious term that challenges educators and educational systems to think about the work of teaching and learning in different ways and from varied perspectives. According to Grima-Farrell *et al.* (2011:118), “Inclusive education represents a whole-school concern and works to align special education with general education in a manner that most effectively and efficiently imparts quality education to all learners”. Ainscow *et al.* (2006) thinks of inclusion in the following six ways: as a concern with learners with disabilities having special educational needs; as a response to disciplinary exclusion; in relation to all groups being vulnerable to exclusion; as developing the school for all; as education for all; and as a principled approach to education and society.

Acceptance as an essential part of an inclusive school community involves a willingness to accept and promote diversity and to take an active role in the lives of learners, both in and out of school. The optimal learning environment for inclusion depends largely upon the relationship among teachers, parents, other learners and society. Ideally, effective inclusion involves implementation both in school and in society at large (UNESCO, 2005). Teachers must also accept ownership of the process and a commitment to all learners in a class. In addition, teachers must be highly skilled practitioners (Florian, 2012; Smith & Tyler, 2011).

Participation as an indispensable part of an inclusive school community involves teachers, parents, communities, school authorities, curriculum planners, training institutes and entrepreneurs in the business of education who are all among the actors who can serve as valuable resources in support of inclusion. Some (teachers, parents and communities) are more than just a valuable resource; they are the key to supporting

all aspects of the inclusion process (UNESCO, 2005). Stivers *et al.* (2008) explain that the involvement of the family is an important and essential element in the success of inclusive education. True home and school collaboration is therefore necessary for learners to experience success (Stivers *et al.*, 2008).

Furthermore, inclusion is more than just addressing special needs or disabilities, as Ainscow *et al.*, (2006) as well as Thomas and Loxley (2001:118) argue, but is rather more concerned with comprehensive education, equality and collective belonging. The main argument for an inclusive education system is that for curricular and social reasons, all learners should be educated together with equal opportunities to succeed (Mitchell, 2010). Education is not simply about making schools available for those who are already able to access them. It is about being proactive in identifying the barriers and obstacles learners encounter in attempting to access opportunities for quality education, as well as in removing those barriers and obstacles that lead to exclusion (UNESCO, 2012). This definition indeed represents an education for all approach in which inclusive practice is generally seen as having a broader focus than just disability (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006). Although inclusion is undeniably related to admitting learners with disabilities or special educational needs into the mainstream classroom, it essentially embraces the challenge of providing the best possible learning environment for all learners (Forlin, 2004; Nel, 2013).

Since South Africa accepted inclusive education as part of a global agenda known as the Salamanca statement, it will be discussed next to provide the context of where the movement of inclusive education officially started.

### **3.2.2 The Salamanca statement**

Although the Education for All (EFA) movement was initiated at a World Conference in Jomtien in 1990, inclusion was accepted as a norm for education globally at a World Conference for Special Educational Needs in Salamanca, Spain in 1994. The conference included 92 countries, of which South Africa was one, who committed themselves to promoting and developing inclusive education (Mayor, 1994). The conference was aimed at introducing a framework and a plan of action that would serve

as guidelines for the participating countries to use when implementing inclusive practices in their education systems. This framework directly influenced the newly-emerging education system of the democratic Republic of South Africa in 1994. The Salamanca Framework stated that “all children have a right to education; schools should accommodate all learners irrespective of their diverse needs; the curriculum should be flexible and should give every learner the opportunity to achieve a level of learning and development; inclusive schools should aim to fight discrimination, prejudice and a separated community; and education for all must be promoted to build a nation that is accepting” (Links, 2009:51). Inclusion can therefore be regarded as a basic human right to quality education (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 1999:189).

### **3.2.3 Theoretical grounding of inclusive education**

Truths and the full complexity of life cannot be captured by a single theory, and theory is useful when it can provide a set of organised principles that, together with contextual knowledge, can generate insights into specific situations (Geldenuys & Wevers, 2013; Dreyer, 2011; Donald *et al.*, 2010; Nguyet & Ha, 2010; Thomazet, 2009; Artiles *et al.*, 2006). In order to understand what is involved when an inclusive education approach is implemented, it is necessary to provide a brief background regarding its applicable philosophical paradigm and theoretical framework. Therefore the theoretical grounding of inclusive education with regard to the medical model, socio-ecological model and the bio-ecological framework will be discussed next.

#### **3.2.3.1 Medical model paradigm**

The medical model, applied from the early 1900s, is a model of diagnosis and treatment. It is highly focused on pathology, illness, the nature and aetiology of presenting a problem, and dealing with the specific pathology in a centred way (Gutkin, 2012; SEED, 2004). When applying this model to education, learners with any type of difference or disability are singled out and the cause or origin of the difference is believed to be located within the child. Subscribing to this model leads to a belief system that regards some learners as, at best, disadvantaged and in need of individual

fixing and, at worst, as fundamentally deficient and therefore beyond support (Engelbrecht, 2004). The medical or deficit model of understanding difference is widely described by writers in the field of disabilities and special education (Shulman, 2013; Walton, 2006; Ferguson, 2002; Thomas & Loxley, 2001; Mittler, 2000). In a medical model, educational difficulties are approached as a doctor would approach a medical problem. The learner is treated as a patient who needs diagnosis and treatment. Thus, health professional experts are usually required as experts to intervene when a learner experiencing difficulties is identified. As a result of this kind of intervention, learners are labelled and frequently separated from the mainstream to receive specialist intervention (treatment) (Swart and Pettipher, 2011). The focus of this model is therefore on deficit, or what is wrong with learners. It assumes that the learners who do not experience barriers to learning are normal and those who do are not normal or are deficient (Walton, 2006). Failure is thus located within the person, not the system.

Sheridan and Gutkin (2000) point out that although assessing, diagnosing and treating pathologies of learners are relevant for clinical work, it is too restrictive in the scope of educational support services, since neither education support professionals, nor learners, function in isolation. All people are influenced by the multiple systems that surround them. Consequently, learners cannot be served effectively by decontextualizing their problems as internal pathologies. An improved understanding of how dysfunction relates to the larger systems that impact on a person is needed, and then ways must be found to intervene effectively within these systems (Shulman, 2013; Mehta *et al.*, 2013; Gutkin, 2012).

Since the medical model can result in discriminatory and labelling practices it is not accepted as practice within an inclusive education system. However, care must be taken not to disregard the role of health professional expertise and the important medical or clinical background of a learner who experiences a barrier to teaching (Nel *et al.*, 2012). Yet, with the move to inclusive education, a paradigm shift was needed towards a more socio-ecological theoretical model (World Health Organization, 2001).

### 3.2.3.2 Socio-ecological model

From an inclusive education perspective, the socio-ecological model moved the focus away from the “specialness” of learners to the removal of stumbling blocks within the society and thereby including everybody in the everyday life of society (O'Connor *et al.*, 2012; Colucci-Gray *et al.*, 2006). In contrast to the medical model, the socio-ecological model shifts the focus away from the assumption that barriers in learning only exist within the child (Nel, 2013:20), such as a medical or physical condition. It acknowledges that there are also barriers in society as well as the system and these create stumbling blocks for learners trying to achieve their learning potential (McCormick, 2006). Within a socio-ecological model, a systemic approach to understanding barriers to learning is recommended (Walton, 2006).

The socio-ecological approach represents the following characteristics: it identifies the learners’ strengths; it takes the learners’ environment and community into consideration; it does not separate screening and identification from teaching and learning; it views the classroom as the best place to offer support; it acknowledges the teacher as a key role-player in screening, identification, assessment and support; challenges the teacher to be reflective in his/her teaching styles, methodologies and strategies; and it confirms that systems need to be in place to support teachers (DoE, 2006:85). The principles of socio-ecological models are consistent with social cognitive theory concepts which suggest that creating an environment conducive to change is important in making it easier to adopt changed and developmental behaviours (Tai *et al.*, 2012).

The socio-ecological model is relevant to this study because it will aid in our understanding of different factors affecting teaching behaviour and also provide guidance for developing a successful guideline programme by keeping the influence of social environments in mind (Sallis *et al.*, 2008). Socio-ecological models emphasize multiple levels of influence and the idea that behaviours both shape and are shaped by the social environment (Trifiletti *et al.*, 2005). As discussed in Chapter Two, there are different factors, namely personal, contextual and environmental, that influence self-efficacy. It was therefore essential that factors such as interpersonal relationships (relationship with parents, learners, colleagues), organizational (the school

management and Department of Basic Education), and community and public policy (local school community), be taken into consideration during the empirical investigation and the consequent compiling of the guideline programme.

### **3.2.3.3 Bio-ecological framework**

Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological framework is an example of a multi-dimensional model of human development, which posits that there are layers or levels of interacting systems resulting in physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural change, growth and development. What happens in one system affects and is affected by other systems (McCormick, 2006; Noonan & McCormick, 2006; Filler & Xu, 2008), thus human behaviour, experiences and actions cannot be understood if the contexts in which they occur are not considered.

Bronfenbrenner's (1986; 1979; 1977) bio-ecological model explains the direct and indirect influences on a person's life by referring to the many levels of environment or contexts that influence the development. A major challenge to the present education system lies in understanding the complexity of the influences, interactions and interrelationships between the individual teacher and multiple other systems to which he or she is connected (Swart & Pettipher, 2011; Donald *et al.*, 2010:37). The teacher does not exist in isolation from surrounding systems. They, together with role players such as the Department of Basic Education, learners, parents, the school, as well as community members, determine successful teaching. If all these role-players work well together; all teachers, even those who are experiencing difficulties in teaching (for example, supporting a learner with a specific barrier to learning), should benefit. This is a clear paradigmatic shift away from a medical understanding to a more holistic view. Thus, Bronfenbrenner's (1986; 1979; 1977) bio-ecological model for human development is applicable as a theoretical framework for this study, since various factors in the different system levels will be taken into consideration when data are collected and analysed.

In the field of inclusive education, Bronfenbrenner's (1986; 1979; 1977) ecological model (and more recently, the revised bio-ecological model) has great relevance in emphasizing the importance of the interaction between the development of an individual

and the systems within the individual's social context (Singal, 2006). This perspective integrates both ecological and systems theories. Ecological theory is based on the interdependence between different organisms and their physical environment (Donald *et al.*, 2010:37). These relationships are seen holistically. Every part is as important as another in sustaining the cycles of birth and death which together ensure the survival of the whole system (Donald *et al.*, 2010:40). The systems theory sees different levels and groups of people as interacting systems where the functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction among all parts (Donald *et al.*, 2010:40). Bronfenbrenner has had significant influence on the shaping and creating of our understanding of how different levels of systems, in the social context, interact in the process of child development. In Bronfenbrenner's model of the 1970s, four interacting dimensions are used to understand the process of human development (Nel *et al.*, 2012:12). These interactive dimensions are discussed next in relevance to the current study.

Firstly, an important component of the bio-ecological theory is that teachers are also active participants in their own development and the environment is therefore not simply impacting on the teacher. A teacher's perceptions and views of their context are central to understanding how they interact with their environments (Anderson & Minke, 2007).

Secondly, Bronfenbrenner refers to the fact that in adapting to internal and external change, systems attempt to maintain a dynamic balance (Brown & Medway, 2007).

A third key component is that which is referred to as circular causality. This idea is quite opposite to that of linear cause and effect, commonly associated with the medical model. Circular causality refers to the fact that change (or activity) in any part of a system or individual affects other systems and individuals, and at a later time could be seen as a cause of change (McCormick, 2006). This is an important concept to understand, especially when one is trying to understand an education system. It is also relevant to keep this in mind when looking at the school at the centre of a study. Attitudes, actions, changes and events happening in one area of the school's functioning have an effect on the functioning and experience of other parts of the school system.

A final concept that is relevant is the notion that the whole system is greater than the sum of its parts. To understand the whole, the relationships among the different parts of the system need to be looked at. In terms of education, a school that encourages reciprocal relationships within the school environment is more effective than one that does not (Dreyer, 2011). All of these concepts that, although briefly, have been discussed are central to understanding the bio-ecological perspective.

Having a clearer conception of the bio-ecological perspective should give one insight into understanding the framework of this research. This framework is extremely relevant to this study because it is both useful and important to look at the teachers as part of a set of interrelated and interconnected systems within the school case (Donald *et al.*, 2010:40), in exploring their self-efficacy. All schools are made up of many levels or layers of functioning, including learners, parents, teachers, school management, curriculum, other schools in the area, policy, the wider community, national education issues, etc. Functioning in one area affects functioning directly or indirectly in another. This is vital to understand when looking more closely at a school. For example, when changes in the curriculum are made at a management level, it is experienced in different ways by all the other constantly interacting systems, such as the teachers and learners. These changes, for example, from exclusion of learners with barriers to inclusion, can be positively or negatively experienced by the teachers and consequently influence these learners in the same way. Another example could focus on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. If the attitudes or actions of a teacher in one classroom change from negative to positive, the effects can filter through into other systems and areas of school functioning, such as motivating other teachers to adopt more positive attitudes towards inclusive education.

Therefore, although the effects one system has on another may be clear and obvious, they may also be subtle. Being aware of the interconnectedness of systems is extremely useful when trying to discover and understand how a school functions (Geldenhuis & Wevers, 2013). This framework is therefore clearly relevant for this study and important to consider when looking at the school environment of the teacher and how their self-efficacy is influenced.

Bronfenbrenner (1986; 1979; 1977) identifies five structures or environmental systems in which human beings develop, namely micro-, meso-, macro-, exo- and chrono-systems.

#### **3.2.3.3.1 Micro-systems**

The micro-system refers to a pattern of roles, activities and interpersonal relations experienced among individuals and the systems in which they are active participants such as the family, school or peer group (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Duerden & Witt, 2010). Micro-systems involve roles, relationships and patterns of daily activities that shape many aspects of cognitive, social, emotional, moral, and spiritual development (Donald *et al.*, 2010). In the case of this study, the focus will be on the teacher as individual where proximal interactions with the surrounding micro-systems, such as learners, parents, colleagues within the school and the Department of Basic Education, influence their feelings of self-efficacy. A proximal interaction refers to face-to-face and usually continuous social interactions (Filler & Xu, 2006; Noonan & McCormick, 2006; Pérez Carreón *et al.*, 2005; Cooper & Christie, 2005).

#### **3.2.3.3.2 Meso-system**

A second level or system is what Bronfenbrenner (1986; 1979; 1977) refers to as the meso-system. The meso-system is a set of micro-systems that continuously interact with one another (Donald *et al.*, 2010:42; Salend, 2006; Bronfenbrenner, 1979:25). In the case of this study, the same example can be used as in the micro-system (*cf.* 3.2.3.3.1). Changes within the school system, for example, the move towards an inclusive education system and the way it is communicated to teachers, can influence how the teacher responds to this by either cooperating positively or negatively. The same applies to the classroom situation. If the teacher responds positively to inclusion it will have the same effect on the learners in a school and vice versa. However, factors such as increased numbers of learners with severe barriers can result in teachers feeling and reacting negatively towards inclusion.

Teachers' self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive system, cannot be clearly understood without paying attention to relationships developing between the different

micro-systems (c.f. 3.2.3.3.1). This needs to be done in order to provide an idea of the effects of contextual factors on the teachers' functioning and their sense of self-efficacy, in this research. The relationship between school, district and teachers can also be regarded as an important influencing factor in the meso-system (Sethosa, 2001). Therefore, it is important to understand that the way the teacher collaborates with all the micro-systems around him/her can have an influence on the teacher's self-efficacy (Schunk & Meece, 2006; Garcia, 2006).

#### **3.2.3.3.3 Exo-system**

Exo-systems are defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979:25) as comprising one or more environments in which an individual (in this case the teacher), is not necessarily directly involved as an active participant, but may influence or be influenced by what happens in the settings. Poor functioning systems, such as the education-, social development- and, health services departments could cause problems and challenges for teachers (Erhard & Umankysy, 2005; Gaad, 2004). The influence of the media, what happens at learners' homes, parents' place of work, inadequate community support organisations, and the lack of human as well financial resources could impact negatively on a learner's development (Yorke, 2008; McDonald *et al.*, 2006). This consequently restricts the teacher from providing quality teaching and support to learners which, in turn, could influence a teacher's feeling of self-efficacy.

#### **3.2.3.3.4 Macro-system**

A fourth system Bronfenbrenner (1986; 1979; 1977) notes is the macro-system. It involves dominant social, cultural and economic structures, as well as beliefs, values and practices that influence all systems. This includes ideologies and discourses inherent in the systems of a specific society (Donald *et al.*, 2010:40) as well as cultural, ideological and institutional contexts in which all the systems are embedded (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Duerden & Witt, 2010). In the South African context, the macro-system can refer to the level at which policy decisions about education are made, viz. the national Department of Basic Education (DBE). These policies have a major impact on how teachers should teach and support learners. Many research studies have found

that although South Africa has well-developed policies, such as the policies that must address inclusive education, the implementation thereof remains a challenge (Kalenga & Chikoko, 2014; Ntombela, 2011; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2004). Consequently, if teachers do not have clear indications on how to integrate policies into practice, it can result in their feeling uncertain and inefficient.

#### **3.2.3.3.5 Chrono-system**

Encompassing these four systems is what Bronfenbrenner (1986; 1979; 1977) refers to as the Chrono-system. Donald *et al.* (2010) describe this system as developmental time-frames that cross through and affect the interactions between the systems and, in turn, influence individual development. In the case of this study, the influence of development impacts on the teacher's, as individual, self-efficacy, over time. The systems and curriculums that changed over time caused and are still causing insecurities for teachers, which could make them experience low teacher self-efficacy levels. In order to explain this last point, a brief summary of the changes in the curriculum will be discussed next and also how it affects the teacher.

#### **3.2.3.3.6 Changes in the education system over time**

There have been several curriculum changes since 1994. The purpose of these changes was the result of reviews in order to adapt the curriculums in such a way to ensure that all learners receive quality education on an equal basis. It started with an Outcomes Based Education (OBE) approach through Curriculum 2005 (Sayed & Ahmed, 2011; Taylor *et al.*, 2008). OBE brought about major changes to the method of teaching. It shifted the emphasis of learning and teaching away from rote learning to concrete educational results called outcomes (Jacob *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, the roles of teachers as transmitters of knowledge changed to facilitators to help learners achieve the desired goals, and the classroom activities mainly focused on a learner-centred approach (Chisholm, 2005).

Research found that this new approach resulted in teachers being overloaded with unprecedented decision-making authority and a lot of heightened expectations, more

administrative work, which resulted in them not having time for proper lesson preparation and actual teaching (Weber, 2007).

This curriculum was consequently reviewed and changes were made to address its complexity. Thereafter, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in general simplified the outcomes statements giving more emphasis to basic skills, content knowledge and grade progression (Sayed & Ahmed, 2011; Taylor *et al.*, 2008).

After another review, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) replaced the Revised National Curriculum Statement. The CAPS is a more regulated learning programme than previously and provides more time for languages and mathematics (or literacy and numeracy). Workbooks are a central feature of CAPS, leaving less responsibility for educators to interpret curriculum outcomes. In addition, the workbooks' pace and sequence work on a daily and term-by-term basis with easy-to-follow worksheets.

However, the fact that teachers had to deal with these continuous changes, with them not really understanding what is expected of them, resulted in resistance and negative attitudes towards the curriculum change endeavour (Wits & Lee, 2009; Engelbrecht *et al. in press*). Change can arouse emotions and despair or, at the same time, if taken positively, can raise hope, growth and progress. Yet, despite training, meant to prepare teachers for changes in curriculum, they tend to continuously show signs of confusion and struggle to apply change in their classrooms (Jacobs *et al.*, 2004:314). This seemed to have impacted negatively on the teaching and learning environment (Wallace & Fleit, 2005). Despite curriculum changes, teachers also have to deal with departmental prescriptive requirements calling for particular methods of instructions or assessment (Wallace & Fleit, 2005; Nel *et al.*, 2014) as well as large classroom numbers and difficult learner behaviour. This adds to teachers' frustration and negative attitudes toward curriculum change.

Bantwini (2009:179) asserts that when teachers are exposed to or trained in new knowledge and skills they often resist or reject the new knowledge and skills. This impacts on their feelings of self-efficacy.

### **3.3 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

#### **3.3.1 Background to inclusive education in South Africa**

For a better understanding of inclusive education in the South African context, it is important to discuss the political background first. Besides the global educational movement towards inclusive education, the establishment of human rights after 1994 in South Africa motivated the change of its education system to inclusivity (Nel *et al.*, 2012:6).

During the previous Apartheid system, segregation in education based on race and disability was the order of the day. Separate education departments existed for designated population groups and were characterised by vast disparities in terms of funding, resources, educational rights, opportunities and expectations. Special needs education was fragmented, not only by Apartheid laws that enforced educational separation along racial lines, but also by policies that separated so-called 'normal' learners from those who were categorised as having special needs (Swart & Pettipher, 2011; Engelbrecht, 2006; Stofile & Green, 2007). It was estimated in 2001 (DoE, 2001) that about 280 000 learners with disabilities were not in the education system at all. White learners with disabilities were exclusively catered to in special schools or classes, but most of these special schools were mainly concentrated near large cities which excluded many learners from the rural areas (Links, 2009:51). Very few Black African learners with disabilities had access to education whatsoever and only a small number of special schools for Black African learners were available (DoE, 2001; Links 2009; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). As a result, most learners with a disability have either fallen out of the education system or been 'mainstreamed by default' (DoE, 2001). Support services for these learners were inadequate and a separate curriculum from what was done in mainstream education was followed in special education institutions (Naicker, 2000:26). In many Black African communities, learners with disabilities were kept at home and labelled by the community as a disgrace to the family and the society (Links, 2009:51). In summary, it is clear that education provision and support under the Apartheid government operated along discriminatory and racial lines. Therefore, the curriculum and education system as a whole have largely failed to accommodate

diverse needs of learners, resulting in considerable numbers of drop-outs, push-outs, and failures (DoE, 2001).

The establishment of a democratic government in South Africa in 1994 had a wide-ranging impact on the education system and specifically for learners experiencing diverse barriers to learning (e.g. disabilities, socio-economic deprivation, under-resourced schools, inappropriate language of instruction) (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011). The Constitution of 1996 included a Bill of Rights that ensured the right of all South Africans to a basic education, including learners with disabilities. The Bill of Rights is founded on the underpinning values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms (section 1a) and these values needed to be implemented in a single inclusive education system to ensure that all learners, with and without disabilities, pursue their learning potential to the fullest (Links, 2009; DoE, 2001). Thus, inclusive education in South Africa has its origin in a rights perspective informed by liberal, critical and progressive democratic thought (Engelbrecht, 1999:7) and consequently possesses a strong emphasis on equality and human rights (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011). In South Africa, legislation and policies concerning inclusive education have been formulated in the era of the post-Apartheid state and, therefore, they possess a strong emphasis on equality and human rights (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011).

As a result, changing education to a more inclusive practice was initiated with the National Commission on Special Needs in Education Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Educators Support Services (NCESS) report in 1997. In 1996, the minister of Education selected the National Commission on Special Needs in Education Training (NCSNET) and The National Committee on Educators Support Services (NCESS) to develop a policy required for successful implementation of inclusive education. The combined report of these two bodies was finally published by the Department of Basic Education in 1998. This report recommended that the “education and training system should promote education for all and foster the development of inclusive and supportive centres of learning that would enable all learners to participate actively in the education process so that they could develop and extend their potential and participate as equal members of society” (DoE, 2001:7). In

this report they formed the conceptual foundation for inclusive education which contributed to an understanding of the range of barriers to learning within the South African context. This report also proposed the usage of respectful and acceptable terminology to explain concepts in inclusive education. Several pieces of legislation and policies influenced the development of inclusive education in South Africa and the key documents are discussed next.

### **3.4 POLICY DOCUMENTS AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

The policy documents and support services currently available for inclusive education in South Africa will be discussed next.

#### **3.4.1 Policy documents**

All education policies are influenced by the Constitution of South Africa that affirms human dignity, equality and the advancement of human rights (RSA 1996a, section 1(a)), freedom from discrimination (RSA 1996a, section 9(4)) and the fundamental right to basic education (RSA 1996a, section 29(1)). The right to education is given legislative expression in the South African Schools Act.

##### **3.4.1.1 South African Schools Act (1996)**

The South African Schools Act was enacted in 1996 and sets “uniform norms and standards for the education of learners at schools” (Preamble, South African Schools Act, RSA 1996b). It makes allowance for an inclusive education system in South Africa through the following provisions:

- Public schools must admit learners and “serve their educational requirements” without discrimination (Section 5 (1));
- No admission test may be used to determine the admission of a learner to a public school (Section 5(2));
- Where learners have “special education needs”, the rights and wishes of the parents must be taken into account when determining their placement (Section 5 (6));

- Where it is “reasonably practicable”, learners with “special education needs” should be served in the mainstream and relevant support should be provided for these learners (Section 12 (4)); and
- Physical amenities at public schools should be made accessible to disabled learners (Section 12 (5)).

### **3.4.1.2 Education White Paper 6 (EWP6)**

Education White Paper 6 was developed based on the findings and recommendations of the NCSNET and NCESS Reports of 1998. This White Paper is the fundamental policy document for the implementation of an inclusive education and training system in South Africa. The document was introduced in 2001. It provides an outline of what inclusive education and training systems entail and also provides the strategies and methods the National Department of Basic Education planned to use to construct such a system (Links, 2009:51).

EWP6 defines inclusive education as: i) acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and will need support; ii) recognising and respecting that learners have diverse needs as a result of differences in age, gender, ethnicity, HIV/AIDS-status, disabilities, language or social-economic status. The acceptance that these different needs must be valued and not be discriminated against in order to ensure equal human experiences; iii) the enabling of education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners; iv) broader than formal schooling by realizing that learning does not only take place at school but in the community itself and at home; v) changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environment to maximize the participation of all learners in classroom practices and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning; and vi) enabling learners to grow and develop as responsible citizens in the country that will contribute to society. It stressed that inequalities in all schools, including the special schools sector, should be eradicated (DoE, 2001; EWP6).

Furthermore, White Paper 6 asserted that the education system had to transform to accommodate the full range of barriers to learning and development (such as intrinsic barriers to learning caused by organic/medical causes), as well as needs caused by

systemic barriers (e.g. poverty and poorly trained teachers). Although the fundamental philosophy of EWP6 is a social rights approach to education, it appears that it still depended on a medical approach when support for diverse barriers to learning was proposed. It distinguished between learners with low-intensive support who would receive their education in mainstream schools, learners with moderate support requirements who should be accommodated in full-service schools, and learners who require high-intensive educational support would continue to be accommodated in special schools (DoE, 2001; Engelbrecht & Van Deventer, 2013).

Full-service/inclusive schools are first and foremost mainstream education institutions that: provide quality education to all learners by supplying the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner; which should strive to achieve access, equity, quality and social justice in education; promote a sense of belonging so that all learners, staff and families experience a sense of worth in the learning community; have the capacity to respond to diversity by providing appropriate education for individual needs of learners, irrespective of disability or differences in learning style or pace, or social difficulties experienced; and establish methods to assist curriculum and institutional transformation to ensure both an awareness of diversity, and that additional support is available to those learners and educators who need it (DoE, 2010:7).

A central standpoint of EWP 6 is also capacitating teachers to enable them to address a wide range of learning needs by focusing on teaching and learning actions that will benefit all learners who experience barriers to learning. This requires that teachers must be qualified to support and assist a broad variety of learning needs by concentrating on beneficial teaching and learning exertions, activities and efforts for all learners who face barriers to learning (Nel *et al.*, 2011; Oswald, 2010; Ladbrook, 2009).

One of the main issues addressed White Paper 6 was the recommendation to move away from labelling terminology such as 'special needs' and 'disabilities' (DoE, 2010). Consequently, 'learners experiencing barriers to learning' was determined as the new accepted vocabulary, thus purposefully moving away from a medical model approach (DoE, 2001:24).

### 3.4.1.3 Other policy documents

Other important South-African policy documents that resulted from EWP6 and need to be noted are (Nel *et al*, 2012:8):

- Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. 2002. *Draft conceptual and operational guidelines for the implementation of inclusive education*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. 2005. *Conceptual and operational guidelines for special schools as resource centres*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. 2005. *Conceptual and operational guidelines for full service schools*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. 2005. *Conceptual and operational guidelines for district based support teams*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. 2005. *Guidelines for inclusive learning programmes*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. 2005. *Draft national strategy on screening, identification, assessment and support*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. 2007. National Education Policy Act (27 / 1996): *national policy on assessment and qualifications for schools in the general education and training band*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. 2008. Department of Education. *National strategy on screening, identification, assessment and support*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. 2009. Department of Education (DoE). 2009. *Guidelines for full service / inclusive schools*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

- Republic of South Africa. Department of Education (DoE). 2010. *Guidelines for inclusive learning programmes*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

#### **3.4.1.4 The challenge of implementing inclusive education policies**

Advocacy and information programmes, research and pilot projects as well as in-service training programmes by the National Department of Education and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), have attempted to assist with the implementation of policies. However, policy-makers and researchers agree that a gap remains between policy development and the implementation at grassroots' level to effect the successful implementation of inclusive education (Engelbrecht 2006; Stofile & Green 2007; Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007; Oswald & de Villiers, 2013; Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming; Chataika *et al.*, 2012; Brand *et al.*, 2012; Dalton 2005; Hall *et al.*, 2003). Issues such as a lack of adequate and appropriate human, financial and physical resources (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007), and crucially, an inflexible curriculum, play key roles in this.

Teachers have reported in recent research studies, that the newly-implemented CAPS restricts curriculum flexibility, which is inconsistent with the principle of inclusive education that promotes flexibility with regard to teaching methods, assessment, rate of teaching and the development of learning material (DoE, 2001; Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013). This makes it difficult to address learners' context and needs (Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming).

#### **3.4.2 Educational support services in South Africa**

Support services in South Africa exist within the institutions and district offices and were introduced by the EWP 6 (DoE, 2001). These services are called the Institute Level Support Teams (ILST) and the District-based Support Teams (DBST). These teams are established by institutions in general, further and higher education, as institution-level support mechanisms whose primary function is to put in place co-ordinated school, learner and educator support services (DBE, 2008).

### **3.4.2.1 District-based support teams (DBST)**

Each province is divided into several districts, each of which has a team which manages inclusive education in that district (Landsberg, 2011:69-75). This team is called the district-based support team “to provide a coordinated professional support service that draws on expertise in further and higher education and local communities, targeting special schools and specialised settings, designated full-service and other primary schools and educational institutions “(DoE, 2008: 8). This team includes role players from core education support providers at district level and are determined by the local needs, which may include the following (DoE, 2005: 17-18):

- Curriculum specialists who can provide curriculum support to teachers;
- Management specialist to provide guidelines on management to schools;
- Administrative experts who provide administrative and financial management support to schools;
- Specialist support personnel from existing special schools and other educational institutions such as higher and further education institutions;
- Other Government professionals ; such as local government structures, the Office of Status of Disabled Persons, Health, Social Welfare, Justice, Safety and Security, Sport and Recreation, etc. which can be co-opted depending on the particular support needs and availability of resources in that district; and
- Community role-players such as parents, grandparents and other caregivers, community-based organisations, disabled people’s organisations, members of the school governing body, teachers, learners, etc.

This should be a flexible team that may differ according to the needs of the school(s) and the learners (Landsberg, 2011:69-75). These team members need to fulfil the roles of researchers and evaluators, providers of learning support, and material developers for specific learning needs (DoE, 2005; Johnson and Green 2007).

The core functions of the district-based support team are as follows (DoE, 2005: 21-22):

- The development and ongoing backup of support teams in schools and early childhood learning centres in supporting their capacity building, identifying, assessing and prioritising learning needs and barriers to learning experienced by learners in their district; identifying the support needed to address these challenges and pursuing these within a strategic planning and management framework and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of support;
- Linking these institution with formal and informal support systems so that support needs and barriers to learning can be addressed;
- Providing, as the main focus, indirect support to learners by supporting teachers and school management to ensure that the teaching and learning environment is responsive to the full range of learning needs (DoE, 2005: 22);
- Providing, as a secondary focus, direct learning support to learners where necessary and possible where the institutional-level support team is unable to respond to particular learning needs (DoE, 2005: 22); and
- Supporting institutions (e.g. schools) in the development and functioning of an institution-based support team.

#### **3.4.2.2 Institution-level support team (ILST)**

At a school level, the ILST is a team which is collectively responsible for making suggestions to support the learner, while the referring (responsible) teacher has to implement the strategies suggested (Nel *et al.*, 2013; Landsberg, 2011:67). The ultimate responsibility of the ILST of each school is to liaise with the district-based support team and other relevant support providers (such as health professionals, community-based support organisations and other governmental departments), to identify and meet the needs of their specific institution (Landsberg 2011:67). Their task is to coordinate learner and teacher support services. They are to provide collaborative support by identifying and addressing pupil, teacher and institutional needs (DoE, 2001:29).

Furthermore, they are also responsible for developing collaborative support strategies in the school by establishing networks between all role-players; identifying school and learner needs with regard to barriers to learning; focusing on in-service training of teachers; facilitating the sharing of resources between different role players; ensuring parent involvement; planning preventive strategies; and monitoring the learning support processes (DoE 2005; Johnson & Green 2007; Landsberg, 2011). The team can also suggest strategies to support the learner. However, the ultimate implementation of these strategies rests with the referring teacher who must report to the institution-level support team. If the support is not successful, relevant members of the district-based support team and other teams, also from the special school as a resource centre or the full-service schools, are called to come on board to support the referring teacher and the learner (Landsberg, 2011).

The composition of the institution-level support team is dependent on the size and the needs of the school and the number of teacher available. They comprise the following nominated role-players (Landsberg, 2011):

- A learning support teacher who is competent and innovative, and possesses good collaborative skills;
- The referring teacher (usually the learning area/subject or class teacher);
- Teachers who have particular expertise on offer concerning the needs and/or challenges of learners (e.g. a teacher of a lower grade who is good at teaching reading if learners experiences difficulty with reading);
- The principal or deputy principal or a member of the management team, who should be involved on a part-time basis;
- Any member of the district-based support team, depending on the support needs of the learner ( e.g. an occupational therapist or psychologist);
- The parents of learners;

- Learners' representatives at senior and further education and/or higher education levels; and
- Specific member(s) of district based support team and of the special school/resource centre.

### **3.5 THE TEACHER AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

With the introduction of inclusive education, significant changes to the way teachers have been working in the classroom were required since they now contain a more diverse mixture of learners from different backgrounds, as well as levels of ability and disability (Sharma *et al.*, 2012:12; Engelbrecht *et al.*, in press; Engelbrecht, 2006; Engelbrecht & Green, 2007:33; Engelbrecht & Green, 2006:49, Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2004:16). Kozleski *et al.* (2007) affirm that the basic premise of inclusive education is that schools are about belonging, nurturing and educating all learners regardless of their differences in ability, culture, gender, language, class and ethnicity. The emphasis is, therefore, currently more on how all learners can be taught and supported to achieve and participate fully in the life of the school (DoE, 2011). An inclusive classroom can consequently be described as an environment where diverse learning needs are integrated and supported, where views of deficiency about disability are dismissed and involvement, engagement, and contribution are the key focuses in activities (Florian, 2009; Kershner, 2009; Berry, 2006; Kozleski *et al.*, 2014).

Therefore, the importance of the general classroom teacher's role to ensure the success of inclusive education cannot be over-emphasized. Policy-makers and various researchers assert that the teacher plays a critical and important role in the successful implementation of inclusive education (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011; Forlin *et al.* 2010; Donald *et al.*, 2010:27; Weisel & Dror 2006). The ways in which teachers accept inclusive values impact on learners' adaptive academic and behavioural functioning at school. When teachers demonstrate acceptance of diversity they are trusted and learners are more motivated to engage at school, behave pro-socially and succeed academically (Theron & Engelbrecht, 2012).

An issue that has received a great deal of attention internationally has been teacher-effectiveness and teaching quality in inclusion (UNICEF, 2013; EADSNE, 2012; Savolainen *et al.*, 2012; Luckner & Pianta, 2011). Teacher education programmes now have a major responsibility to ensure that new graduates, as well as in-service teachers, are well prepared to include all learners into mainstream classrooms regardless of individual differences (Winter, 2006). As teachers are recognized as the primary resource for achieving the goal of an inclusive education system, their feelings of self-efficacy to enact inclusive education are central.

### **3.5.1 What is expected of the South African teacher?**

The South African legislative and policy framework (cf. 3.4) expects of teachers to effectively teach within an inclusive education system. This involves knowledge about diverse needs and how to effectively include and teach all learners. Therefore, teachers need to develop strategies that provide quality educational opportunities for every learner in their classroom, on a daily basis (Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming; Engelbrecht & Green, 2007:33; Engelbrecht, 2006; Engelbrecht & Green, 2006:49, Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2004:16; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2001). For an improved understanding of what is expected of the inclusive education teacher, the following section addresses the roles and responsibilities, as well as the profile of the inclusive education teacher.

#### **3.5.1.1 The inclusive teacher's roles and responsibilities**

Teachers' roles have diversified in an inclusive classroom (Westwood & Graham, 2003; Avramidis *et al.*, 2000; Paterson & Graham, 2000). The policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (DBE, 2011:54) expects of newly-qualified teachers: "to understand diversity in the South African context in order to teach in a manner that includes all learners; they must also be able to identify learning or social problems and work in partnership with professional service providers to address these; and they must be able to manage classrooms effectively across diverse contexts in order to ensure a conducive learning environment". This policy (DBE, 2011: 52) also requires that the teacher enact the following roles:

(a) Be a specialist in a phase, subject discipline or practice

The educator must be well-grounded in the knowledge, skills, values, principles, methods and procedures relevant to the phase, subject, discipline or practice as well as to his/her specific specialisation. Knowledge about different approaches to teaching and learning (and, where appropriate, research and management), and how these may be used in ways which are appropriate to the learners and the context are essential.

(b) Learning mediator

The educator must mediate learning in a manner which is sensitive to the diverse needs of learners, including those with barriers to learning; construct learning environments that are appropriately contextualised and inspirational; and communicate effectively, showing recognition of and respect for the differences of others. In addition, an educator must demonstrate sound knowledge of subject content and various principles, strategies and resources appropriate to teaching in a South African context.

(c) Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials

The educator must understand and interpret provided learning programmes; design original learning programmes; identify the requirements for a specific context of learning and select; and prepare suitable textual and visual resources for learning. The educator must also select the sequence and the pace of learning in a manner sensitive to the differing needs of the subject and learners.

(d) Leader, administrator and manager

The educator must make decisions appropriate to the level of the learners, manage learning in the classroom, carry out classroom administrative duties efficiently and participate in school decision-making structures. These competences must be performed in ways which are democratic, support learners and colleagues, and demonstrate responsiveness to changing circumstances and needs.

(e) Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner

The educator must achieve ongoing personal, academic, occupational and professional growth through pursuing reflective study and research in their field, in broader professional and educational matters, and in other related fields.

(f) Assessor

The educator must understand that assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process and know how to integrate it into this process. The educator must have an understanding of the purposes, methods and effects of assessment and be able to provide helpful feedback to learners. The educator must design and manage both formative and summative assessment in ways that are appropriate to the level and purpose of the learning and meet the requirements of accrediting bodies. The educator must keep detailed and diagnostic records of assessment. The educator must understand how to interpret and use assessment results to feed into processes for the improvement of learning programmes.

(g) Community, citizenship and pastoral role

The educator must practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others. The educator must uphold the Constitution and promote democratic values and practices in schools and society. Within the school, the educator will demonstrate an ability to develop a supportive and empowering environment for the learner and respond to the educational and other needs of learners and fellow educators. Furthermore, the educator must develop supportive relations with parents and other key persons and organizations based on a critical understanding of community and environmental development issues.

It can also be deduced from these required roles that teachers must be psychologically prepared to take on the dynamic role of inclusive educator (Mullen, 2001) and consequently exert the appropriate attitude. Engelbrecht *et al.* (forthcoming) emphasize that attitudinal changes will result in the removal of barriers to physical and educational access for learners. The development of appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes influences teaching within inclusive education and is also relevant to the profile of the inclusive teacher, which is discussed next.

### 3.5.1.2 Profile of inclusive teachers

As has been mentioned in 3.5.1.1., teaching in an inclusive education environment involves holding certain attitudes and values in relation to inclusion, as well as possessing knowledge and skills relevant for teaching in inclusive settings (Esteve, 2009; Nuova, 2009; Munoz, 2009; Cardona, 2009; Pugach & Blanton, 2009; Acedo *et al.*, 2009; Guðjónsdóttir *et al.*, 2008; Tubele, 2008; Naukkarinen, 2008; Hajkova, 2007; Kaikkonen *et al.*, 2007; Kavkler, 2009; Cefai *et al.*, 2007; Casonova *et al.*, 2006; Molina, 2006; Saloviita, 2005; Hollins & Gunzman, 2005).

In response to the roles of the inclusive teacher as discussed previously (*cf.* 3.5.1.1), the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2012) has compiled a profile for inclusive teachers. Four core values are included in this profile, namely, the valuing of learner diversity; providing support to all learners; working with others; and professional development. Various national and international education policy documents, organizations and researchers, affirm this profile (Watkins & Donnelly, 2014; World Health Organization, 2011; DoE, 2010; EWP6, 2010; Acedo *et al.*, 2009; UNESCO, 2008).

These core values include associated areas of teacher competence, which are made up of three elements: attitudes, knowledge and skills (see outline, Table 3.1) (EADSNE, 2012). The approach to this framework builds upon the work of Ryan (2009) who describes attitudes as multi-dimensional traits, and Shulman (2013) who describes professional learning in terms of the apprenticeships of the head (knowledge), hand (skill, or doing), and heart (attitudes and beliefs). Since the four core values relating to teaching and learning have been identified as the basis for the practice of all teachers in inclusive education (EADSNE, 2012), it will be used as a basic framework with relevant literature to gain a clearer understanding of an inclusive teacher's profile.

Core value:	Areas of competence:	Underpinning elements:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valuing learner diversity</li> <li>• Supporting all learners</li> <li>• Working with others</li> <li>• Continuing personal professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conceptions of inclusive education</li> <li>• The teacher's view of learner difference</li> <li>• Promoting the academic, social and emotional learning of all learners</li> <li>• Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes</li> <li>• Working with parents and families</li> <li>• Working with a range of other educational professionals</li> <li>• Teachers as reflective practitioners</li> <li>• Initial teacher education as a foundation for ongoing professional learning and development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitudes and beliefs</li> <li>• Essential knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• Crucial skills and abilities</li> </ul>

Table 3.1 An outline of the profile of the inclusive teacher (EADSNE, 2012)

### **3.5.1.2.1 Valuing learner diversity**

Learner difference must be considered as a resource and an asset to education. Areas of competence within this relate to conceptions of inclusive education and the teacher's view of learner difference (EADSNE, 2012).

#### **3.5.1.2.1.1 Conceptions of inclusive education**

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence for teachers are that education is based upon a belief in equality, human rights and democracy for all learners, and that inclusive education and quality in education must not be viewed as separate issues (Ouane, 2008).

This includes the knowledge and understanding of theoretical and practical concepts as well as principles underpinning inclusive education, within global and local contexts and the wider system of cultures and policies of educational institutions at all levels (Munoz, 2009; Molina, 2006). Therefore:

- Teachers must understand how the education system works and know how to use the possible strengths and weaknesses;
- Since teachers are crucial in determining what happens in classrooms, they must realise that the development of more inclusive classrooms requires them to cater for different learning needs of learners, through the modification or differentiation of the curriculum (Forlin, 2004);
- As inclusive education is an approach for all learners, not just those who are perceived to have different needs and may be at risk of exclusion from educational opportunities, teachers must have knowledge on how to address all barriers and needs; And
- Furthermore, Saloviita (2005) declares that appropriate language of inclusion and diversity must be known by teachers and they must also understand the implications of using different terminology to describe, label and categorize learners. Therefore, the use of biased language that demoralizes certain groups (ethnic, cultural or racial

groups), must be excluded. A classroom environment without judgment or discrimination in terms of the correct use of language should rather be promoted. Schoeman (2012) agrees that bias and stereotypes against learners with barriers and disabilities need to be recognised and concludes that all learners must be handled and respected as an individual with human dignity.

In order to develop these crucial skills and abilities, teachers need to critically examine their own beliefs and attitudes and the impact these have on actions; engage in ethical practice at all times and respect confidentiality; implement coping strategies to challenge non-inclusive attitudes and segregated situations; be empathetic to the diverse needs of learners; and model respect in social relationships as well as use appropriate language with all learners and stakeholders in education (Cardona, 2009). Dispositions such as resilience, positive attitudes towards disability and beliefs regarding the potential of learners with diverse needs are also considered to be essential (Tubele, 2008).

#### **3.5.1.2.1.2 The teacher's view of learner differences**

The attitudes and beliefs supporting this area of competence include the following: it is 'normal to be different'; learner diversity is to be respected, valued and understood as a resource that enhances learning opportunities and adds value to schools, local communities and society; all learners' voices should be heard and valued; the teacher is a key influence on learners' self-esteem and, as a consequence, their learning potential; and categorisation and labelling of learners can have a negative impact on learning opportunities (DBE, 2011:54; Naukkarinen, 2008).

Diversity in a school community is a given. To ensure that learners' self-esteem and learning potential are addressed in such a diverse community, it is essential for teachers to gain information about learner diversity (such as support needs, culture, language, socio-economic background etc.) (DoE, 2010:7). It is also important for teachers to be aware that both the school and classroom population are constantly changing and therefore diversity cannot be regarded as a static concept. Knowledge and understanding related to this competence also include how learners can be used as

a resource to facilitate learning about diversity; how learners learn in different ways and in what way this can be used to support their own learning as well as that of their peers (Theron & Engelbrecht, 2012; Tubele, 2008; Naukkarinen, 2008; Hajkova, 2007).

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include learning how to learn from differences; identifying the most appropriate ways of responding to diversity in all situations; addressing diversity in curriculum implementation; using diversity in learning approaches and styles as a resource for teaching; and contributing to building schools as learning communities that respect, encourage and celebrate all learners' achievements (Luckner & Pianta, 2011; Winter, 2006). It is also important that teachers have knowledge and skills on how to differentiate instruction in order to address the individual needs of learners in their diverse classrooms (Thousand *et al.*, 2007:10; Oswald, 2007:149).

### **3.5.1.2.2 Supporting all learners**

Teachers need to have high expectations of all learners and their abilities to achieve their optimal potential. The areas of competence within this core value relate to promoting the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all learners, and also effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes (EADSNE, 2012).

#### **3.5.1.2.2.1 Promoting the academic, social and emotional learning of all learners**

The attitudes and beliefs important for this area of competence include the acknowledgement that learning is regarded as being primarily a social activity and that academic, practical, social and emotional learning are equally important for all learners. Teachers' expectations are a key determinant of learner success and therefore high expectations for all learners are critical (Florian, 2012; Smith & Tyler, 2011). All learners should be allowed to be active decision-makers in their learning and the assessment processes they are involved in (Grima-Farrell *et al.*, 2011:118). Developing autonomy and self-determination of learners as well as their learning capacity and potential has to be discovered and stimulated (Gurney, 2007). It should also be recognised that parents and families are an essential resource for a learner's learning (UNESCO, 2005).

The essential knowledge and understanding for this area of competence relate to the value of collaborative working with parents and families to gain essential background information about learners as well as in creating a supportive network (Smith & Guarino, 2005; Oplatka, 2004; Barnett, 2004). Knowing and understanding typical and atypical child development patterns and pathways, particularly in relation to social and communication skills development as well as different models of learning and approaches to learning, are vital in the process to effect inclusive education (Parker *et al.*, 2003).

The crucial skills to be developed within this area of competence include being an effective verbal and non-verbal communicator who can respond to the varied communication needs of learners, parents and other professionals; supporting the development of learners' communication skills and possibilities; assessing and then developing 'learning to learn skills' in learners; developing independent and autonomous learners; facilitating co-operative learning approaches; implementing positive behaviour management approaches that support learners' social development and interactions; facilitating learning situations where learners can 'take risks' and even fail in a safe environment; and using assessment for learning approaches that take account of social and emotional as well as academic learning (Adalsteinsson *et al.*, 2014; Florian, 2012; Smith & Tyler, 2011).

#### **3.5.1.2.2.2 Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes**

In an inclusive education environment, teachers need to believe that they can teach all learners effectively and are able to take responsibility for facilitating the learning of all learners in a class. Essentially, teachers should understand that learners' abilities are not fixed and that they all have the capacity to learn and develop. However, learning is a process and the goal for all learners is the development of 'learning to learn' skills and not just content/subject knowledge. An essential aspect of teaching in heterogeneous classrooms is to know and understand that the learning process is essentially the same for all learners and there are very few 'special techniques, however, sometimes particular learning difficulties require responses based on adaptations to the curriculum and teaching approaches. Giangreco *et al.* (2010:251) affirm that although classroom

teachers are not expected to have all the answers or undertake the task of inclusive education alone, they must realise that while the foundational principles of teaching and learning do not change, these principles may need to be applied differently or used more systematically. Specifically, teachers must apply systems and teaching approaches that meet the diverse needs of all learners in their classrooms by accommodating the unique needs of learners during lesson design and application. This, however, requires constant re-examination and evaluation of the effectiveness of methods and strategies used in teaching and assessment as well as the variation of approaches, methodologies and strategies (Schoeman, 2012).

The essential knowledge and understanding underpinning this area of competence includes knowledge about the way learners learn as well as how teaching supports the learning process; positive behaviour and classroom management approaches; how to manage the physical and social environment of the classroom to support learning; and ways of identifying and then addressing different barriers to learning and the implications of this for teaching approaches. The development of basic skills with regard to a variety of teaching and assessment for learning methods focusing on identifying the strengths of a learner as well as being able to differentiate curriculum content, learning process and learning materials to include learners and meet diverse needs is important. The ability to personalise learning approaches for all learners to support them in order to develop autonomy in their learning, is a key competence. These competences are also confirmed as essential by other researchers (e.g. Nel *et al.* 2012:9).

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include employing classroom leadership skills that involve systematic approaches to positive classroom management; working with individual learners as well as heterogeneous groups; using the curriculum as a tool for inclusion that supports access to learning; addressing diversity issues in curriculum development processes; differentiating methods, content and outcomes for learning; working with learners and their families to personalise learning and target setting; facilitating co-operative learning where learners help each other in different ways, including peer tutoring within flexible learner

groupings; and using a range of teaching methods and approaches in systematic ways (Coffield, 2008:22; James & Biesta, 2007:37).

### **3.5.1.2.3 Working with others**

Collaboration binds an inclusive school community together (Oswald, 2007) and is essential to ensure effective teaching (Nel *et al.*, 2014; Swart & Pettipher, 2005; Dyson 2005; Gerschel, 2005; Engelbrecht, 2004; McLeskey & Waldron, 2000). To ascertain the successful implementation of inclusive education, teachers are required to collaborate effectively with other role-players involved, such as colleagues, parents, health professionals and education support services (Donald *et al.*, 2010:27). They are, therefore, essential role-players in an inclusive school community (Nel *et al.*, 2013) and must become key partners in a collaborative partnership when supporting learners who experience barriers to learning (DoE 2001, 2005, 2008; DoBE, 2010; Kinsella & Senior, 2008; Horne & Timmons, 2009; Sharma *et al.*, 2012; Chiner & Cardona, 2013; Florian & Spratt, 2013; O'Toole & Burke 2013). Collaboration with these others are also important for teachers' self-efficacy, since it creates a sense of interdependent support (*cf.* 3.5.3).

In education, the manner in which individuals collaboratively relate to one another is commonly called a model of collaboration and consists of the multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches (Friend, 2010; Engelbrecht, 2004:248). Each approach has different sets of underlying assumptions that guide teacher and team actions. All three approaches incorporate the participation of service providers, but that is essentially where the similarity ends (Hernandez, 2013:484; Bruder, 2010; Horn & Jones, 2005; Kilgo, 2006).

A multi-disciplinary collaboration approach forms part of the traditional consultation approach, which allows only certain specialists to form and use their own knowledge and information to identify and support a barrier independently, with very little collaboration or collective decision-making (Dreyer, 2014; Engelbrecht, 2007). It is characterized by the application of services by a variety of different disciplines acting independently (Thompson, 2012). Even with the presence of multiple disciplines, the level of active involvement by each discipline was found to be limited within the

framework of the multi-disciplinary approach. The overall approach of the multi-disciplinary model presumes that only those trained in the specific field are capable of assessing and serving the learner in need of their expertise (Kritikos *et al.*, 2012). An example would be, according to Hernandez (2013:484), an occupational therapist trained in understanding fine motor skills being the only discipline capable of working with the learner on handwriting and shoelace tying. This perspective then results in much of the assessment and intervention process occurring in isolation instead of in collaboration with other role-players such as teachers (Kritikos *et al.*, 2012). Within this approach, teachers mainly work from within a medical model, without collective decision-making which involves only individualistic intervention roles and support from other professionals (Engelbrecht, 2007).

The inter-disciplinary approach attempts to create an atmosphere of collaboration, primarily through enhanced coordination and cooperative engagements amongst disciplines during assessment and activity planning (Hernandez, 2013:484). This approach is parallel with the way multi-functional teams function, but is different in terms of more collaboration and openness to share individual opinions and plans with one another in their efforts to develop and work toward a collective goal of service and coordination (Engelbrecht, 2004:250). The inter-disciplinary approach may still result in the disciplines assessing learners independently from one another. Professionals using an inter-disciplinary approach can engage one another in a variety of ways including conferring with one another during the assessment, programme development, and intervention processes (Kritikos *et al.*, 2012). While this approach engenders an enhanced exchange of information, boundaries were noted to exist among team members that constrict the flow of information, dialogue, and effective implementation (Stepans *et al.*, 2002).

In comparison to the multi- and inter-disciplinary approaches, the trans-disciplinary approach has been perceived to be more effective approach in many ways – most notably in the creation of an integrated team structure and service delivery; deliberate and regular cross-disciplinary communications; knowledge exchange across disciplines; and its strong learner focus (Engelbrecht, 2007). This approach is about the interaction

of and inter-dependence among all role-players on an equal level, involving teachers and professionals with specialised knowledge, members of the school community, various role-players in the school district, as well as learners and parents/guardians. In a trans-disciplinary approach, stakeholders should operate interactively together as a group, on an equal level, sharing expertise and supporting one another with the collective goal of contributing to the development of effective support strategies (Blue-Banning *et al.* 2004; Engelbrecht 2007; DoBE 2010; Lindqvist *et al.* 2011; Strogilos *et al.* 2011). This integration of services within the team has been identified as a key component of the trans-disciplinary approach and is in contrast to the traditional model characterized by isolating, discipline-specific therapeutic interventions (Sapon-Shevin, 2010; Scorgie, 2010; Engelbrecht, 2007; Nel *et al.*, 2014). Various researchers support the trans-disciplinary approach as the desired option to provide effective learner support (Engelbrecht 2007; Horn & Jones, 2005; Kilgo, 2006; King *et al.*, 2009, Hong & Reynolds-Keefer, 2013). Teachers are therefore required to collaborate interdependently with others in inclusive education and are consequently more supported within this approach. Trans-disciplinary collaboration can be described as effective communication between team members, mutual recognition of every team member's skills, and an acceptance that in actively working together positive outcomes can be developed for learners who experience barriers to learning (Engelbrecht, 2007; Johnson *et al.*, 2007).

The areas of competence within the core value of this section (working with others) relate to working with parents and families, and working with a range of other educational professionals (EADSNE, 2012) which will be discussed next.

#### **3.5.1.2.3.1 Working with parents and families**

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include awareness of the added value of working collaboratively with parents and families; respect for the cultural and social backgrounds and perspectives of parents and families; and viewing effective communication and collaboration with parents and families as a teacher's responsibility (EADSNE, 2012; DoE, 2005; Johnson & Green, 2007; Landsberg, 2011).

The opinions of parents with regard to their children's schooling were not fully considered for many years in South Africa and parental contributions were restricted, for example, to only raising of funds by parents at schools (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2005). Swart *et al.*, (2004:81) suggest that with the democratic changes, parents are now more regarded as "integral partners in developing a more inclusive system, where decision-making and the responsibility for outcomes are shared". However, there are still barriers to parent and teacher partnerships (Ladbrook, 2009; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:127). For instance, a large number of parents are deceased in South Africa, leaving the grandmothers to care for their children. Poverty at home as a result of child-headed households and parents or caregivers who are illiterate and unemployed is a harsh reality. Because of long working hours, many parents leave their children with other care-givers who are not able to attend to their school needs. Factors such as these affect adequate parental participation in the learning process and make it difficult for teachers to support the learners effectively (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:127).

Klein and Miller (2008) proclaim that the following obstacles can hamper teacher and parent partnership:

- Differences in backgrounds: The parents and teachers come from different cultures, languages, and socio-economic statuses; Communication abilities and communication discomfort: Teachers or parents lack the ability to identify and communicate key experiences, ideas, or issues. They are consequently uncomfortable about communicating their needs, which could be as a result of not enough fluency in the language of communication. Being able to communicate effectively with parents and family members of different cultural, ethnic, linguistic and social backgrounds is essential to establish working parent-teacher relationships (Oswald, 2007:149);
- Differing views from parents regarding their role and the teachers' role: Parents who have a false perception that the main responsibility in educating their child remains that of the teacher only. Ladbrook (2009) affirms some parents still

assume that it is primarily the role of the teacher to address inclusive education;  
and

- Different philosophies between the parent and the teacher: The school views the learner's learning and development differently than the parents do. There could also be a different view about appropriate learner strategies or class management. For example: The parents equate teaching with telling, and the teacher equates learning with doing. Or, behaviour issues are handled one way at home and another at school (spanking at home, explaining at school).

In research conducted by Engelbrecht *et al.* (2005:474), it was found that even though there could be a disparity in the relationships between parents and teachers, it can be overcome by shared understandings of the importance of communication, commitment, equality and respect for successful relationships. The same researchers further declare that for inclusive education to be implemented successfully, it is important for professionals, such as teachers, to acknowledge the rights of parents to be partners in the process. Shared ownership and better understanding among professionals, parents and learners are critical in determining the success of inclusive education (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2005:474). Sharma (2011) agrees that the best outcomes of inclusive education occur when teachers and parents of learners (with and without disabilities) work together (Sharma, 2011).

Collaboration between parents and teachers can contribute to both parties experiencing mutual support and satisfaction, which can result in positive behaviour in learners, such as academic achievement, higher self-esteem and more discipline (Cavora, 2010:2; Olsen & Fuller, 2010; Patrikakou, 2008:2). Inclusive teaching can therefore only be successful if teachers have adequate knowledge and understanding about a collaborative working approach that includes parents and families; and how these interpersonal relationships in such a collaborative approach can impact on the achievement of learning goals for learners (Sapon-Shevin, 2010; Scorgie, 2010).

Therefore, the crucial interpersonal and collaboration skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include effectively engaging parents and families in supporting their child's learning (Oswald, 2007:149).

#### **3.5.1.2.3.2 Working with a range of other educational professionals**

The attitudes and beliefs supporting this area of competence require that all teachers need to be able to work in teams with other educational professionals, such as school colleagues, departmental colleagues, health professionals and community members linked to education. Collaborative teamwork with other educational professionals can develop a teacher's own professional learning. Donald *et al.* (2010:27) assert that it is critical to see the teacher as part of a professional team or network to enable him/her to transform the process of inclusive education.

Within a professional collaborative team, it is important for the teacher to have knowledge and understanding about the following: support systems and structures ; multi-agency working models where teachers in inclusive classrooms co-operate with other experts and staff from a range of different disciplines; collaborative teaching approaches where teachers take a team approach involving learners themselves, parents, peers, other school teachers and support staff, as well as multi-disciplinary team members; and the language/terminology and basic working concepts and perspectives of other professionals involved in education (Swart & Pettipher, 2011; Dyson 2005; Gerschel, 2005; Engelbrecht, 2004). By following a trans-disciplinary approach (cf. 3.5.1.2.3), teachers should operate interactively together as a group, including the principal, other colleagues, institutional level support teams (ILST) and the District-based support teams (DBST) (cf. 3.4.2), health professionals, Department of Basic Education and community members, by sharing expertise and supporting one another equally, with the collective goal of contributing to the development of effective support strategies (Strogilos *et al.*, 2011; Lindqvist *et al.*, 2011; DoBE, 2010; Engelbrecht, 2007; Blue-Banning *et al.*, 2004).

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include being able to be a leader in the classroom and having adequate management skills that

facilitate effective multi-agency working; co-teaching and working in flexible teaching teams; working as part of a school community and drawing on the support of a school's internal and external resources; building a class community that is part of a wider school community; contributing to whole school evaluation, review and development processes; collaborative problem-solving with other professionals; contributing to wider school partnerships with other schools, community organisations and other educational organisations; and drawing on a range of verbal and non-verbal communication skills to facilitate working cooperatively with other professionals. To collaborate successfully and establish collaborative partnerships, teachers will also need to develop skills in problem-solving and inter-personal communication in order to develop the shared decision-making approach needed for collaboration (Oswald, 2007; Adler & Heckscher, 2006).

#### **3.5.1.2.4 Continuing personal professional development**

Teaching is a learning activity and teachers need to take responsibility for their own lifelong learning (Scales *et al.*, 2011; DoE, 2001). The areas of competence within this core value stress the importance of adequate initial teacher education as a foundation and ongoing professional learning and development to enable teachers to become reflective practitioners (EADSNE, 2012).

##### **3.5.1.2.4.1 Teachers as reflective practitioners**

Reflective practice of teachers can be defined as the process of the teacher studying his or her own teaching methods and determining what works best for the learners (Larrivee, 2000). The concept of reflective practice is now widely employed in the field of teacher education and teacher professional development and is the basis for many programmes of initial teacher education (Loughran, 2002). Reflection is a vital process of learning from experience that allows a teacher to evolve through learning from past experiences (Paterson & Chapman, 2013). Reflecting on different versions of teaching, and reshaping past and current experiences will lead to improvement in teaching practices (Leitch & Day, 2000). Through reflection, a teacher is able to look objectively at his/her actions or take into account the emotions, experience, or responses from their actions to improve their practice. Reflection on professional practice is a core quality of

effective teachers (Frick *et al.*, 2010; Bezzina, 2006; Seferoğlu, 2006; Wilson & Demetriou, 2007).

The attitudes and beliefs underpinning this area of competence include acknowledging that teaching is a problem-solving activity that requires on-going and systematic planning, evaluation, reflection and then modified action. Reflective practice facilitates teachers to work effectively with parents as well as in teams with other teachers and professionals working within and outside of the school. Evidence-based practice and valuing the importance of developing a personal pedagogy guide a teacher's work (Bintz & Dillard, 2007:223). Teachers should therefore interpret their everyday practice through the pursuit of reflective self-development (Ferguson, 2012:5; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009:40; Carr & Kemmis, 2009:75).

In order to develop reflective practices, knowledge and understanding in the following areas are essential: personal meta-cognitive learning to learn reflective skills on what makes a reflective practitioner and how personal reflection on and in action can be developed; methods and strategies for evaluating one's own work and performance; and the development of personal strategies for problem solving (Pavlovich, 2007; Korthagen, 2004). Loyens *et al.* (2007) describe reflection on the meta-cognitive level as a process in which teachers become self-regulated learners, capable of knowing how and when to use their knowledge constructed through reflective practice growth. This growth depends on how teachers bring together their own insights, perspectives and dreams, on the one hand, and the guidance and expectations of all involved in the teacher education process, on the other (Frick *et al.*, 2010).

The crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include systematically evaluating one's own performance; effectively involving others in reflecting on teaching and learning; and contributing to the development of the school as a learning community. Specifically, teachers need to engage in reflective practice as a way to think about their teaching and how to continually develop and implement a curriculum that is personally meaningful and relevant to learner's performance (Wilson & Demetriou, 2007:214; Adler & Heckscher, 2006; Allington, 2002).

#### **3.5.1.2.4.2 Initial teacher education and ongoing professional learning and development**

Although initial teacher education is the first step in teachers' professional lifelong learning process, they should take responsibility for their own continuous professional development. Teaching is a continuous learning activity and one must therefore be open to learning new skills. This includes actively asking for information and advice since a teacher cannot be an expert in all questions related to inclusive education (EADSNE, 2012). Change and development are constants in inclusive education and teachers need to attain the skills to manage and respond to these changing needs and demands by attending workshops, conferences and skills development courses as well as investigating possibilities, opportunities and routes for further, in-service teacher education (Schoeman, 2012; Lessing & De Witt, 2007; Molina, 2006; Kaikkonen *et al.*, 2007; Early & Bubb, 2004:3). When knowledge and skills are shared, valuable tools for change and improvement can be obtained (Lessing & De Witt, 2007; Kaagan, 2004:4). Teachers must realise that they have to take responsibility for becoming educated and trained, and consequently take control over improving their own knowledge and skills. However, it is also important that teachers are offered expanded and enriched professional development opportunities (Oswald, 2007). These opportunities need to be created and supported by the school principal and senior management, school governing bodies, learning support staff at school, as well as from support services external to the school (such as the DBST) (Dreyer, 2014).

Molina (2006) and Kaikkonen *et al.*, (2007) assert that it is also important for teachers to have knowledge about educational law and the legal context (such as inclusive education policies) they work in, as well as what their responsibilities and duties towards learners, their families, colleagues and the teaching profession entail. This will encourage them to have a better understanding of inclusive education.

In summary, the crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence include flexibility in teaching strategies to promote innovation and personal learning; employing time management strategies that will accommodate possibilities for

pursuing in-service development opportunities; being open to and proactive in using colleagues and other professionals as sources of learning and inspiration; and contributing to the whole school community's learning and development processes (Nel *et al.*, 2013; Sapon-Shevin, 2010; Scorgie, 2010; Sands *et al.*, 2000).

It is acknowledged that the above competences are essential for a teacher to have in enacting inclusive education. However, in the South African context, there are some challenges.

### **3.5.2 The current situation: Challenges to South African mainstream teachers**

Wood and Olivier (2008) postulate that currently teachers are caught in a circle of disempowerment and consequently display negative feelings, behaviour and attitudes towards teaching in an inclusive environment. They have a perception that they are not equipped to meet a diversity of needs and base this on various factors. It appears that mostly contextual issues are contributing to these negative feelings, such as under-resourced school environments including a lack of teaching aids and equipment; a lack of administrative and financial support from District offices; inadequate knowledge regarding barriers to learning, including language barriers and behavioural problems; and perceived pressure from school management teams and the Department of Basic Education (Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming; Nel *et al.*, 2013; Wood & Olivier, 2008:240). These factors are currently disabling teachers from implementing inclusive education successfully and can also be derived from inadequate training and other strenuous contextual issues, such as overcrowded classrooms, and curriculum constraints which have prescriptive requirements for completion of curriculum and limited flexibility to address learners' contexts and needs (Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming; Nel *et al.*, 2013).

Recent research has found that teachers are currently still employing the medical model by preferring to exclude learners with barriers from their classroom, because they feel not equipped enough to assist diverse needs and therefore find it easier to refer the specific learner to a special class or school (Nel *et al.* 2014; Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming). Consequently, inclusive education practices do not translate into reality in

most mainstream classrooms (Dreyer, 2014:181; Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming; Dreyer 2008; Oswald & Engelbrecht 2004:26; Swart & Pettipher 2005; Hay, 2003:136).

In-service teachers report that they are not adequately trained to support learners who experience barriers to learning, despite the current training and workshops given by the Department of Basic Education on inclusive education practices (Oswald, 2007; Stofile & Green 2007; Nel *et al* 2014). These training programmes tend to be of short duration, fractured, lacking depth in content knowledge and are focused more on a deficit-oriented approach towards learners who experience barriers to learning (Stofile & Green, 2007; Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming).

Loreman (2010) asserts that teacher education programmes must address the following: a deeper understanding of inclusive education and diversity; the development of knowledge and skills on how to collaborate widely with all stakeholders; the ability to engage in inclusive instructional planning by being prepared to anticipate and be responsive to high-priority needs within regular classrooms; and knowledge and skills on how to effectively support learners with diverse learning needs to participate fully in all classroom activities rather than being supported in separate special classrooms or resource centres. It appears, however, that teacher education programmes do not address this fully. The reason for this seems to be that the unique contextual influences impacting on the way in which schools function or the effect of the traditional medical approach to learners with diverse education needs on the quality of teacher-learner interactions, are not always taken into consideration (Oswald, 2007; Nel *et al.*, 2014; Engelbrecht & Van Deventer, 2013).

Furthermore, it appears that besides teachers not being adequately prepared to implement the South African government's agenda for inclusive education, the demands of the educational authorities with regard to curriculum coverage and consequent inflexible curricula prevent the possibility of achieving the desirable outcomes of inclusive education (Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming). Moreover, despite policy documents (cf. 3.4.4) asserting the implementation of a flexible curriculum to address a diversity of learning needs, teachers still seem to feel unable to adapt curricula accordingly (Chataika *et al.*, 2012). As a result, teachers' doubt or uncertainty regarding

the implementation of inclusive education increases as they rather become more concerned with teaching subject matter and completing curriculum requirements rather than diversifying instruction to meet a range of learner needs (Nel *et al.*, 2013; Savolainen *et al.*, 2012). The challenge increases when learners with disabilities attend mainstream classes and expectations regarding flexibility increase (Forlin, 2008:76). Teachers do not always regard them as their primary responsibility (Singal, 2010:52) and therefore do not attempt curriculum adaptations or modifications. This is contrary to the guiding principle underpinning inclusion - that regular schools should accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, sensory, emotional or other special needs (Forlin, 2008:76).

Research on the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa has also pointed out that although teachers seem to favour inclusion in principle, they believe that the South African educational system does not have the resources needed to enable them to implement inclusive education (Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming; Oswald & Swart, 2011:391; Bornman & Rose, 2010:7; Campbell *et al.*, 2003; Mowes, 2002: 75-86; Swart, Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2002: 177-179,185). Complex contextual issues including funding constraints that affect the availability of resources, resultant overcrowded classrooms and school cultures that influence attitudes negatively towards difference and disability, have complicated the implementation of the recommendations of White Paper 6 (Walton & Lloyd, 2011; Walton, 2010). These negative attitudes are not based as such on ideological arguments, but rather on practical concerns about how inclusive education can be implemented (Burke & Sutherland 2004).

Another concern is a feeling of low self-efficacy (Forlin *et al.*, 2009) because teachers do not feel supported or empowered for inclusive practices to successfully address the individual needs of learners (Wood & Olivier, 2008:238). Wood and Olivier (2008:240) postulate that teachers are not coping with the demands placed on them in their teaching environment and, as a result, they experience low self-esteem, feelings of despondency, apathy, hopelessness and a lack of purpose (Wood & Olivier, 2008:240). Furthermore, teachers' inability to cope with personal problems and working under stressful conditions, add to these feelings (Katz, 2014). Being able to work in teams

could enhance feelings of self-efficacy. However, a study on self-efficacy found that teachers experience a relatively low belief in their abilities to collaborate successfully with parents, teachers and support professionals, due to a lack of interpersonal skills (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011). These findings clearly indicate that in the future pre- and in-service teacher education programmes need to place more emphasis on collaboration skills in addition to courses on pedagogy and behaviour management (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011).

In conclusion, the above challenges can affect teachers' feeling of being effective teachers, which subsequently influences their attitude towards inclusive education and also self-efficacy.

### **3.5.3 Teachers' Self-efficacy and Inclusive Education**

In section 3.5.1 of this chapter, a summary was made of what is expected of the inclusive education teacher, the roles and responsibilities, as well as the profile of the inclusive education teacher. It was clearly indicated that in teaching within an inclusive education system, teachers are required to perform various tasks (*cf.* 3.5.1; 3.5.1.1; 3.5.1.2). In this section, for the purpose of this study, a literature review on teachers' self-efficacy and the related requirements of an inclusive education teacher (*cf.* 3.5.1), is discussed.

Since the global move towards inclusive education, research on teacher self-efficacy for inclusive education has increased (Malinen *et al.*, 2012; Leyser *et al.*, 2011; Almog & Shechtman, 2007; Romi & Leyser, 2006). In all of these studies it was asserted that in order to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education, a teacher had to experience high self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy can be defined as teachers' belief or conviction that they can influence how well learners learn, even those who may be considered difficult or unmotivated (Pajares, 2009) (see Chapter Two). Within an inclusive education system, the level of confidence a teacher needs to complete a task when teaching a learner who experiences a barrier to learning is an essential characteristic of high self-efficacy (Schaefer, 2010; Ryan, 2007:12). Mastery experiences (*cf.* 2.3.2.2.1) when teaching these learners will affect efficacy beliefs

positively, and consequently create more confidence for being able to teach in an inclusive education environment (Adalsteinsson *et al.*, 2014). For example, in a situation where a learner with a visual impairment and who is under-performing is in a classroom, the teacher needs to become creative to provide the learner every opportunity to learn optimally. When this is successful, it will affect the teacher's efficacy beliefs positively, and this will increase confidence for the next situation. Self-efficacy can therefore be achieved through experiencing and overcoming obstacles through perseverance and efforts (Bandura, 2012).

More recently, there has been a growing interest in studying the pragmatic side of teaching by measuring teachers' feelings of self-efficacy in implementing inclusive education (Sharma *et al.* forthcoming). Sharma *et al.* (2012) explains that one way to determine if in-service and pre-service teachers are ready for inclusive education is to examine their perceived efficacy to implement inclusive practices. However, being able to effect inclusive practices is influenced by motivation, behaviour and performance (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Hsiao *et al.*, 2011; Hardre, 2003; Pajares, 2003) as well as commitment, attitudes, collaboration, knowledge and skills (Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming; Savolainen *et al.*, 2011; Sharma *et al.*, 2009; Chan, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). These aspects will all impact on the level of self-efficacy.

- Motivation, behaviour and performance

Teacher's self-efficacy has been identified as an indicator of teacher motivation and also as a predictor of teacher openness to inventive or creative teaching strategies and didactic innovations, especially when dealing with learners who experience barriers to learning. Teachers with a high sense of efficacy are usually able to set challenging goals for themselves, maintain confidence and stay motivated in the face of demanding educational tasks that could be set by inclusive education and are able to find and implement solutions for classroom difficulties (Ryan, 2007). They will not necessarily experience negative feelings such as low belief in self, anxiety and demotivation and can cope with stressors (Bandura, 2006; Warnecke *et al.*, 2011; Lu *et al.*, 2011; Pedersen, 2012; Mills *et al.*, 2006). A teacher's motivation will also influence learner motivation and success (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Hsiao *et al.*, 2011). Highly self-

efficient teachers are associated with increasing learners' self-esteem, promoting their sense of efficacy, fostering involvement in class activities and supporting efforts in facing difficulties in their educational career (Hadre, 2003; Pajares, 2003; Ross *et al.*, 2001).

- Commitment, attitude, collaboration, and knowledge and skills

Various researchers agree that the implementation of inclusive education is dependent on teachers' attitudes and commitment towards it (Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming; Savolainen *et al.*, 2011). The more a teacher believes he/she can be effective in whatever difficulties are being approached, the more commitment there will be. Commitment will also promote attitudes of acceptance and willingness to facilitate the necessary mind shifts in terms of inclusive education practices. Consequently, attitudes and commitment towards inclusive education and its implementation are crucial elements in the success and maintenance of inclusive education (Sharma *et al.*, 2012:13; Engelbrecht *et al.*, forthcoming) because it is directly translated into actions and teaching practice, and also informs decision-making.

Research indicates that teachers who have lower levels of self-efficacy resist the inclusive model (Schaefer, 2010:36). Studies exploring how low levels of self-efficacy have shaped teachers' attitudes towards learning disabilities have found that these teachers often show hostility toward inclusion. These experiences then tend to affect how teachers respond to learners with learning disabilities (Schaefer, 2010, p. 36). They are more likely to criticize learners for incorrect responses and less likely to self-examine their teaching strategies (Ryan, 2007).

Better attitudes and consequent higher self-efficacy can be developed through providing teachers with more concrete tools to meet diverse needs in their classrooms during pre-service and in-service training (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011). Even though attitudes can be seen as relatively stable constructs containing cognitive, affective and behavioural elements (Bizer *et al.*, 2003), findings show that even short-term training can have positive effects on attitudes (Campbell *et al.*, 2003; Shade & Stewart, 2001). A lack of self-efficacy can be caused by a lack of knowledge and skills to address learners'

specific learning needs. The more teachers know, and the better they are able to apply their knowledge, the better their self-efficacy will be (Ryan, 2007; Kolektív autorov, 2006; Lukášová-Kantorková, 2003). Acquiring skills and knowledge through professional development are therefore important in enhancing teachers' self-efficacy (Malinen *et al.*, 2012; Savolainen, *et al.*, 2012; Gavora, 2010; Klassen *et al.*, 2009; Mitchell, 2010; Ross & Bruce, 2007).

Furthermore, the literature supports a relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and collaboration (Nel *et al.*, 2013; Malinen *et al.*, 2013; Savolainen *et al.*, 2012; Forlin *et al.*, 2009; Wood & Olivier, 2008:247; Henson, 2001:830). In their study on teacher self-efficacy for inclusive practices among three diverse countries (including Chinese, Finnish, and South African in-service teachers), Malinen *et al.* (2013) tested a hypothetical model for explaining teacher self-efficacy. This model contained three self-efficacy dimensions: efficacy in instruction, efficacy in managing behaviour and efficacy in collaboration. The findings of Malinen *et al.* (2013) correlated with other research (Savolainen *et al.* 2012) which has also emphasised the role of teachers' ability to collaborate as a relatively strong predictor of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. Positive interaction and collaboration (*cf.* 3.5.1.2.3) between teachers and other role players, such as learners, parents, and colleagues within the school and the Department of Basic Education, who are involved in the practice of inclusive education, can enhance teachers' self-efficacy (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). During these collaboration practices, team members must feel that their contributions are valued and respected and that there is a clear goal in shared decision-making (Sapon-Shevin, 2010; Scorgie, 2010). Working with other colleagues through collaboration, by planning and sharing ideas, new and better strategies can be developed, problems can be solved, learners' progress can be better monitored, and teaching outcomes can be evaluated and reflected upon. This collaboration will lead to improved teacher self-efficacy, since a sense of support and inter-dependency is created (Maika, 2012; Romi & Leyser, 2006).

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter addressed inclusive education. Since I aimed to explore teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system, I provided in this chapter a background review on inclusive education with regard to the principles, values and different views. This was followed by a discussion about different models, policy documents and educational support in South Africa, related to inclusive education. In the last section, the teacher's role within an inclusive education system was discussed in order to relate it to the influence of self-efficacy. In the next chapter, the research methodology underpinning this study is explained.

# CHAPTER 4

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

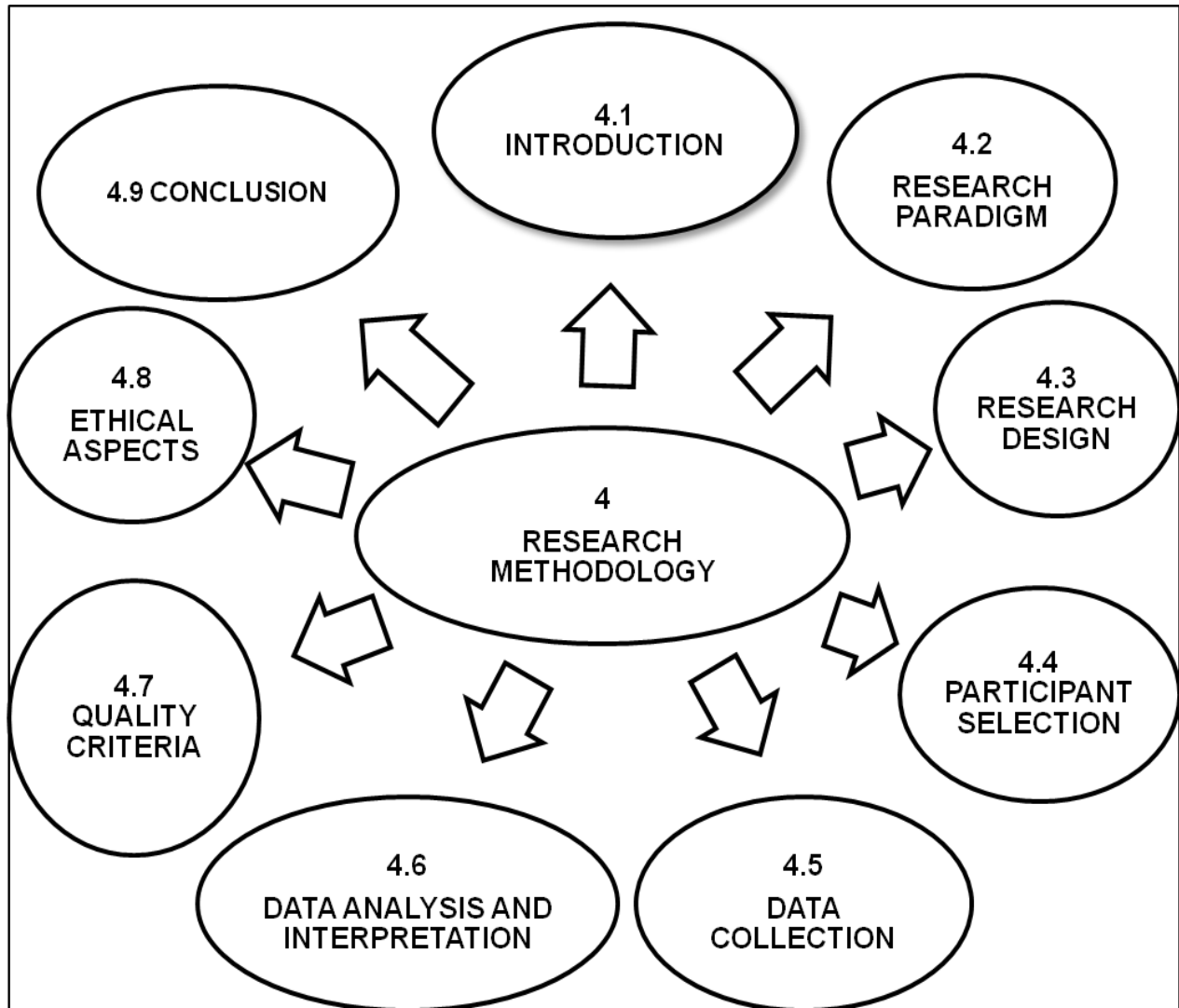


Figure 4.1 Overview of Chapter Four

## **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I outline the research methodology used in this study. It includes a description of the research design and paradigm that I used for this research. The way in which the participants were selected and how I collected, analysed and interpreted the data is also explained. This is followed by a discussion of the quality criteria and ethical guidelines I adhered to within this study.

### **4.1.1 Background of the study**

This study forms part of an international collaborative research project among South Africa, Finland, China, Slovenia, Lithuania and England. The main purpose of this comparative project has been to produce a knowledge base that sheds light on the nature of the development of inclusive education in different countries from a teacher's perspective (Engelbrecht, 2012) (cf. 1.2).

As mentioned in Chapter One (cf. 1.2) my doctoral study has formed part of the qualitative phase of the project and sought to further explore teachers' sense of self-efficacy within inclusive education with specific reference to South African full-service school teachers.

### **4.1.2 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to explore what influences full-service school teachers' self-efficacy, either enabling or disabling them in terms of implementing inclusive education successfully.

In order to realise this purpose of this study, I was guided by the following objectives as determined by the research questions (cf. 1.4):

- to determine what self-efficacy is;

- to determine what knowledge, skills and values are regarded as essential for teachers' sense of self-efficacy in inclusive education;
- to explore what the factors are that enable or disable teachers' sense of self-efficacy to implement inclusive education successfully;
- to explore what the needs are of teachers to be self-effective in an inclusive education system; and
- to develop recommendations for the strategies that can be developed to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in an inclusive education system.

## **4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

As indicated in Chapter One, this research is embedded in a constructivist research paradigm (Creswell, 2009:8). This research paradigm respects social constructivist explanations of how knowledge is co-generated (Creswell, 2007a:20; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:13) and aligns with my focus on exploring and understanding teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system. The belief that meaning evolves through people's social and cultural experiences is central to this paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:13; Creswell, 2007a:21).

A constructivist research paradigm involves the researcher as the primary instrument in the generation and analysis of qualitative data by taking participants' subjective experiences and interpreting the meanings that they attach to these experiences. This is done by interacting with participants and observing and listening to what they have to say. The constructivist researcher relies on participants' experiences and attempts to describe these in rich detail (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:5). In this sense, researchers and participants working within a constructivist research paradigm are partners in the research process and co-generate findings (Levin & Greenwood, 2011:29). It is important for the constructivist researcher to understand the participants' experiences fully in the context of their personal and societal backgrounds (including cultural, racial, religious and gender factors) that might influence their experiences (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:273–77).

A constructivist research paradigm was well-suited to my research, because I wanted to understand teachers' experiences regarding their feelings and experiences of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system. The teacher participants reflected on their perceived sense of self-efficacy, and then I endeavoured to interpret their understandings and experiences in order to answer the research questions. During the process of data collection the participants and I were involved in an interactive process that entailed a participatory exploration of their feelings and experiences and how they constructed the meaning of their responses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:5; Mertens, 2005:14).

The following three concepts define a research paradigm (Mertens, 2005:20):

**Ontology** – Constructivists believe that there are multiple socially constructed realities. According to the ontological position (or what it is we want to know about the world), we accept that individual subjective understanding and the social world exist independently of each other and that it is accessible via the participants' interpretation only, which may be further interpreted by the researcher (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Therefore in this study my goal was to gain an understanding of the teachers' multiple social realities and their feelings and experiences regarding their own sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system.

**Epistemology** – Constructivists believe that there is an interactive link between participants and the researcher in which values are made explicit and where, through the research process, findings are created. This is a more personal, interactive mode of data collection (Sprague, 2010; Creswell, 2009; Agger, 2007). I acquired my knowledge in this way by being personally involved in the gathering of the data. I aimed to broaden my understanding of teachers' feelings and experiences regarding their sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system by means of interaction with the teacher participants in their natural school context.

**Methodology** – Within a constructivist research paradigm, research is primarily qualitative, hermeneutical and dialectical, and only contextual factors are described

(Babbie & Mouton, 2001:20; Mertens, 2005:9; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). To further elucidate this explanation, hermeneutics “is an approach to the analysis of texts that stresses how prior understandings and prejudices shape the interpretive process” (Denzin & Lincoln 2005:27). It is hermeneutical in the sense of an understanding of the whole (the school as a case) that has to be continually revised in view of the reinterpretation of the parts (teachers as part of the school context). The dialectical angle involves comparisons and contrasts of various constructions through repetition, analysis, critique, replication, reanalysis, and so on that leads eventually to a joint (among myself as researcher and my participants) construction of a case (i.e. findings or outcomes). Through the use of the constructivist paradigm, the participants’ subjective experiences are taken seriously as the essence of what is real for them. By interacting with the participants during the data-collection procedure that included interviews and collage making, I intended to broaden my understanding of the meaning teachers attribute to their feelings and experiences which enable or disable them to experience more self-efficacy, in an inclusive education environment.

#### **4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A qualitative research design (Terre Blanche et al., 2006:274) was used in this research, partly because this is what a constructivist paradigm calls for (cf. 4.2.1). Qualitative research is an enquiry process of understanding a social and human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants and is conducted in a natural setting (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:395; Pogrebin, 2003:4). A qualitative design is suitable for this research, because I explored the meaning that teachers give to their feelings and experiences of their sense of self-efficacy in their natural setting. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:133) describe two common features of qualitative research. Firstly, it focuses on phenomena that occur in natural settings and secondly, it studies these phenomena in all their complexities. Thus qualitative researchers recognize that the phenomena they study have many dimensions and rely heavily on their ability to interpret and make sense of what they see. The interpretation is reflected through the understanding of people’s perspectives in the contexts of their own lives. It is also important to recognize

that different participants will have different vantage points and perspectives, which will result in different types of understanding. A rich description of people's perspectives is therefore sought through qualitative research. As qualitative researcher, I therefore aimed to gather as much detailed information as possible about the participants' feelings and experiences of self-efficacy within an inclusive education system (Merriam, 2009:169; Mertens, 2005:9; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Consequently, a variety of data collection strategies were employed (cf. 1.6.2.3).

#### **4.3.1 Strategy of enquiry**

I chose a multiple case study design for my study to promote the richness, depth and complexity that was drawn from multiple events which helped me to understand the phenomenon of interest that was shared among the diverse cases (Anaf *et al.*, 2007; Stake, 2000).

The strengths of making use of a multiple case study in a research enquiry was identified and made the approach ideal for this study (Lauckner *et al.*, 2012). These strengths included the following:

- They are appropriate for examining a “contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003). In terms of my research it refers to exploring the teachers' sense of self-efficacy as a phenomenon, in their inclusive teaching environment, as a real-life context and how these affect each other;
- The enable the exploration of complex situations by allowing for the gathering of multiple perspectives from a range of sources, including contextual information. For the purpose of my study this complex situation involved gathering data from multiple teachers from full-service schools who are required to work within an inclusive system;
- Being particularly useful when looking at a process. Case studies answer “how” questions (Yin, 2000), and this is compatible with the research question of my

study, since I want to find out how teachers feel and experience self-efficacy and how it can be enhanced; and

- Multiple case studies with variety across cases ensure richness and depth in order to understand the shared phenomenon of interest. In my research two school cases have been included to ensure this (Anaf *et al.*, 2007; Stake, 2006).

#### **4.4 PARTICIPANT SELECTION**

Participants were purposively selected in terms of their suitability and convenience for the study (Creswell, 2009:178; Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:304). As mentioned in Chapter One, after I had taken the demands of the case study design, such as multiple visits to the schools, travel costs and time restraints into account, I decided to include two full-service schools that were in closer proximity to the university where I work (the Vaal Triangle area). I've chosen full-service schools, because they are mainstream education institutions that should provide quality education for all learner's individual needs, irrespective of disability or differences in learning style or pace (EWP6, 2010:7). Since my promoter worked with these schools during Phase One of the project (*cf.* 1.2), she had knowledge about their willingness and participation, as well as their needs in functioning fully as full-service schools, to continue with collaboration, and therefore she supported me in choosing the two most suitable schools. These schools will be referred to as school A and school B for discussion purposes.

To be included in this research study, teachers who volunteered to take part had to comply with the following specific criteria;

- Teachers who had taken part in Phase One of the research project;
- Qualified teachers currently working in these full-service schools and teaching within an inclusive education system/ setting/environment; and
- Teachers who were willing and committed to participate in this study.

The principals of the schools were contacted for an appointment by me to gain permission in order to conduct the collection of data at their schools. During this meeting, I personally discussed the aim of the research, possible contributions and details of the

data collection, the planned methodologies/activities with the teacher participants and amount of time needed for them to take part. I also presented an informed consent form, which described the purpose of the research in detail. Thereafter they signed the informed consent form (see Addendum A).

Since all teachers of both schools took part in Phase One, I proposed to the principal that all teachers had to be invited for an introduction session which was arranged for after school hours. I asked both principals if they would be so kind to motivate the teachers to attend the introduction session. Most teachers of both schools attended this first introductory meeting. These included fifteen teachers from school A and fourteen from school B. During these introduction sessions, I informed the teachers about the aim of the research, what it entailed, the time needed for them to take part, what to expect, the different activities/ research methodologies/strategies that would form part of our collaborative activities and provided them with an informed consent form (see Addendum B). It was also made clear that participation was voluntary and not compulsory.

Thereafter, their voluntary participation was requested and if they were interested they had to indicate which activities (focus group interviews, individual interviews and collages) they would like to take part in. They had the choice to choose as many activities as they wanted, for example they could've taken part in only one or all three activities. I aimed to personally make an effort to shape a caring, inviting and positive climate during the introduction session. I also explained that this research could probably benefit them personally and assured them that all activities would be done in a safe environment. It was anticipated that after the purpose of the research had been explained, the majority of selected teachers would take part in the study, and most did. The number of participants who took part was more than I had initially expected. This indicates that teachers clearly have a need to be heard and have opportunities to focus on themselves personally as teachers.

The following table outlines the number of participants who signed the informed consent form and agreed to take part in the different data-gathering methods.

School:	Focus group 1	Focus group 2	Collages	Individual interviews
A	7 Participants	8 Participants	5 Participants	5 Participants
B	6 Participants	8 Participants	5 Participants	5 Participants

Table 4.1 Number of participants who took part in the research process

A total of 21 teachers participated in this research, eleven from school A and ten from school B. Some of them took part in all the activities and others only one activity. Table 4.2 provides an outline of the school (A or B), teacher participant (number) and the activities they took part in (marked by an X), as well as their biographical profiles including sex, age, qualifications and years of experience.

School	Teacher participant	Focus group 1	Focus group 2	Collages, individual interviews and questionnaire after recommendations	Sex	Age	Qualifications	Years of experience
A	Participant 1	X			F	50	HED Higher Education Diploma	29
A	Participant 2	X		X	F	59	HED Higher Education Diploma	38
A	Participant 3	X		X	F	53	HED Higher Education Diploma	32
A	Participant 4	X			F	26	BEd Degree	2
A	Participant 5	X			M	35	HED Higher Education Diploma	12
A	Participant 6	X			F	42	BEd Honours Learner Support	17
A	Participant 7	X		X	F	40	BEd Honours Learner Support	14
A	Participant 8		X	X	F	45	BEd Honours Learner Support	19

A	Participant 9		X		F	30	BEd Degree	6
A	Participant 10		X		M	40	HED Higher Education Diploma	18
A	Participant 11		X	X	M	48	HED Higher Education Diploma	26
B	Participant 1	X		X	M	36	BEd	12
B	Participant 2	X		X	M	40	MEd	14
B	Participant 3	X		X	F	60	HED Higher Education Diploma	38
B	Participant 4	X			M	36	BEd	12
B	Participant 5	X			M	40	MEd	15
B	Participant 6	X			F	60	HED Higher Education Diploma	39
B	Participant 7		X		M	59	HED Higher Education Diploma	38
B	Participant 8		X	X	M	25	BEd Honours Learner Support	1
B	Participant 9		X		F	29	BEd Degree	5
B	Participant 10		X	X	F	38	BEd Honours Learner Support	12

Table 4.2 Biographical and participatory profile of teacher participants

#### 4.4.1 Description of the school contexts

Both schools are located in a semi-rural township in the Vaal Triangle area with low socio-economic levels and limited resources.

These schools were identified as full-service schools by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE). School A became a full-service school in 2011 and school B in 2012. The principals were enthusiastic about this because they believed in the principle of inclusion and wanted their schools to become more effective regarding the implementation of White Paper 6 (SA, 2001). However, they acknowledge that at that point in 2011, they and their teachers did not have adequate knowledge about inclusive

education and received little support from the District Office on how to become a functional full-service school. The limited support from the District Office appears to still be problematic. The home language of the teachers and learners in both schools is Sesotho. The language of learning and teaching (LOLT) is English, which implies that learners and teachers alike are learning and teaching in their second language.

#### **4.4.1.1 School A**

After the school had been declared as a full-service school, the principal contacted surrounding schools and offered their services to accommodate all learners who experience barriers to learning, even though they had little support and resources available. He was convinced that they would make most of the little they had available and do their best to give the best support to any learner. He also tried to make the surrounding schools and community aware that they must all take hands to achieve the outcomes of inclusive education. Since they were struggling to get adequate support from the District Office, he reached out to the Inclusive Education section of the School of Education at the Vaal Triangle campus of North West University. They were provided with workshops regarding inclusive education as an approach, as well as the identification and support of learners who experience learning difficulties. According to the principal, these workshops were very helpful and afterwards the teachers indicated that their knowledge improved and as a result they felt more confident about implementing inclusive education effectively. The principal was also very positive about the difference my research made to himself and the teachers. *“Isabel, we’ve been getting great support from you guys at the university, just talking to you now makes me feel better and know that we are taken care of”*. Although the school has made much progress regarding inclusive education practices, there is still a need for more support to become a fully functional full-service school. The staff consists of 24 teachers including 20 mainstream teachers and four Learner support teachers teaching in special classes. There are 896 learners in the school of whom 187 (Grades 1-7) are identified as learners with barriers to learning and development (special needs) by the teachers. Of these 187 identified learners, 101 are in special classes, while the other 86 are accommodated in the mainstream classes. In 2011 the school started with two special

classes for the Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3) and in 2012 they added two more for the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-7). These four classes are taught by a trained learner support teacher each.

#### **4.4.1.2 School B**

School B is a smaller school in terms of learner numbers than school A. It has 12 teachers and 438 learners, of which 65 learners have been identified as experiencing barriers to learning and development by the teachers. 18 of these learners in the Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3) are placed in a special class and 19 from the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-7) are placed in another special class. The other 28 learners with barriers to learning and development are accommodated in the mainstream classes.

### **4.5 DATA COLLECTION**

#### **4.5.1 Data-collection methods**

In this study I made use of qualitative methods, i.e., field notes and a journal, semi-structured focus group interviews (Creswell, 2007a:215), collages (Van Schalkwyk, 2010:676), semi-structured individual interviews about the collages (Creswell, 2005:214) and open questionnaires. The data generation methods were compared and the findings analysed and interpreted by me (see section 4.6). I conducted the focus group interviews first followed by the collages and then the individual interviews. For this reason they are also discussed in that order.

##### **4.5.1.1 Field notes and a journal**

Field notes are notes of observations or conversation taken during the conduct of qualitative research. It is the primary way of capturing the data collected from participant observations (Kawulich, 2005). Therefore I made use of detailed descriptive field notes during the research, which were later re-worked for clarity and entered into a field journal (Creswell, 2009:181; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Pitney & Parker, 2009). The field journal was kept throughout the research process and included information such as the

interview schedule and detailed planning of the study, observations, a methodology log and a personal diary.

#### **4.5.1.2 Semi-structured group interviews**

Semi-structured group interviews can be defined as a small group with a typical sample of six to ten individuals, all of whom have had direct experience of the phenomenon being studied and they usually last for one to two hours in total (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:153; Patton, 2002:385). Two semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted in each of the selected schools. The groups consisted of between six to eight participants each and a total of 14 teacher participants within each school took part in the focus group interviews. In school A the first focus group consisted of six participants and the second focus group of eight participants. The focus groups in School B had seven participants in each group (*cf.* table 4.1).

Semi-structured interviews consist of several key predetermined questions that help to define the areas to be explored, but also allow the interviewer to probe in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail (De Vos *et al.* 2002:290). This interview format is used most frequently to provide participants with some guidance on what to talk about, which many find helpful. I kept in mind the flexibility of this approach, because it allows for the discovery or elaboration of information that is important to participants, but may not have been previously been thought of as being pertinent by me (Gill *et al.*, 2009).

During these interviews I made use of a list of semi-structured questions determined by the findings of the first phase of the larger project (Malinen *et al.*, 2013; Savolainen *et al.* 2012) the research questions as well as the literature review of this study. The following is the interview schedule that I used:

- How do you feel about teaching within an inclusive education system?
- Tell me what the term teacher self-efficacy means to you?
- Tell me about the importance of self-efficacy for teachers?
- What do you think affects teachers' self-efficacy?

- What do you think can enhance teacher's self-efficacy?

Furthermore, responses from participants were encouraged by probing, prompts and questions, such as “can you tell me a bit more about that”, or “how did you experience that?” (Gill *et al.*, 2009). Questions of encouragement like these enrich and expand the way the participants react or give feedback (De Vos *et al.*, 2002:290). All focus group interviews were audio-tape-recorded during the research process and transcribed by me.

#### **4.5.1.3 Collages**

A collage is a symbolic representation which exposes social meaning, process and values (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:453). It is a process of narrating life experiences using different modes of expression including both language and non-linguistic action (Van Schalkwyk, 2010:676). Making a collage is a projective or enabling technique whereby research participants create rough collages from magazines or other visual material to represent something relevant to the research, often a brand or an activity. Since the use of different data-collection methods improves the quality of qualitative research (Cresswell, 2009:180; Greeff, 2005:295), I also made use of collages as a data-collection method at each of the two schools. During the collage-making activity, the participants got the opportunity to express their feelings about their self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system. Ten participants (five teachers from each school) made two collages each. In the first collage (collage one) they had to illustrate how they experienced their self-efficacy currently in teaching within an inclusive education system and in the second collage (collage two) how they would want their self-efficacy to be. See example of the collage interview in Addendum C. This has contributed to richer data being obtained (*cf.* 4.5.1.3).

#### **4.5.1.4 Semi-structured individual interviews**

An individual interview is a way of finding out what is in or on someone's mind, his or her individual lived experience and knowledge, opinions, beliefs and demographic data (Gill *et al.*, 2008; Diccico-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Opdenakker, 2006; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Therefore, I attempted to understand the world from the participant's point of

view, by unfolding the meaning of people's experiences and uncovering their lived world, prior to scientific explanations (Creswell, 2005:214; Greeff, 2005:287; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:148). Participants of this study's perceptions, perspectives and understanding of their sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system have been explored. The interviews were semi-structured and were conducted face-to-face between me and each of them. This included ten participants in total, five from each of the two schools, who also completed the collage activity. During these individual interviews the same predetermined semi-structured questions of the group interviews were asked at first and secondly they were interviewed on the collages.

During the interviews about the collages I followed a certain process, since they had completed two collages (*cf.* 4.5.1.2). Collage one illuminated how they experienced their sense of teaching self-efficacy at this stage and collage two what they wanted it to be. During these interviews, in the first round I asked them "how they experienced the exercise?", and then secondly, to "tell me about what every symbol or picture presented"? I for example pointed at something on the collage and asked: "Tell me about this here"? These first two rounds included the participant reflecting on one collage at a time, for example the first collage and then the second next, in the same individual interview. After they had reflected on each collage, in the third and last round, I placed the collages vertically next to one another in front of them, collage one on the one side and collage two on the other side. In order to gain more in-depth understanding of how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced, I asked them "How can we go from collage 1 to collage 2, what must happen for a teacher to make that progress?" This clearly helped them to reflect and think about ideas to enhance teachers' self-efficacy, and therefore added to richer data in my research.

All individual interviews were audio-tape-recorded during the research process and transcribed by me. I also made copies of each to make notes on during the interview process and scanned copies to include in my Chapter Four to report and describe the findings.

#### 4.5.1.5 Open questionnaire

Based on the findings of the previously mentioned data collection methods (*cf.* 4.5.1.1, 4.5.1.2, 4.5.1.3; 4.5.1.4), suggested recommendations to enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy were compiled (see Chapter Six). A qualitative open questionnaire (see addendum F) was designed based on these recommendations (*cf.* 6.6). Questionnaires in qualitative research are used to promote the reaction of the participants, which does not provoke any clear answers such as yes or no, but instead, encourages further explanation in the form of open questions (Gill *et al.*, 2008). Therefore the questionnaire contained open questions in which the main aspects of the recommendations were mentioned and participants were asked to motivate their opinion if they agree or disagree (see addendum F).

#### 4.5.2 The data-collection process

The research process is summarised in Table 4.3. In my explanation of each step I do not specify which school of participants the explanation applies to (Schools A and B), because the process was the same for both.

<u>Steps in data-collection process:</u>	<u>Data-collection procedure:</u>
Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Literature review.</li></ul>
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appointments with school principals were made to provide more information about the study and ask permission to conduct the data collection at their specific school.</li><li>• Both principals signed the informed consent form.</li><li>• After giving their informed consent, a date was selected when the introductory, information and invitation session could be held.</li><li>• Both principals agreed to inform all teachers about this session and ask them to attend, without any pressure being applied.</li><li>• I made it clear to the principals that this study was for the teachers' own benefit and therefore not compulsory, but kindly asked them to motivate their teachers to consider taking part in the study.</li></ul>

<b>Step 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I conducted an introductory, information and invitation session for all teachers on the arranged date as confirmed by the principals.</li> <li>• This included a discussion of the purpose of the research and an explanation of all activities and research methodologies.</li> <li>• Teachers interested in taking part in the research completed and signed the informed consent form, and selected which activities (research methodologies) they wanted to be part of, on suitable dates and times.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I conducted focus-group interviews.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I administered collages with participant teachers.</li> <li>• I conducted individual interviews with the teachers with the same questions as the focus group interviews.</li> <li>• I conducted individual interviews with the teachers about their collages.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All audio-taped-data gathered during steps four and five were transcribed.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I analysed and interpreted the data gathered from steps four and six, and drew up conclusions.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on the findings of step seven, I compiled a document with recommendations to enhance full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I presented a copy of the recommendations to the participant teachers who also took part in the collage activities (<i>cf.</i> 6.6) and provided them with an open questionnaire (<i>cf.</i> 4.5.1.5; 6.6) to evaluate the appropriateness of the recommendations. The participants then completed the questionnaire.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I analysed the data of step nine and drew up conclusions.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I concluded the research findings.</li> </ul>

Table 4.3 Steps in the data-collection process

### **4.5.3 Role of the researcher**

As the researcher of this study, I was an integral part of each step in the data-collection process. The qualitative researcher is seen as the most important instrument in the data-collection research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:3). One of the characteristics of qualitative research is that the researcher is typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants (Creswell, 2009:177). This requires the researcher to be actively involved in the research process and, therefore, I personally conducted all the interviews and administered the collage-making process (Creswell, 2009:177; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:3; Merriam, 2009:28).

I was aware of the fact that my personal involvement introduced a range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues and therefore I needed to remain as objective as possible during the process. Objectivity in qualitative research refers to a realistic aim for researchers to remain impartial; that is, to be impartial to the outcome of the research, to acknowledge their own preconceptions and to operate in as unbiased and value-free a way as possible (Association for Qualitative Research, 2012). In order to remain objective, I had support from a colleague and also from my promoter, who are both specialists in the field of inclusive education. The colleague assisted me only in the group interviews, in terms of language and probing the answers of the participants. In order to respect the privacy of the participants who took part in the collages and individual interviews, I conducted these by myself and the individual participants only. By reflecting with my promoter on a regular basis helped me to remain impartial and not to get too personally attached to the participants.

## **4.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Data collection and analysis must be a simultaneous process in qualitative research and the analysis is therefore done from the commencement of the data-collection process (Henning *et al.*, 2004:5; Merriam, 2009:169). As I continued with the process of collecting, I constantly reflected on impressions, relationships and connections, dividing, categorising and grouping the data into smaller and more meaningful units (Henning *et al.*, 2004:5).

All qualitative data analysis is primarily inductive and comparative (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:321; Merriam, 2009:175). I worked inductively and also made use of the constant comparative method of data analysis. My purpose in using an inductive approach was to: (a) condense raw textual data into a brief, summary format; (b) establish clear links between the evaluation or research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data; and (c) develop a framework for the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in the raw data (Thomas, 2006). I have therefore been working inductively by seeking patterns and meaning in the data, with a view to making overall statements about them (Hatch, 2002:161).

The overall objective of the constant comparative analysis is also to identify patterns in the data which are arranged in relationship to one another. The constant comparative method uses a similar procedure by involving the following: comparing one segment of data with another to determine similarities and differences, grouping data together on a similar dimension. This dimension was then tentatively given a name and then it became a category (Merriam, 2009:30).

In my study the four semi structured group interviews, ten collages and ten individual interviews gathered provided three sets of data (Creswell, 2009:181). By using an inductive content analysis the data directed the set of codes and themes that emerged, rather than my imposing a set of codes onto them (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2010:37; Creswell, 2009:184; Ellingson, 2009:55; Merriam, 2009:183; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:142; Nieuwenhuis, 2007a:99).

I made use of five phases of the inductive content analysis process (Creswell, 2009:185), which is discussed next to provide a more complete description of how the above inductive process was conducted.

#### **4.6.1 Phase One: Organise and prepare data for analysis**

After obtaining the data through the data-generation steps (as described in section 4.5.2), the four focus group and ten individual interviews were transcribed verbatim to produce electronic transcripts (totalling 135 pages). I scanned the collages (with the

participant's number as the picture name) into a secure computer and typed out the explanations of the collages provided by the participants.

#### **4.6.2 Phase Two: Read through the data repeatedly**

In order to get a general sense of the information and to examine each data set intensively, I read repeatedly through all the data (Guillemin, 2004:287). The transcripts of the focus group and individual interviews were read first and then the data collected by the collages. Within each set I started with one participant's data. When I was familiar with these data I moved on to the next participant's data, and so on. By examining the data sets I began to have a general sense of the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2009:185).

#### **4.6.3 Phase Three: The coding process**

The data of both schools were analysed separately at first by following the coding process that is discussed next and then compared for cross-cutting themes afterwards. To code the data, I used the suggested steps by Creswell (2009:186). This meant that steps one to three were used to code the data within each set before comparing the themes across sets (step four).

Step one: In this step the labelling of data took place. In order to do this, I went through the transcripts of the individual interviews and collages, to label any piece of data that answered a particular research question that I was focusing on. I did this by writing a word or phrase that best described or paraphrased the particular piece of data. I also made use of colour pens, underlining my codes. Question one was yellow, two blue, three green, four purple and five pink.

Step two: In step two, codes were revised to address redundant codes, i.e. excess codes that did not fit in with themes. The objective was to reduce the list of codes to a more controllable number and to eliminate codes that were similar to other codes (Creswell, 2012:245). The ideal number of codes, according to Creswell (2012:245), had to be between 25 and 30, which I adhered to. I reduced the number of codes by going back to my data and eliminating codes that did not answer the research

questions.

Step three: In this step different themes emerged for each research question by comparing codes with one another. Similar codes were grouped into emerging themes (Creswell, 2009:186).

Step four: As explained above, the themes found in one piece of data from the one school (e.g. Focus group interview 1) were compared with the data from the same data source from the other school – in this case other group interviews – to form one main list of all the themes from one data set. The same process proceeded with the other data sets. The four main lists of the first school were compared with those of the other school to find similarities and to incorporate them into a single master list. Duplicate themes that were discovered were refined in this process. This process also allowed me to check whether I had missed themes or needed to re-label themes (Merriam, 2009:180). Cross-cutting themes from the data of both schools were identified.

#### **4.6.4 Phase Four: Themes or descriptions of data**

The cross-cutting themes that emerged from the data of both schools were used to generate a detailed description of teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system and how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced. In this phase I was also able to present my findings through themes and sub-themes that answered each research question.

#### **4.6.5 Phase Five: Interpret the meaning of themes or descriptions**

The final phase was interpretation of the data. This involved aligning it with existing literature, finding what it conflicted with in current knowledge from the literature, and also to view noted information from the literature which are not reported in my findings (Loots, 2010:305). Finally, by integrating the answers to the sub-questions I generated a composite answer to the primary question: What influences full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy, enabling or disabling them to implement inclusive education successfully?

## **4.7 QUALITY CRITERIA**

The term “quality criteria” refers to the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the research process and the resulting findings (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a:113). I aimed to enhance the trustworthiness of my research by using the five principles of credibility, transferability, triangulation, dependability, conformability and authenticity as outlined by Guba and Lincoln (2005:146) and Lincoln *et al.* (2011:108).

### **4.7.1 Credibility**

Credibility raises a question regarding the accuracy of the findings in qualitative research according to Bashir *et al.* (2008:39). The researcher must, for instance, be able to bring about trust in the accuracy of the findings which were derived from the research methods. The qualitative researcher must take time and effort to ensure that a detailed account of credible procedures is included in the report (Delport & Fouché, 2005:353). Savin-Baden and Fisher (2002:191) state that a way to ensure value and truth in the findings is by exploring experiences that participants lived through. A thorough and accurate description of the data-collection process can contribute to the credibility of the research (*cf.*4.5) (De Vos, 2005:346). Truth and value have been ensured in this study by making use of group and individual interviews that have been audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. The content of these transcribed interviews together with the collages was analysed continually and compared by me to refine constructs. All the participants were English Second Language speakers and demonstrated a limited proficiency in the language as can be seen in the quotes (*cf.* Chapter Five). It was therefore important to do member checking with the participants in ensuring that their statements were correctly transcribed and appropriately analysed. Unlike quantitative researchers who wait until the end of the study to analyse their data, qualitative researchers analyse their data throughout their study (Siegle, 2002:2). This ensures a match between researcher categories and participation realities, which supports validity (Merriam, 2009:215). All findings were correlated with the literature.

#### **4.7.2 Transferability**

The possibility of transferring the research findings into a context other than the original can be viewed as an indication of the validity of the findings (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:256). The question in relation to the transferability of my research is therefore directed at whether the findings would be the same if my research had been conducted with another group of people in a different context (De Vos, 2005:346). Triangulation can contribute to a study's transferability, and for this reason I made use of the process of triangulation, which is discussed in the next paragraph.

#### **4.7.3 Triangulation**

Triangulation is applied to contribute to the truth or belief value of an inquiry. Merriam (2009:216), Creswell (2005:266) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (2005:232) define triangulation, as a strategy which involves the use of different methods to provide insight into the same theme or relationship is mainly used to ensure validity and reliability. The process of triangulation was used in my study to contribute to the strength of the findings (Golafshani, 2003:7). Group, as well as individual interviews and collages were employed.

The goal of reinforcement, with the help of triangulation, is not to confirm the accuracy of people's perceptions or to report the real reflections of a situation, but rather to ensure that the findings relating to people's perceptions are reflected accurately (Merriam, 2009:216).

#### **4.7.4 Dependability**

Dependability in qualitative research raises the question as to whether the research findings would be the same if repeated with the same participants in the same context (De Vos, 2005:346). According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003:581), the use of multi-methods contributes to the dependability value of the findings. Merriam (2009:229) also mentions the use of multiple sources of the same interest to confirm emerging findings. By working with two school cases in this study, I therefore added to the dependability of the study.

#### **4.7.5 Conformability**

Conformability can be defined as the degree to which the research findings are the product of the focus of the investigation, rather than the product of the prejudgement of the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:278).

The qualitative strategy which was followed in this study is about the in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences and recognises the researcher, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005:10), as an integral role player in the whole research process. The interpretation of the data was conducted by me. During this I was aware of my own personal framework and beliefs, as well as the role it could play in the interpretation of the data. I was, therefore, able to acknowledge my role in the interpretation of the data and not let my own personal judgement be an influence.

#### **4.8 ETHICAL ASPECTS**

Ethical considerations were important to ensure that participants were not harmed (Flick, 2007:123; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:101. This research is part of a project (*A Comparative Analysis of Teachers' Roles in Inclusive Education*) for which permission was obtained from the North-West University ethical committee.

The ethical issues described below I considered to be essential while conducting the research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:101–4; Strydom, 2005:58–59; Terre Blanche et al., 2006:67).

##### **4.8.1 Informed consent**

Informed consent means that participants are provided with enough information to enable them to decide whether they want to participate in a study or not (Gibbs, 2007:10; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:101; Strydom, 2005:58). In terms of this study, informed consent incorporated information that included a description of the study, an explanation of the activities involved, the time frame of the study, an explanation of participants' right to withdraw at any time, a discussion of possible risks and the assurance that information would remain confidential (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:101). As

already mentioned in Chapter One (cf. 1.7.1), the issue that confidentiality in a group situation cannot be an assurance, was discussed by me during the introduction and invitation phase, in the letter of intent, and right before each group interview. This also included a request from them to keep information discussed in group interviews confidential. Informed consent also means that participants agreed voluntarily to participate without physical or psychological coercion (Christians, 2011:65). I therefore made it clear that their participation in this study, was voluntary. Informed consent was obtained from the participants (see Addendum for the letter of information and the consent form). The research process and its purpose were discussed in detail with the participants before the commencement of the research (including gaining consent from school principals) (Strydom, 2005). No deception was involved in explaining the purpose of the research and all information was honestly and accurately presented to the participants (Christians, 2011:65). The participants signed the consent form to confirm that they agreed to take part in the programme and that they were aware of the possible risk and benefits. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the interviews if they wished to do so (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:101).

#### **4.8.2 Privacy**

I respected the rights of the participants to confidentiality and took them into consideration (Strydom, 2005:61). During the research, the autonomy of participants should be respected and therefore personal information should not be revealed unless consent to do so is given (Christians, 2011:66; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:102). The participants were allocated different alphabet letters and their names were not used so that their identity could be protected. Furthermore, the comments of the participants were kept confidential by reporting in an anonymous way (e.g. P1 participant one reported that....) (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:101-103). I also took care in adhering to the necessary requirements of confidentiality in group interviews (cf. 4.8.1).

#### **4.8.3 Ethical data analysis**

Ethical principles need to be adhered to when analysing data. Gibbs (2007:101) states that applying ethical principles during analysis enhances the quality of a researcher's

analysis. What follows are some of the ethical principles I applied when conducting the data analysis (Gibbs, 2007:101–3):

Transcriptions were kept confidential by me (Gibbs, 2007:102). Furthermore, the use of numbers for participants rather than their names concealed their identities even from my promoter. The transcripts and data will be kept for five years in a locked cabinet.

Researchers should be aware that their findings could be used by other researchers in the future. Therefore it was ensured no information about any participant was incorporated in the analysis that could be detrimental to the participants in the future (Gibbs, 2007:103). Furthermore, no false information was provided or fabricated to support my theory in any way (Christians, 2011:66).

#### **4.9 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter a detailed account of the qualitative design and methodology of this study was provided. The data-collection methods that were used were also described and ethical issues and trustworthiness were explained. The methodological choices aimed at providing rich findings that will subsequently be presented in Chapter Five.

# CHAPTER 5

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

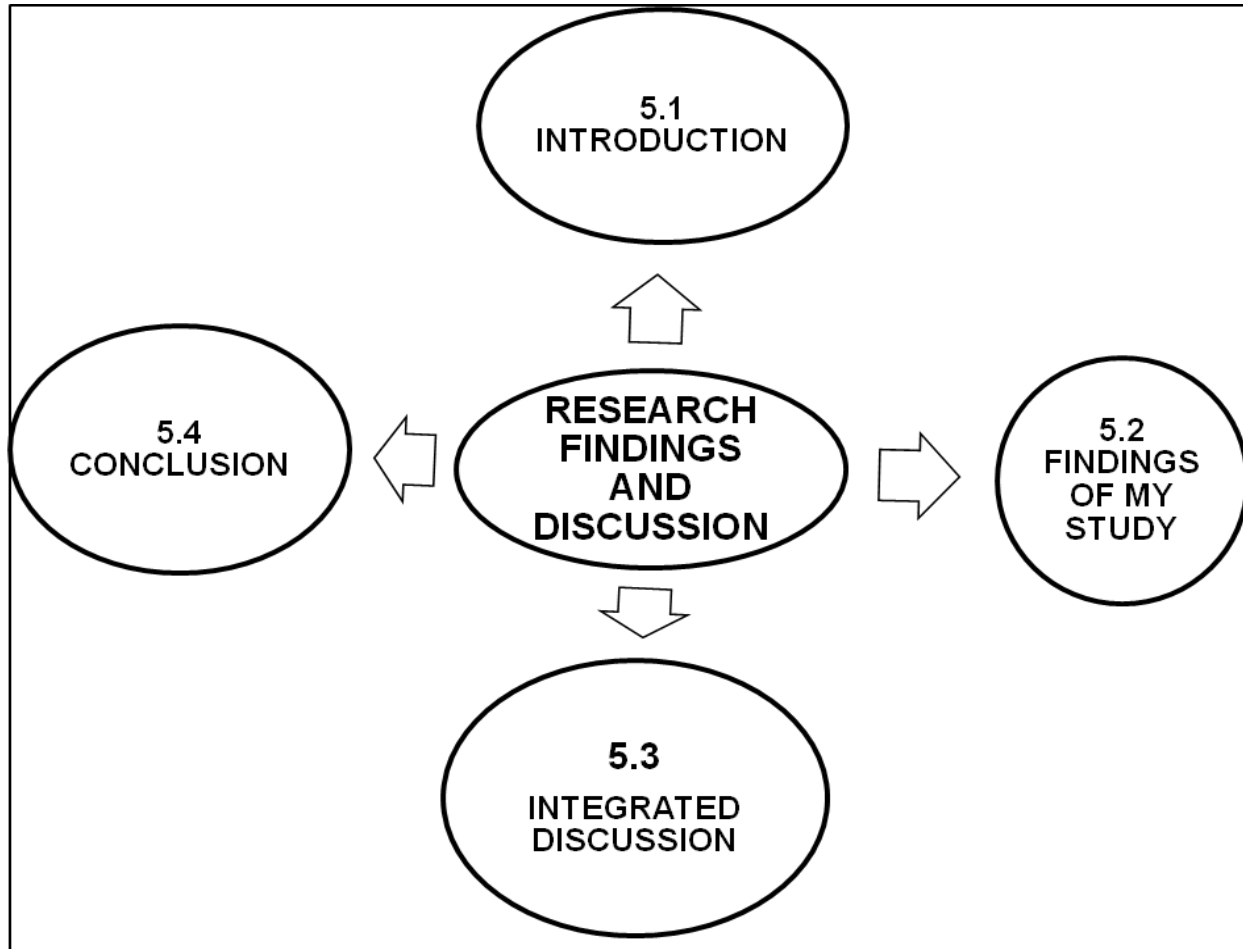


Figure 5.1 Overview of Chapter Five

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I discussed the research process by presenting the research design and the data-collection methods employed to conduct this study. I also explained my stance as a researcher and reflected on the ethical considerations that underpinned the study.

In this chapter, the results of the empirical study in terms of themes that emerged subsequent to the data analysis are presented and interpreted. This is followed by a discussion integrated with the relevant literature.

During the analysis, direct quotations are used to substantiate the themes. The P indicates the participant whose quote was used, S for the school (A or B), F for focus group interview one or two, I for individual interview and C for the collages.

For example, the following codes are used:

- SA F1 P1 refers to School A: Focus group: 1 Participant 1
- SB I1 P1 refers to School B: Individual interview: 1 Participant 1
- SA C1 P1 refers to School A: Collage: 1 Participant 1

Categories, main themes and sub-themes were identified inductively throughout the data-analysis process.

## **5.2 FINDINGS OF MY STUDY**

In my explication of the themes, I refer to the number of participants out of a total of 21 who took part in this study, as indicated below:

- “few” or “some” refers to between one and four participants;
- “many” refers to between five and nine participants; and
- “most” to between ten and 21 participants.

The following categories, themes and subthemes were identified of which a summarised outline is presented in Figure 5.2.

It is important to note that under some main themes there are a number of sub-themes since there were many different individual comments made that I feel are important to emphasise.

Category:	Main theme:	Sub theme:
<b>1. Defining teacher self-efficacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Teacher self-efficacy as a concept</b></li> <li>○ <b>Low vs high teacher self-efficacy</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Traits</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Positive attitude</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Reflected in learner behaviour</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Role model</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Skills</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Intra-personal skills</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Critical self-reflection as a method to develop intrapersonal skills</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Inter-personal skills</b></li> </ul>
<b>2. Ecosystemic (cf. 3.2.3.3.) factors currently enabling teachers' self-efficacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>School environment</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Learning through exposure</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Positive influences of others in the school</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Successful teaching strategies within the classroom</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Personal factors</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Own personal effort</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Personal background experience</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Religious views</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Significant others</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Positive views on inclusive education</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Reinforcing external influences</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Rewarding opportunities</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Continuous professional development</b></li> </ul>
<b>3. Ecosystemic (cf. 3.2.3.3.) factors currently disabling teachers' self-efficacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Lack of knowledge and skills</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Lack of confidence in teaching</b></li> <li>▪ <b>The teacher as person as barrier</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Physical and psychological problems</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Disabling factors as influenced by the Department of Basic Education</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Ineffective implementation of inclusive education</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Inadequate training</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Incompetent DBE leaders/managers</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Lack of support or acknowledgement from DBE</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Curriculum constraints</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Disabling factors within the school system</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>School management</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Lack of support and resources</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Peer relations</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Parents</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Overcrowded classrooms</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Other discouraging external factors</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Negative influences from media</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Disrespect and false perceptions by society</b></li> </ul>

Figure 5.2 Summarised outline of the categories, main themes and sub-themes

## 5.2.1 CATEGORY ONE: Defining teacher self-efficacy

The first sub-question that guided my study, namely ‘what is teacher self-efficacy?’ is discussed with regard to four main themes and relevant sub-themes when applicable, as reported by the participants. The first main theme, teacher self-efficacy as a concept, is discussed first, followed by low versus high self-efficacy, traits and then skills (cf. Figure 5.2).

### 5.2.1.1 Teacher self-efficacy as a concept

The participants of this study generally conceptualised their understanding of teacher self-efficacy in the focus group and individual interviews, as well as in the collages, as a personal belief in their own teaching performance. Self-efficacy was also conceptualised by the following words as used by the participants: “*self-growth and self-development (SB F2 P4)*”. Efficacy was also defined as taking action: “*like doing something effectively (SA F1 P2)*”. Other descriptions also included “*self-helping*” and “*self-motivation (SA F2 P3)*”.

One participant described her view of teacher self-efficacy as a process of realising and reaching one’s potential. “*The potential, realising the potential that you have in you, and giving it out. And this is being controlled by a certain drive, I don’t know, this is how I feel. Sometimes I have this drive inside but I don’t know how to explain it, you see. I want to do this, this way I realise I got 1 2 3, and maybe I have a weakness somewhere that I need to work on. It’s just about self-realisation, what I can offer, you know, if you talk about the education system, what I can offer (SA F2 P2)*”.

Self-efficacy was also described by most participants as being based on a person’s experiences, self-understanding and being knowledgeable about the job and the learners. “*A person self-efficacy is based on something, it’s based on our experiences in the past, it’s based on our experiences in the present moment and how far we understand ourselves within the system, eh, do we trust ourselves (SB F1 P1)*”.

“*I want to put it like this, like I understood it like, it’s like knowing your purpose / pupils at your job. Knowing how you are going to deal with your day-to-day life or activities on*

*your job. I would say like things like planning how you are going to do your job, to make your live very easy, also about knowing each learners barrier or needs and know how to support and plan for them (SA F1 P3)".*

Self-efficacy was also expressed as a sense of job satisfaction and feeling worthy as a teacher: *"A teacher that finds meaning in his/her job and that motivates them intrinsically, which leads to job satisfaction (SA F1 P2)".*

*"A feeling of what I am doing is worthwhile. What I am doing here is worthwhile, my purpose being making a difference as a teacher, the whole effective feeling as a teacher, you feel when you did your job good (SA F2 P1)".*

#### **5.2.1.1.4 Low versus high teacher self-efficacy**

This theme was especially illuminated during the collage activity where the participants had to illustrate their current levels of a sense of self-efficacy in one collage and the way they wanted their self-efficacy to be in a second collage (cf. 4.5.1.2). The participants mainly linked low teacher self-efficacy with high levels of stress, emotional exhaustion and negative attitudes as well as a lack of knowledge, confidence, motivation, purpose and meaning. A low sense of self-efficacy was also influenced by an attitude of negativity towards inclusive education. This is described in collage A (cf. Figure 5.3.) where the teacher is represented as a blue old man despite being new in the field. The participant described himself as confused, not knowing what to do and standing with open hands in the centre threateningly surrounded by all the diverse needs.

*"If you look at the pictures there, it is a picture of a teacher who doesn't feel good about himself as a teacher, he looks old, doesn't look like a person who just entered the profession, he has years and years of experience, but he doesn't really know what to do with this class, which is having different people with different challenges (SB C6 P6)".*

He also explained that the teacher is willing to try to support learners, but a lack of confidence in his teaching abilities creates fear about attempting it: *"This is a picture of a teacher he doesn't really know what to do and then he is not sure about what he has*

to do but he is going to do something he is going to try something but he doesn't really know if it is going to be successful or not (SB C6 P6)".



Figure 5.3: Collage A (SB C6 P6)

In this participant's second collage (cf. Figure 5.4), he envisions himself as a teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy. He believes that this is an ideal situation where he represents a happy positive teacher with high self-efficacy surrounded by learners who are smiling, happy and inspired. "A teacher teaching in the ideal situation. Looking at this teacher that I put there. He is happy. He looks more organised, he knows what he is

going to do in class. And then I also put in a picture of learners who are very happy. Sharing some information there. And then you can see that they are also happy. So that is the situation where a teacher has support, where a teacher has everything available and where a teacher has a class which is not overcrowded, he can always assist, he can be seen as a role model. I believe most of those learners would like to be teachers at a later stage, they are inspired (SB C6 P6)”.



Figure 5.4: Collage B (SB C6 P6)

Another participant, in her first collage (cf. Figure 5.5), confirmed that low teacher self-efficacy is associated with a lack of knowledge and concomitant unhappiness, and added feelings of isolation and confusion. She illustrated herself in a sketch as an inefficient teacher with low self-efficacy: *“That is me in the middle, I don’t feel good about my teaching, you can see my face, I’m not smiling, and my eyes are closed”*. She placed herself in the middle between a light bulb on her right-hand side and the diverse group of learners on her left-hand side. The light bulb represents increased knowledge of the notion that she *“cannot keep up with”* demands and, on the opposite side, she represented diverse learners who are dissatisfied.

Through the separation lines between her head and the light bulb, she represents herself as being distant from the needed knowledge. She described that this resulted in her being in a situation of *“confusion and frustration”*. She expanded: *“The knowledge that I’m having is not enough, because of a lot of challenges learners and inclusion learners with differences between, you know, abilities and their level of knowledge is different in their races they are from different culture backgrounds so I’m faced with something that is new to me don’t know how to handle this because you know so I felt frustrated I felt that I must quit now you can see I have written in my bubble here I’m quitting now (SB C10 P10)”*. The inability to cope with all these challenges made her feel incompetent, as she illustrated with her hand on her head. She also felt unhappy as a teacher as illustrated by the sad face. These feelings almost convinced her to rather resign, as she stated in the bubble above her head. She also expressed her feeling of loneliness and being unsupported by placing herself as standing alone in the middle, surrounded by challenges. *“No one is helping me I’m surrounded by this challenges as you can see no one is coming here to help me the children are confused I’m also confused (SB C10 P10)”*.

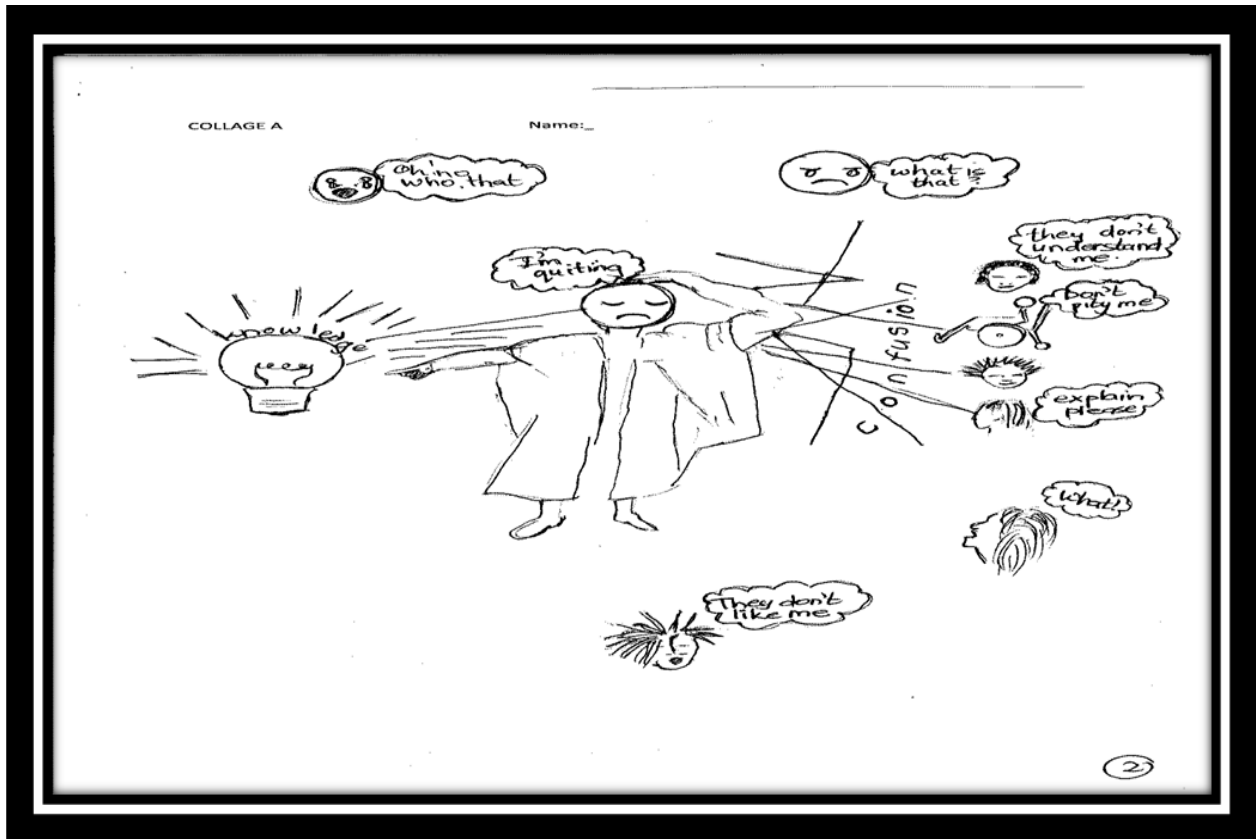


Figure 5.5: Collage A (SB C10 P10)

In the second collage (*cf.* Figure 5.6), the same participant expressed herself as a teacher with a high sense self-efficacy. She created a picture of where she wanted to be. She explained that she wanted to be in a different situation where she would have more knowledge (illustrated through her thinking cap in the collage), feeling more relaxed, with an increased sense of happiness and satisfaction. *“There’s a thing that shows what do you call this a cap my cap the knowledge the little knowledge that I had I went out I started more you know I have done a lot of things to gain knowledge then I feel like I’m educated enough now I’m knowledgeable a lot now my gown is still on me you can see my shoulders are up now I’m not like and then this hand because the knowledge you see the knowledge you see the gown is looking neat and this one you can see here this one I’m relaxed because I know what to do how to handle these kids*

*now the knowledge that I'm having the smile on my face and then my eyes are open (SB C10 P10)".*

She illustrated the learners as also more fulfilled, because she understood them better and treated them in the right way.

*"Okay because of the response that you can see here on my collage here all the kids are responding they are with me meaning that they understand what I'm saying because I have a better understanding. I understand them so they do understand me because I know how to handle them so all of them I know how to handle this one with that ability and this one with his ability all of them have been catered so they are free and happy and then they can respond and feel free in my class they are fulfilled I can see them.....they are so wonderful....(SB C10 P10)".*



Figure 5.6 Collage B (SB C10 P10)

### 5.2.1.2 Traits

The participants mostly associated a strong sense of self-efficacy with a teacher revealing the following traits:

#### 5.2.1.2.1 A positive attitude

Most participants associated a teacher who feels self-efficient with a positive attitude, being passionate, happy and an openness to working with others, willing and eager to learn, and being motivated. This is affirmed by the following participants. *“Someone who is always positive and passionate about his/her job (SB F1 P4)”*.

*“A teacher with a high self-efficacy is described as a teacher who is happy and willing to work (SA F2 P2)”*.

*“He is just someone who is, I can say someone who is motivated and energetic (SB F1 P2)”*.

*“She will always be willing to do things (SB F2 P2)”*.

*“Someone who is eager to know, eager to learn (SB F1 P3)”*.

*“Someone who will always do research, or always wants to gain more knowledge, or has an interest in what he is doing and motivated (SB F2 P1)”*.

It is also notable that it is believed by most participants that a positive attitude and, therefore, a high sense of self-efficacy seem to influence other colleagues and learners to be the same way. One participant states that: *“A teacher with high self-efficacy has a positive attitude towards learners, other colleagues, school and the teaching profession as it is, influences other colleagues and learners who are negative to be positive (SA I3 P3)”*.

Another participant described a teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy as being willing to do things, but also being able to motivate, support and work together with other teachers. *“The attitude is good, because he or she is always willing to do whatever what is requested of them or even if and sometimes it is not even requested of*

*them like myself even, if it's a bad attitude you can come now and motivate others to have a positive attitude, because of this self-efficacy which is in me I will be able to help you (SA F2 P1)".*

#### **5.2.1.2.2 Reflected in learner behaviour**

The participants indicated that they believed that highly effective teachers are characterized by how learners react to their teaching in terms of values, respect, academic achievement, behaviour and motivation.

Many participants reported that portraying good values by means of honesty and respect towards learners and themselves, resulted in learners reacting in the same way, as being *"honest with his learners or to himself, respect himself and the learners like with Ubuntu, then the learners they do the same to him, you can see that that teacher are respected and valued by them (SB F1 P3)".*

A few participants also related that a teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy contributed to learners having good results and demonstrating appropriate behaviour and skills to achieve well academically. *"Teachers with high self-efficacy, you will see that in the learners' performance also, they will have good results (SB F1 P1)".*

It was also asserted by a few participants that when a teacher was highly self-efficient, learners would want to follow and become like them. *"If I am having that self-efficacy within me then learners will follow me, I will end up with learners and children who wants to be me, you can see that in the learners they envy the teacher and they want to become just like the teacher (SA F2 P1)".*

#### **5.2.1.2.3 Role model**

Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy are also characterised by the participants as a role model to learners, since learners often imitate teachers' behaviour. They confirm this by explaining the importance of the role that teachers play in equipping learners to be potentially highly contributing citizens.

*"I think it is important because the teacher is the mirror to learners, because they say children are learning through imitating so if I portray good things the learners will learn*

*good things, but if my behaviour is not good it means I will be blunting this bad behaviour to the nation so as a teacher you can't focus at yourself as a teacher in a classroom, because if you look at our society even now they don't respect teachers but let's say you are gathering the problem, people will look and say the teacher he/she can help as a teacher to always be an example to the community so we must be well equip to give and help others (SA F2 P1)".*

*"If you are experiencing high self-efficacy, you feel good as a teacher who will also influence the learners' self-efficacy, because everything you do, you tell yourself that this is good and then they are going to do good, you are busy developing children to adulthood so they are going to be very good adult parents or they are going to be good (SA F2 P3)".*

*"Because we are moulding and developing our future citizens and adults, so we have to be, we have to be, educators have to be, have to have high self-efficacy. You have to have those skills so that you can impart them to learners to use them in future (SA F2 P4)".*

### **5.2.1.3 Skills**

Most participants asserted that teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy exhibited the following intra-personal and inter-personal skills:

#### **5.2.1.3.1 Intra-personal skills**

*"Intra-personal skills" such as "self-regulation" are considered by most participants as being essential for teachers to feel self-efficient. The self-regulation skills mentioned include "self-confidence", "a positive self-concept", "self-understanding", "self-reflection", "self-motivation", "personal goal setting", and "an internal locus of control", "persistence" and "emotional intelligence".*

Acknowledging feelings was indicated as an important skill for teacher self-efficacy, because *"when a teacher feels angry or having bad emotions and he or she can acknowledge these feelings and turn them in to good emotions, that will help him or her to cope better with situations and feel more effective (SA F1 P1)".*

A few participants asserted that a teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy should have confidence in his/her abilities to be effective teachers. *“To me I think it’s all about self-confidence, being confident about what you are doing, and believing that you can do it (SB F2 P1)”*.

*“Teachers with a high self-efficacy has confidence actions (SB F2 P3)”*.

Confidence in one’s own ability to influence learners’ performance positively was emphasised by most participants. *“A teacher with high self-efficacy beliefs in his/ her ability to affect learner’s performance positively, especially academically, he or she believes that they can help the learner to achieve his potential (SA F2 P1)”*.

Aspects such as a *“positive self-concept”* and *“understanding the self”*, *“being aware of emotional states”*, *“inner feelings”*, *“feeling motivated”* and *“achieving goals”* were highlighted by the participants as being essential for feeling self-efficient. *“He knows himself in a positive way, he understands himself as a teacher, and he knows how to use his feelings positively, he has high self-esteem, not afraid of anything, self-driven (SB F1 P4)”*.

It was also contended that teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy should have the ability to *“self-reflect and examine one’s own strengths and weaknesses”*, *“establish realistic personal goals and have self-motivation”*, *“be willing to take risks”* and *“face challenges”*. *“He will be able to look back at what he experienced and identify his strengths and weaknesses and set goals that he knows he can achieve and that will motivate himself (SB F2 P2)”*.

*Teachers with a high self-efficacy learn from whatever the experience, because they take risks and that drives them (SA F2 P5)”*.

*“He faces challenges, he is not afraid of the challenges for today, because he knows how to do them (SB F1 PC)”*.

Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy were described by some participants as *“being confident in his or her actions”*, *“effective in planning”*, *“better capable of solving problems”* and *“who will consequently experience lower levels of stress”*. *“I think that*

*that person being confident of what he is doing that he is going to be effective in whatever he is going to do, because in doing the planning he will be knowing exactly what he is going to do. And then he will be also be able to look at other grey areas I will call them so areas that are not easy identifiable, areas he can work on, but because he will be relaxed, because of knowing what he is doing he will be able to understand and to solve the problems (SB F2 P2)*”.

Planning and organising skills were confirmed by all the participants as being essential skills for teacher self-efficacy. *“I think it’s a person or a teacher who plans before ahead, who comes to class knowing what he or she will do. And be able to achieve her goals (SB F2 P3)*”.

Some participants emphasised the skill of persistence: *“Self-efficacy is described as “a positive thing within a person that will try again and again, and not give up (SA F1 P4)*”.

*“The teacher will know his learners and try to solve problems, he will do anything in his power to help the learner who struggles, even if he sees something is not working he will try something else until it works (SA F2 P1)*”.

The skill of adaptation to change was also associated with self-efficacy by most of the participants: *“When something changes or when the system changes, because of this high self-efficacy the teacher will learn fast and know what to do (SB F1 P1)*”.

#### **5.2.1.3.1.1 Critical self-reflection as a method to develop intrapersonal skills**

Opportunities where teachers could do *“personal exercises”* such as *“introspection”* and *“reflections”*, were recommended by the participants as being important to develop intrapersonal skills and consequently cultivate a strong sense of self-efficacy. This was mentioned by most participants. Participants who participated in the collage activity, which was a form of an introspection method, reported on their experiences and proposed that related opportunities had to be given for teachers to reflect on themselves, because the process made them aware of their skills, contributions to teaching and also helped them to examine their thoughts on how inclusive education can be improved. *“This activity made me realise things about myself that I didn’t know*

*“I’ve come to the conclusion that I do have what it takes to make inclusion work……, I became aware of my competencies and how I am really contributing in my teaching (SA C3 P3)”.*

*“I know now that I can do it and we can do it together, it is possible for inclusion to work (SA C5 P5)”.*

*“I got more clarity on who I am and what do we need for inclusion to work (SB C4 P4)”.*

*“It made me understand how I am part of this whole process (SB C6 P6)”.*

The collage exercise helped a participant to broaden his mind. He explained how this event made him think about ideas to improve inclusive education and realise the importance of collaboration with others. *“This thing as helped me a lot, you know it; it has opened up my world as well. I started now to realise that I was so narrowed; I didn’t look outside the box, I didn’t see other institutions coming up to address this you know, we take it as if it is not our problem, mmm, but if we can own it and understand it that we can involve as many people as we can, we will be able to address it, I’m defiantly sure of that. It has given me the chance to think and it did not keep me right inside the box, it’s a think as far as you can, come up with every clue that you can think of and just look at the link, how they link to one another to address the problem that you are facing. Then I say oh, okay it means now I have to look now even beyond the problem, what I foresee in future. Then I say oh, it has opened up my mind really, because I could not have done it, I could not even think. You know, posing the questions and, and bringing your own Ideas together helps you to even think even better than before. And um, there is not really um, time or, or time to go and sit and think like this exercise where you’ve um, you know make time and think about it so um, to broaden up my mind you know, not just thinking strait, but stretching my wings, stretching my wings. The tentacles must go out and feel what oh, no, here it doesn’t work, I have to go this side oh, I’m trapped in something here, which can assist me to address a problem, you know. You have to think in front, at back, on the sides and come up with something that can assist you, but if you are looking only strait or, you are not looking at other hot spots of some kind; really you are not going to address a problem. So I realised the importance of forcing yourself to think and that opened up a broader view on inclusive education”.*

One participant explained how the opportunity to complete the collage exercise made her feel good about herself as a teacher, and she realised the meaning she had in life as a teacher by helping learners and making a difference. She described this activity as *“relaxing”*, because on the day she completed this she was *“quite frustrated”* in her *“big class”* and she expanded that she *“was sitting there at her desk head between hands looking at all these learners going around the class not listening”* and then she opened her drawer and took out the collage exercise, which she intended to complete on another occasion. *“I wasn’t looking for that exercise, to be honest I postponed it for a better time, but when I opened my drawer, that was the first thing I saw, and being that negative and irritated at that point, and so tired of school administration, I took it out and began with it, I started looking for papers to snip and paste, wondering about my situation, being so frustrated, so I looked for pictures of the terrible feelings that I’m having right now”*. She asserted how this experience of illustrating her feelings impacted on her *“just by doing that it felt like I’m shifting load, shifting off some of this frustration and I felt better”*. She described the second collage as a dream, because she had to present how she would like her self-efficacy to be. *“When I went to the second one, the second one is a dream, and no one want to dream bad things about their future, so I dreamt great things for my future in teaching and that made me realise that things can be so much better, it gave me hope (SB C7 P7)”*.

Introspection as a way for teachers to learn from their experiences was indicated by many participants who did not partake in the collage activity as well. *“It helps me because if I go back and look at myself then I can realise this was a way I did something and then think about how it worked, then identify where I can improve or do something differently and then learn from it, so it is how I apply it on to myself to effectiveness (SA F2 P1)”*.

A participant added it as a method for improving on mistakes. *“That is how you improve on your mistakes, because you have to correct yourself to the mistakes that you have done you must sit down and think where you made the mistakes and do remedial, or to*

*see what you have done right and give yourself credit and that will make you feel effective (SA F2 P3)*”.

#### **5.2.1.3.2 Inter-personal skills**

The participants reported that “*inter-personal skills*” are required for teachers to be able to experience a sense of high levels of self-efficacy. These skills include “*effective problem-solving*”, “*leadership*”, “*cooperation*”, “*conflict management*” and “*communication*”.

Problem-solving was defined as “*analysing a situation for improvement (SA F2 P2)*”. One participant asserted that by increasing teachers’ ability to effectively solve problems would enhance their sense of self-efficacy. “*Good problem solving so it means teachers that analyse a situation for improvement, it helps in a sense if you can analyse a situation and look how they can improve in this situation, and if that problem is puzzled out, the teachers will feel more effective and confident*”. Problem-solving was also described in the context of solving learners’ problems. “*A teacher who can identify a problem from a learner, find out more about the problem, looking for anything to possible handle this problem, allowing himself to be creative and even design programs to help, according to the learners’ potential and try something’s out and then check where it worked or not worked (SA F1 P2)*”. Adapting teaching strategies as part of problem-solving was also classified as a problem-solving skill: “*The teacher will for example try to help a learner who cannot see clearly by placing him in front of the class or one that that cannot hear, the teacher will talk louder (SA F2 P1)*”.

Leadership and delegation as a skill to enhance a sense of self-efficacy was asserted by many participants. “*To be more effective as a teacher, you have to be able to lead and to assign other teachers to tasks, for collaboration purposes (SA F2 PC)*”.

A few participants mentioned that a teacher with a sense of high self-efficacy was “*someone with a vision, who is motivating others and leading them (SB F1 P3)*”, and the teacher with the leadership who leads by example (SB F2 P2)”.

One participant associated a person with high self-efficacy with the late President Nelson Mandela, who personified effective leadership skills: *“He leads like Madiba did, he was good at it and made things happen (SA I2 P2).*

*“I would say to be able to stay focus and to prepare myself for my work which mean each and everything that I am going to do as someone who is a like a leader then I must go there and represent all the things that I supposed to very well what I am trying to say is to be a good leader (SA F2 P3)”.*

*“I think the other thing is that what we were saying about leadership skills. It must be coupled with management, because they are two different things but I must lead but we must be able to manage but we must be able to use both of them and the other thing is we must be taught to how we can manage especially time, work and whatever you are doing, how can you manage that how can you deal with this thing I think if they can help us to enhance the efficiency of a teacher (SA F2 P1)”.*

Another participant confirmed effective leadership skills as a prerequisite for high teacher self-efficacy in his collage (cf. Figure 5.7). He stated that leadership skills for high teacher self-efficacy included a powerful leader, leading a successful team with directive actions and constantly reflecting on experiences in order to improve himself and others. This was illustrated with pictures which he encoded in the following alphabetical order: (A) Refers to a *“happy smiling man who takes action and control, with the ability to leads effectively”*; (B) represents a *“proud winning rugby team and the person who is leading is part of that team, he is the one who gave them that oomph, and as a coach you will help them to get the passion, taking into consideration that I also have to lead as a teacher with high self-efficacy”*; (C) is a picture of an educator leading a group of learners with a whistle: *“You have to be in front and lead. Ja, that whistle keeps them on track so that they must not go out of the track, they must always be on track you see you whistle then you say hey, you are out of bounds you must come closer to the point what, which we are trying to address”*; and (D) represents a leader standing in front of a video camera who is continuously reflecting in order to solve problems: *“As a leader every action that you take at the end of the day you must review, you must refocus, look whether you are addressing the problem or not, it is a*

stage where by now you need to look at yourself. And this, this is where you represent the person with the camera... With the camera. Video camera, refocus. Ja, at all the directions until you can come say no the spoil, the hotspot is there, there is where we also have to focus, then they say oh, let's look at that spot, and say hey, this is what I can see, I see one, two , three, four, five so we are working towards solving one, two and three (SB C8 P8)”.



Figure 5.7 Collage B (SB C8 P8)

Most participants furthermore stated that interpersonal skills were essential for “*working together*”, “*learning from each other*”, “*motivating and supporting each other*” as well as

*“being able to deal with conflict with other colleagues”. “Working together with other colleagues, develop other colleagues and help other colleagues and motivate them (SB F2 P5)”.*

*“Learn from one another by sharing the information that she has or the strategies she uses in her class or his class with other colleagues (SB F2 P1)”.*

*“If I argue with, say for instance, M, because she doesn’t want to help or help us with something in the planning or with a problem, I must know how to get her involved, how to approach her and solve this tension between us, cause this creates a barrier for me and the school and that’s why it is so important to have that skills to handle it (SA F2 P10)”.*

*“Can I add to that, that is why I was saying as a teacher you must know how to work with your fellow teachers, you must know how to settle a disagreement and productively with them (SA F2 P8)”.* The same participant concluded that improving conflict management skills would help the teacher to experience higher levels of self-efficacy. *“Then when you can learn that skills, then you will overcome that disruption and you will be more, how can I put it, self-effective, because you will feel that you were able to handle that (SA F2 P8)”.*

A few participants mentioned the ability to communicate effectively. They affirmed that it will bring about improved understanding between teachers and others involved in the inclusive education implementation process. *“If you know how to transmit the right message, the information you want them to know, will be deliver in the right way. Your colleagues will understand you, your managers, your learners and the parents (SA F1 P6)”.*

### **5.2.2 CATEGORY TWO: Ecosystemic factors currently enabling teachers’ self-efficacy**

The sub-question that guided this study, namely ‘What are the factors that currently enable and disable teachers’ self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education?’ are divided into two categories (category two: *Enabling* and category three: *Disabling*).

Category two is discussed next with regard to three main themes and relevant sub-themes. The first main theme, school environment, is discussed first, followed by personal factors and then reinforcing external influences. These include the sub-themes relevant to each main theme (cf. Figure 5.2).

### **5.2.2.1 School environment**

The participants in this study reported that factors from within the school environment such as learning through exposure, positive influences of others in the school and successful teaching strategies within the classroom, are currently enabling their teacher self-efficacy. These are subsequently discussed as sub-themes.

#### **5.2.2.1.1 Learning through exposure**

In their current school environment, most participants expressed that they are exposed to opportunities that create challenges for them, such as having diverse needs in the classrooms. Most participants believe that this helps them to grow and learn, and consequently makes them feel more effective as teachers. *“I know most of the growth that I get is in the classroom, because I learn there, I have grown so much, because we are always confronted with problems in the current classrooms, that has learners with intellectual disabilities, severe problems and we are expected to handle that (SA F1 P2)”*.

*“Every day there is something I learn in the classroom, because and fortunately enough I am teaching Grade 1 for the first time in my life, but I’m learning a lot (SA F2 P1)”*.

*“Because you are not going to deal with the same problems every day, and it makes life interesting for me, to say today I have dealt with this problem, tomorrow I’m going to deal, and I grow (SA F2 P4)”*.

These participants expanded on this by asserting that being exposed to different needs forced them to learn how to deal with such needs: *“I believe it is different challenges from learners because I will set an example, I will focus, my focus will be, I was identifying learners that the problem is the reading problem but it is more than that, the hearing problem, the sight problem so I was ignoring these other things and I was*

*focusing on reading and writing, but now with inclusion, I can learn that there is other learners with a hearing, sight problem and those who can't concentrate at all, I am challenged to learn how to deal with that (SA F2 P2)".*

Even though they struggled to work with learners with different abilities (with no knowledge at first about the learner), most of the participants asserted that when they got to know them in time, they realised that they could fulfil a purpose in making a difference in these learners' lives. *"But also it is like a struggle to work with learners who has different abilities, because even your lesson, you have to present a lesson especially when the year starts you don't know them very well, it becomes very, very difficult that learner. But with time you get to understand that this one is like this and then when you are teaching you can try to observe how this one is behaving, how is that one behaving, and then even you ask questions you go to this one specifically for a particular purpose, so it's a very big challenge for us to be teachers in such a class. But you feel very happy when you think you have made a difference in one's life. So that is why I don't have one answer but I will say sometimes it is good to make a difference, especially if you managed to succeed (SB F2 P3)".*

Other examples of this learning process through exposure were explained by the following participants who experienced certain situations that could be considered to be case studies within their school contexts.

One participant addressed a specific learner's barrier by realising what the source of the problem was and paying attention to it. The learner struggled with writing and she realised that he did not know the sounds when she asked him to read his own writing. She then addressed this barrier by teaching him the alphabet (with which he succeeded). This successful event motivated her to learn more about inclusion and also to register for a Learner Support course. *"The learner who made inclusion start for me's name was....., I always refer to him as my progress, something that happens, something good that has happened about my experience. He didn't know the sounds, he didn't know how to read and he couldn't write very neatly, and whatever he writes there you couldn't read. But someday I was just so polite and asked him can you please read what you wrote for me here? It was a paragraph. You know it was amazing he*

*read that paragraph. I never thought he will read that, but he read the paragraph, and as he was reading I noticed something about this person, whatever in your eyes you see doesn't make sense, but to him it makes sense. He thought he was on the right path he read and made sense of what he is reading. After he read that I just notice, the problems he has is sounds. Now I have started this thing – ok, let me just start teaching letters. I notice that he doesn't recognise alphabetical letters and, how can you learn how you can just learn language without knowing your alphabetical letters, because language is that it's the letters. And you won't believe the change he knew the sounds knew how to blend sounds. If you could just see how the learner gets excited, he started reading the grade one reader and he was in grade three at that time. You could see the change on his face that, here is the learner noticing that finally I got it. Finally I know something at school. Because can you just imagine how frustrated it was for him. In the previous years he did not get help ....so inclusion for me started there with this learner, everything started with him. Then I just have interest, and just came to me that I don't care what ...I'm just going to apply or register for a learner support course, that's what I am going to do (SA F1 P3)".*

In another case, a learner had Bell's Palsy and this motivated one participant to help by finding out about the illness and supporting the learner, rather than simply resigning because of the magnitude of the challenge. *"I felt like resigning at first, but before resigning you know how you feel pity you want to do more and then there was this one child, who was like having a problem - the eyes become defaulted the other part because I was placing the child at the back and then the child was struggling, then you say to the child close your eyes and let us pray, the other eye is still open, and I wanted to know why the child is doing that. First I Googled to try and find out what this is and also asked other professionals. Then I called the mother then the mother told me about the child situation, and then I said to her she must take the child to hospital, that's what we did and they found that it was Bell's Palsy. So then I went out of my way to find out what type of disease is that one, and how am I going to handle that child. And then what exercises must that child do, to prevent that to practice that, so the child must be allowed to chew the chewing gum in class so only that child. (SB F2 P2)".*

The same participant reported that she realised how the above experience changed her and led to her becoming a better teacher, instead of giving up. . *“Ja I noticed that before the incident, I was very I was harsh and demotivated, then knowing that I felt bad, and then I felt pity for that child and I learned that I can help, I have acted as a teacher and as a mother a second mother to her, nurturing and caring, so I was continuing the support looking at her do you have the chewing gum today, how do you feel and so on (SB F2 P2)”*.

#### **5.2.2.1.2 Positive influences of others in the school**

Positive influences of certain members in their current schools, such as the principal, other teacher colleagues, parents and learners seem to boost the participants' sense of self-efficacy. These are discussed in the next paragraphs.

A wish to be acknowledged, valued and trusted by their teacher colleagues as well as the learners and their parents, was conveyed by most participants. *“I need them to recognise my input and have faith in me, all of them, my colleagues should know that they need me, the learners must express their gratitude by doing what I say and their parents must realise what I am worth to their child (SB F1 P5)*. One participant confirmed this and stated that if teachers felt appreciated, it would enhance their self-efficacy. *“Appreciation for your contribution, if it can be make know to your colleagues that teaches with you, make known to the learners, and the parents. That in itself will also enhance self-efficacy, because realising whatever you are contributing with is has been appreciated (SB F1 P1)”*.

Most participants explained the important influence of the school principal in the successful implementation of inclusive education. *“Actually when your seniors don't believe in something, it won't happen (SA F1 P3)”*. *A lot of progress and success in inclusive education depends on the principal (SA F1 P2)”*.

Some of the participants mentioned that their school principal motivated them by being open towards inclusive education and consequently made provision for training opportunities for his teachers. *“Our school principal is really open to inclusive education*

*and that makes you, you know also feel motivated and he goes out of his way to get training for us to learn more (SA F1 P3)”.*

One participant referred to her own principal who trusted her to take the lead in transforming their school into a full-service school. *“I would like to make an example of my principal - he believed that, he is actually like this, he believes if you are good at something he will give you the benefit of doubt that ok let’s give this person a try. Let him or her handle that because he or she is good at that. If we are not given the opportunity, we wouldn’t have like a special class in our schools. We wouldn’t have, we wouldn’t even had interest been a full service school. Because like other full service schools, are getting frustrated because they got no idea how to go about with everything. But I just thank him that he, he trusted me, and he gave me the chance. That no Mam led us. He didn’t say I don’t know about that so that so we are not going to do that. I am taking the lead, because he allowed me to. Imagine if I had this thing and it was only caped on me and I couldn’t make it work, what then. I would be frustrated also because I know that he, I could help more people like him who are coming. But I am not given the opportunity to do so (SA F1 P3)”.*

Many participants also avowed that their principal appreciated them through acknowledging their work and effort by always thanking them, and giving constructive feedback. This motivated and helped them to feel more secure about their own teaching. *“And you know he appreciates wherever I say one word, he would be saying: Mam, I learn a lot from you. You know that makes me to look forward to coming to school but people like him are very few. But with him he appreciates, and if he doesn’t like something he is straight you know you get immediate feedback, to say: Hey, watch out, Mam. Be straight I want you to be like this and he is like that. And I like someone who is like that, because at least you always on the correct route on the correct position, he does it like this and he appreciates all the time, all the time, every time. And he always says thank you to the teachers, he can see their hard work, all the time (SA F1 P2)”.*

Other teacher colleagues within the same school, who influenced the participants’ sense of self-efficacy positively, were described as *“inspiring and supportive”*. Motivation from

other colleagues to persist made them feel supported. One participant explained that she wanted to retire, but was motivated by her one colleague in the same school not to, by telling her what an excellent teacher she was. *“I wanted to retire, I couldn’t take it anymore and then someone (a teacher in the same school) made me realise what I’m really putting out there and that the kids need me. She said, Miss ... I know you are turning 60 next year and you want to go on pension. If you have this passion in you will never really go and sit at home, cause I know you will open up a grade R school at home, if you leave the school, because you love teaching too much and you are the best. That’s why you must stay. These kids need you, they need you, because they learn most from you (SA F2 P2). “I feel as if I’m taking care of when I get help from my fellow teachers (SB F1 P2)”. It was also maintained by the same participant that teacher colleagues, who share experiences, create learning opportunities for others. “When this one teacher told us about how she helped this learner with Bell’s Palsy, I made an effort to notice if a child in my class also may have that problem and if there were, I knew I could help, because now I know (SB F1 P2)”.*

Regarding positive parental influences, most participants proclaimed that even if it was only a small number of parents involved, it made teachers feel more supported, because the result of this involvement was that learners were participating more and are more disciplined. *“We only have a few parents who are helping us with their children, but even that few they help us a lot (SA F1 P2)”.*

*“I think with experience I’ve seen that learners who are well behaved, who do their work are those whose parents participate in their education (SB F2 P2)”.*

Learners’ behaviour towards teachers was related by most participants as being a positive influence on their sense of self-efficacy. One participant judged herself according to her learners’ behaviour towards her inside and outside of the school environment. *“Normally when I judge myself, I judge myself with the learners, because you find that in the school my learners when they see me they just come running to me. Someone will be holding me here and there and hugging me. Some even in town, and I would say by the way they respond to me when they see me, it makes me realise that I have a good relationship with them (SA F1 P2)”.*

Another participant explained that his own sense of teaching effectiveness was affirmed by the positive acknowledgement and reaction from learners towards him. *“When I move in the street and the learners are telling others hey this is my teacher he is teaching me this subject, we are doing very well, and he is very good. That in itself proves that I am really doing my job, that means there is something that I have done right (SB F1 P1)”*.

It was also mentioned by a participant that learners’ behaviour towards teachers that is reflected in trust, such as sharing personal problems with the teacher, reflects the good nature of the relationship between the teacher and the learner. *“So I will say relations are good with me, because I interact with my learners we talk about thing even if it’s serious, even if it’s something serious, he or she the learner will come discuss it on the side, that this and this is happening at home or whatever the situation. And it makes me feel good that at least the learners can trust me (SA F1 P2)”*.

Learners who improved or developed academically, because of a teacher’s input, increased most participants’ feeling of making a difference and this elevated their confidence. This was explained by the following participant: *“For me as a teacher, seeing some improvements in the learners and knowing you had something to do with it. I always see some improvement in the learners, you learn to know the learners, I am teaching grade R, and in the beginning they don’t know much, when they start school they don’t know even how to handle a pencil they don’t know how to do anything. But as time goes on they started to do what you say they must do, writing holding the pen in a correct way doing the right thing later..... It makes me happy and proud, feeling like I made a difference .....and also creates confidence regarding own teaching practice. I am becoming sure of myself that I am doing the right thing (SB F2 P2)”*.

#### **5.2.2.1.3 Successful teaching strategies within the classroom**

All the participants shared certain teaching strategies that had been proved to them to be successful and were currently enabling their sense of teacher self-efficacy.

One participant explained that learners knew her classroom practices and this made her feel in control of the class and also more effective because she taught with discipline

and within rules. *“I would say my relationship with the learners is very good, if I rate myself. We have our times, and we sometimes fight. You know, they know all my sides, they know that Mam can be so nice if we do the right things and we all know that learners can’t always do the right things. But as a teacher you teach your learners discipline, how you want things to be done in your classroom. We got rules and we will really, really dwell on the rules, that we need to respect each other in the classroom, we need to listen to people, to the speaker, we need to give chance to each other. Its starts with you the teacher, if you put your foot down, that I don’t like this, I don’t like this, I don’t like this. They know, they know, that Mam doesn’t like learners who bully each other, they know that Mam doesn’t like, but with other things they can just get away with them. But they know something’s Mam doesn’t stand, such things (SA F1 P2)”*.

When joy is experienced in the teaching of a subject, it seemed to enhance the participants’ sense of self-efficacy, especially when teaching strategies can be employed that are enjoyable for the teachers and the learners. One participant specifically reported that she enjoyed teaching Life Skills as a subject, because it helps learners to open up in the course of the teaching. *“And we have this time sometime we will get to oral activities whereby we discuss the things we do at home, something they enjoy. They enjoy when they do Life Skills, we talk about everything. Then they see they like Life Skills, they really like Life Orientation it I also love teaching that subject, because they open up to you (SA F1 P3)”*.

Taking the learners’ experience into consideration during a lesson, and by letting them reflect on it, helped a specific participant to be more effective. *“I rely on my learners. After the lesson, especially at higher grade, they tell me was the lesson interesting. How can I do it, how can I take what I have done, you know, link it to your something that you do at home, you know, and normally I rely on them when I plan my lesson. Somewhere when I finish my intervention, I say let’s discuss now, what do you want me to do? So that’s how I do (SA F1 P2)”*.

Most of participants reported that being aware of the manner in which they talk and listen to their learners, helped them to connect to their learners. *“But with other things I don’t know if it is the way I talk to them or what. I don’t know. But I know that I’m very*

*careful when I'm talking to learners. When I say, I won't say what to learners, I won't say, why you are doing that, with a harsh voice. I always say no because I want them to moral what I say. That one is very careful, especially I when I do listening, you know, I say, you listen to me how I talk to you, and I don't want you to talk to you friend like that, so maybe that reassess that I have, do I tell myself that I'm moral and they should do the same, and make learners realise if you do something there are consequences would you like to help and I'm able to say I'm not angry with you. But now you need to change so that is how I connect to learners (SA F1 P2)".*

One participant's specific method in helping her to feel more self-efficient in her teaching is to visualise every learner when planning her lessons. *"Planning and when you are planning, you need to, I don't say you as an individual, I usually do that, I'm actually focusing on, it's like I visualize each and every learner in my classroom according to their levels, and their needs. This learner needs to do this and this and this for her, and that one he or she doesn't like to write, so it's, I actually take time planning on how I'm going to do, because in my case I got learners from, who I support from level of Grade R to 7 whereby you get into the class without planning you will end up idling, not knowing what to do (SA F1 P3)".*

#### **5.2.2.2 Personal factors**

Personal factors such as own personal input, experience and positive views on inclusive education, appear to enable the participants' sense of self-efficacy.

##### **5.2.2.2.1 Own personal effort**

Many of the participants commented that they employ "*self-directed learning*", instead of "*passively waiting to receive knowledge*". They believe that this increased their knowledge, which made them feel more effective and increasingly enabled them to experience a sense of self-efficacy.

Despite receiving no external support, one participant reported that she took control of her own learning by making a personal effort to interact with people and consequently gaining knowledge through self-discovery. This led to her viewing inclusive education as

an opportunity to grow. *“Yes I agree that sometimes, teachers are not getting support, but because I go out of my way to study by interacting with people and discovering things for myself and choose to enjoy it. It then gives me a chance to, you know, to develop, and to share knowledge with other people and to see that you grow in an inclusive classroom (SA F1 P2)”*. The same participant asserted that instead of waiting to be trained, she used her own initiatives in problem-solving. *“I don’t wait for somebody to come and train me. I normally find, you know, resources from other people. So I can be able to solve problems in the classroom (SA F1 P2)”*.

It was asserted by some participants that they make the most of in-service training opportunities. They explained that even though these workshops do not always address their needs, they made a personal effort to learn something from them and they did indeed gain increased *“knowledge”* and *“confidence”*. *“It depends on you as the teacher, then you are in the learners’ seat and you must get anything you can out of that workshop (SB I2 P1)”*.

One participant stated that she wanted to learn and, therefore, by making use of questions during a workshop, she improved her learning. *“For me I will say, I will say as a person I am a person who likes to learn every day, I want to learn something new every day not just to learn, but if must be able to educate learners I must learn, so if I’m attending what they call a workshop I always ask questions if they say it is a workshop I would listen and listen and looking at the time when the facilitator says something I will ask questions, then I learn better (SB F2 P1)”*.

Another participant added that she made the most of the current in-service workshops by doing introspection, reflecting (cf. 5.2.1.3.1.1.) and talking with others about the workshop as a way of learning and sharing information. *“The workshop or training is necessary because I want myself, if I attended the workshop I think I must be able to help others with that information sharing will but if it is information sharing will I can share with my friends so that they can add on what I am presenting on the table so always one. But sometimes I can attend a meeting and come out of that meeting not saying anything and us keeping quiet because just to say I’m a fool or am I clever just to go back and a look what was interesting of that meeting and do an introspection and*

*what makes to ask good questions so always I like to discuss with the people even on the street if I am meeting in the taxi I will started to picked and learn from you people. I easily learn from people (SB F2 P1)”.*

#### **5.2.2.2.2 Personal background experience**

One participant reported that her personal experience inspired her self-growth and ensued in her teaching being more inclusive. She explained that her own mother was blind and her father partially sighted and consequently she had always been surrounded by people with different disabilities from an early age. This resulted in her learning to solve problems with regard to different learning needs, and forming an increased interest in and passion for inclusive education.

*“I must say Mam, maybe it depends on the background that you had. You know if you have been surrounded by people with different disabilities, and all those things. Then maybe that thing is in you, you know. With me it’s I have been surrounded by people with so many disabilities. My mother was blind, my father partially sighted. My mother was running an organisation, and dealing with different people, different disabilities, because inclusion is not in education system only. Even the organisation can say we specialize with the blind only. Try to help other people. So I have been exposed, you know, this why maybe I say I find I find it easy. To say, you know, I am excepting this. Let me see how I can solve this problem, because of the background (SA F1 P2)”.*

#### **5.2.2.2.3 Religious views**

One participant reported that her religion or belief in God motivated her to choose teaching as a profession. It also keeps her committed and she asserted that daily prayer and faith supported her in her job. *“I always say this job, I was given this job by my Saviour, I would say I am a Christian, I believe in God. He gave me his job, and He will also give me the support and strength. That’s what I believe in every single day I would, I arrive very early actually in my class. I would come and pray, I would pray and visualize each and every learner, because I see the barrier it’s there and I would say Lord please help them, help them give them strength. And you know for me, it works for me. You have to have something you believe in, whereby it will help you. Otherwise*

*there's no angel who comes and says: Aah, it will be okay, angels are at her office, and maybe she doesn't even care about me. But I have to do something to boost myself something that will make me smile. That okay whatever I did the prayer its helps me. So you have to believe in something that will push you to move forward. I don't know about people that have meaning nothing, then I am so stressful, put you down (SA F1 P3)".*

#### **5.2.2.2.4 Significant others**

Participants emphasised that significant others such as supportive spouses, siblings and children motivated them keep going. *"I see my husband and my sister as a rock and strong foundation in my life, I know I can count on them, they are people who listen to me and encourages me to keep on going (SA F2 P3)".*

One participant found her motivation to be an effective teacher in her love for her own children. *"My own children are my life, and because I know I am a good parent and can be an effective teacher, I treat my learners the same as if they were my own children (SA F1 P3)".*

The participant with the mother who is blind said that her mother motivated and was still inspiring her to be effective as a learner support teacher. *"And it also helps you to say, I know I heard this, somewhere where someone has done this, I must do it. Like for instance, I was saying my mother started so many organisations, started schools for the blind, but because she didn't have the eyes, then I said what I can do to support the sight. Let me specialise in developing materials, because the need eyes. That's how I viewed myself, that I am effective when I do that. When somebody has something, I said ok what I can do to see something in somebody. He has these good points. But from this weakness, what can I do to content that, and I try out things, and say okay this one I can see I have done this, to you know, to, to, to do what somebody doesn't do (SA F1 P2)".*

#### **5.2.2.2.5 Positive views on inclusive education**

Most participants reported that even though they were frustrated and sometimes felt demotivated, they were still willing to implement inclusive education, because *“the inclusive education when you look at it, it is the only key to help the nation (SA F2 P1)”*.

Positive views of inclusive education seem to influence the participants’ attitude, enabling their sense of self-efficacy. It is believed by most of the participants that inclusive education is to the advantage of learners. As one of the participants stated: *“because of whole idea that it is promotive for learners, it makes my attitude favourable (SA F1 P2)”*.

Equal treatment of all learners was regarded by all the participants as part of inclusive education which enhanced their positive view. One participant affirmed this view by explaining that in her mixed abilities classroom, she treats all the learners the same, which with time motivated all learners to treat each other the same. *“I have picked up during my experience in teaching is that if you mix the ability of learners in the classroom then you especially in the lower classes you encourage them it is like a motivation to them. The learners mock each other, “you are stupid”, “you are what”, because they are in one class and you treat them as one person and later they treat each other the same (SA F2 P2)”*.

#### **5.2.2.3 Reinforcing external influences**

The participants contended that reinforcing external factors, such as rewarding opportunities, feeling appreciated by others in the school environment and training, strengthened their sense of teacher self-efficacy. These are subsequently discussed as sub-themes.

##### **5.2.2.3.1 Rewarding opportunities**

External rewarding opportunities, such as competition opportunities from outside the school, were affirmed by a few participants as means of strengthening teachers’ sense of self-efficacy. Although there were currently few competition opportunities, a few participants mentioned a competition they took part in, with favourable results, where

teachers are acknowledged and rewarded for achievements. In this competition, teachers had the opportunity to take part in an evaluation where their learners were writing tests and results were compared. The teacher who won this competition was not only motivated himself, but inspired the rest of his school's teachers. *"And because of that competition, eh, the teachers took part with their learner they went for a quiz, an EMS [Economic and Management Sciences] quiz, where the one teacher he obtained position one, tied with one of the noted GPLMS [Gauteng Programme for Language and Mathematics Support] schools but the well performing schools which is the teacher from our school, he got position 1 which of 96% (SB F1 P1)".* These participants concluded that this teacher who won the competition was off sick before and therefore demotivated at first, but he took part anyway *"when he came back from sick leave he was struggling to keep on going, but because he knows his learners, he focused on supporting his learners and took part and he won (SB F1 P2)".*

*"And because of that drive, really he was so motivated. When he got here he was jumping, eh, they have done it, even the learners they were jumping, they were so happy. And showed them that they can even go an extra mile, to the provisional level, and we are proud of that. And that in itself shows other institutions that hey people are moving out that because of our 1 2 3 4 subjects and where we and what are it that we are doing to prove to ourselves that we are working (SB F1 P3)".*

The participants added that when the parents were notified about these results of the competition, they were also motivated, proud and grateful towards the teacher, which in turn boosted all of the teachers' of the school self-esteem. *"That is the only measuring stick to the parents because they talk at home to say hey my child is gone to the provincial level to write EMS and all that. So that also motivated the parents and they came and said thank you. And the teacher if the teacher can also see the parents and the parents can say hey we are so thankful for done 34 for our children that in itself even boost the morale of the educators (SB F1 P3)".*

### 5.2.2.3.3 Continuous professional development

Formal training such as post-graduate opportunities was mentioned as increasing knowledge and made one participant feel more empowered to teach within an inclusive education system. She explained that training in a B Ed Honours course (Learner Support) while she was in practice, increased her knowledge on how to improve her practice, by helping her understand how to accommodate learners who experienced barriers to learning. *“Studying this course, knowing about inclusion course, knowing about inclusion policy, knowing how to support learners”. It just came naturally because we have learners, it’s actually easier if you are in the field, and you are facing such problems. And here are the guidelines, guide you how to teach, how to give methods, how to do that, how to accommodate learners (SA F1 P3)”*.

The current in-service training workshops as provided by the Department of Education were also mentioned by the participants. They averred that training builds confidence, even though it is not always interesting. *“I am also thinking about the training that we do have, we normally have trainings almost every time. Then sometimes after those trainings one feels more confident about what he is doing in class. Although sometimes you will feel that they are boring, but at least some of those things that you get there, I mean they make you to be confident of what you are doing. So training also plays part when building a teachers confidence, so I will say (SB F2 P1)”*.

The influence of current in-service training opportunities was asserted as motivational, when opportunities were created to share content with other teachers. *“You know sometimes when in a workshop, if they give opportunities to compare with other educators who are teaching the same subject that you are teaching, then in that meetings or even workshops of some kind, you learn from each and your own contribution particularly to that subject showing them what you know, also motivates you, especially if they come to you and ask for help. That in itself motivates you, ‘cause hey I didn’t know that I know so much, am I an asset of the institution, why are people coming to me. Man, they come and ask this and we sit down and we discuss this. That in itself really boost your morale (SB F1 P2)”*.

### **5.2.3 CATEGORY THREE: Factors currently disabling teachers' self-efficacy**

In this section the findings of category three that also forms part of the second sub-question that guided my study, namely 'What are the factors that are currently enabling and disabling teachers' self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education?' are presented. As mentioned in 5.2.3, this question is divided into two categories (category two: *Enabling* and category three: *Disabling*). Category two was discussed in the previous section (*cf.* 5.2.3) and category three is discussed next with regard to three main themes and relevant sub-themes. The first main theme, namely lack of knowledge and skills, is discussed first, followed by factors currently disabling teachers' self-efficacy as influenced by the Department of Basic Education, disabling factors within the school system and discouraging external factors as the other main themes. These include each sub-theme's relevance to each main theme (*cf.* Figure 5.2).

#### **5.2.3.1 Lack of knowledge and skills**

Sub-themes that emanated from this main theme included a lack of confidence in own teaching; the teacher as a barrier him/herself; and psychological and physical problems. These are discussed next.

##### **5.2.3.1.1 Lack of confidence in teaching**

Most participants asserted that they were currently experiencing a lack of confidence in teaching within an inclusive education system. Negative feelings regarding inclusive education such as "*confused and frustrated*", and the lack of knowledge "*wondering how am I going to do it (SB C7 P7)*", were expressed with pictures of people representing these feelings in one of the participant's collages (*cf.* Figure 5.8). These were illustrated by the confused man scratching his head and a frustrated man with his hands grasping his hair in the collage. The man in the middle is holding his hand on his chin and is wondering "*how am I going to teach*", which refers to the participant's own insecurity regarding her teaching ability and followed by a little girl with her arms open "*I don't know*". She explained that teaching within an inclusive education makes her feel like the small little girl who knows nothing.

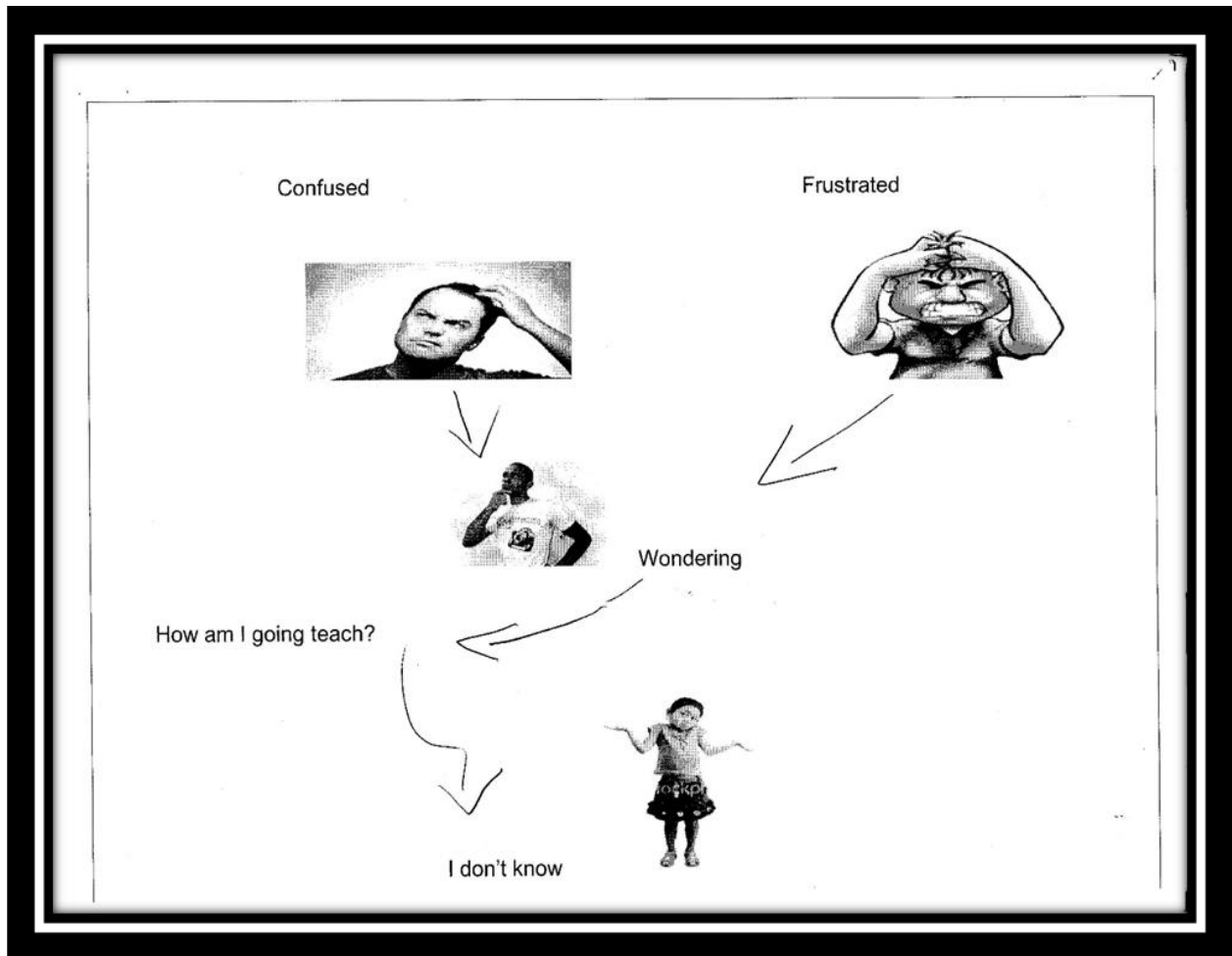


Figure 5.8: Collage A (SB C7 P7)

Most participants stated that they had experienced frustrations with regard to inclusive education. *“The only problem, the only frustration that I’m having right now, is inclusion, is inclusion. I don’t know how to reach my learners (SA F1 P1).* Participants explained that they still felt new in the field, had too little knowledge and therefore lacked confidence in their own teaching abilities. *“Frustrated not knowing exactly what is right, because we are new in the field, and I don’t feel confident in my own teaching ability anymore (SB F2 P3)”.*

These participants confirmed that although they were passionate about teaching, they had a sense of frustration as a result of limited training. *“First of all I am a person who*

*likes teaching, very, very much, I am very passionate about it. But since inclusion education has been introduced, I am a little bit frustrated. I am frustrated in the sense of working with learners with severe barriers, especially intellectual barriers, because I have never been trained for remedial, I don't know if I'm doing the right thing (SA F1 P1)".*

One participant related his insecurities to teach within an inclusive class by stating that he feels unprotected and expressed his need for more knowledge in order to feel safer. *"I will say I feel unprotected simply because as I indicated last time that this is new to us, it is so difficult for us to catch up what has been, what I am going to do with an inclusive class and what are the challenges, we will come across to me right now I will say much complicated, because it is new to me, really I just want to learn more about this, if someone can come and teach me I will feel much safer (SA F2 P1)".* In one of the collage activities one participant symbolized her feelings of insecurity regarding teaching within an inclusion context with a picture of a blue train (cf. Figure 5.9). She explained *"I am in a blue train, the blue train is inclusion, the blue of the train represents uncertainty, I feel like I am lost not having any idea of where the train is going, that's how I feel in my class now (SA C1 P1)".*



Figure 5.9: Collage A (SA C1 P1)

Most of the participants explained that the difficulties they experience with inclusive education is because they have not been previously exposed to it, resulting in feelings

of incompetence. *“On that particular note, you realise that we are dealing with the dynamics that we have never been exposed before and it becomes even more difficult, more difficult, so really it makes you feel that you are incompetent, that is the bottom-line of the whole thing (SB F1 P2)”*.

*“It is tough on us and they require a lot, they say you must include all abilities, but you are not told how to do it, they tell you go and do, include those children with barriers in your lesson plan and what not to do but we don’t know how (SB F1 P4)”*.

*“Very hard, because now you are concentrating on working with learners who have a disability also, so now you are told to include them in your learning area in your curriculum so it is very hard for us (SB F1 P1)”*.

#### **5.2.3.1.2 The teacher as a person as barrier**

Evolving feelings of incompetence due to an incapacity to address all learners’ needs and an increased sense of failing these learners, making the participants feel like being the barrier themselves, were conveyed by most participants. *“I become the barrier, because I don’t know to handle all the barriers and I feel like I’m failing my learners, I’m failing at my task to teach (SA I3 P3)”*. All the participants declared that they are willing to help learners, but despite being willing and attempting to provide support, they still felt incompetent to address diverse needs. *“I am trying my very best, I can see that I can’t reach them like they are supposed to be reached you know (SA F1 P1)”*.

*“You know in the first instance previously when you prepared for learners with different dynamics we were not looking much as those have serious barriers, that need special needs education taught them. But now you are facing them and you have to teach them because you can’t exclude them, eh, really knowing that you are not going to give them a fair share that in itself makes you feel that really you are not doing your utmost best. So that in it itself, as I was saying, it means that it seem as if you are incompetent, knowing that you are doing your work, but you are not touching each and every learner, eh, yes, so that in itself is really bad (SB F1 P3)”*.

The diversity of severe barriers in one classroom and their inability to handle these learners are emphasised by the participants as frustrating. *“Frustrated because you have to plan and have lots of resources for other learners who are struggling. Maybe in your class you have the one who has the cerebral palsy which is mild, and you don’t know how to handle him, or maybe you have this child who is autistic, and you don’t know how to handle that child as educator because you don’t have knowledge about that child. So sometimes you can be frustrated because you see this learner he has this barrier to learning and you don’t know what barrier; this one is hyperactive he used to say that to educators the child is hyperactive so I can’t handle him. He is very silly in his behaviour (SB F2 P1)”*.

One of the participants said that she *“wants to reach learners”*, but explained that if the problem was severe, she felt incompetent due to a lack of skills to support the specific needs: *“I don’t hate them, it’s just that I don’t have the skills of helping them. (SA F1 P1)”*.

A few participants reported feeling less effective because they struggle to reach their objective for the day. *“I feel frustrated because when I enter the schoolyard I know my objective for the day. Because I want them to be lifelong parents, or lifelong human being, so if I have to face the learners with problems severe, you mark my words, severe, if the learner doesn’t know phonics I know how to tackle that. There are so many different kinds of learners, with so many, many, severe barriers that I cannot handle. That I feel frustrated. That my objective that I haven’t obtains my objective, yet. And then I am not effective, to me it feels like that I am less effective to those learners (SA F1 P1)”*.

Not knowing how to handle a learner that they feel should fail and be placed into special education makes most of the participants feel bad. They are then concerned about what will happen to this learner in a secondary school if they are simply passed on. *“You feel very bad, you feel very bad. You really don’t want to pass a learner who is failing. You really don’t want to do it, but sometimes you failed your part, simply because you did not know what to do, you did not have the support, and you did not have the resources to deal with it. Looking at some of the learners who need to be referred to the special*

*schools, it is not easy to send the learner to the special school, sometimes you will apply for a year, or more than a year and then you won't get approval, they will tell you the school is full, but the learner will remain with you. So you end up not knowing what to do with that learner. Especially when you are in grade 7, releasing that learner in a secondary school, will be the most nightmare that you will ever experience, you won't even like to hear what happened to that learner in that particular secondary school where he went to. So it makes you feel very bad (SB I1 P1)".*

The same participant related this stressful feeling of *"not knowing what to do and just passing learners through who are not ready yet"* to a low sense of self-efficacy. *"With low self-efficacy, especially, because of the stress, because you really don't know how to approach anything, also due to the feeling of seeing learners, seeing yourself releasing learners, sometimes to the next grade who are not supposed to be there, knowing very well what is going to happen to them, it's like killing a person when you don't have any option to save that person, and it causes a lot of stress really (SB I1 P1)".*

#### **5.2.3.1.3 Physical and psychological problems**

Many participants maintained that their lack of knowledge and skills influenced their mental and physical health negatively. *"I don't feel healthy anymore, because I'm failing my learners, I'm failing at my task to be a good teacher (SB F2 P1)". "I really feel stressed and drained, because I know so little about inclusive education and I don't know what to do for the first time in my life, I always rated myself as a good teacher, but really now my body is giving in, and I think all teachers are very stressed, I mean you can check in every teacher's handbag there will always be pills and other medication that they need to take for headache or depression continuously to cope (SB F2 P3)".*

One participant explained that his lack of confidence in his own teaching ability caused him to experience a low sense of self-efficacy, and he believed that not knowing what to do have serious physical and psychological consequences for teachers. *"Low self-efficacy, it is a very serious burden to me as a teacher, because I am doing something that I don't have enough confidence to do it is actually like you are being punished for*

*something that you did not do. So it is a burden to the teacher, it is affecting him psychologically and that is why mostly you'll find teachers, their health is no longer okay, they will have stress, they will go to the doctors, you go to most of them they carry medicine to school, different medicines, most of the teachers are on medication, because of this, they don't find the happiness to work (SB I1 P1)".*

Experiencing "depression", "sadness", "unhappiness" and "a loss of passion" were terminology used to describe some of their feelings because of "own inefficient performance". *"I feel depressed, because I know I am not giving my 100%, I'm just too burned out (SB F1 P4)".*

*"I don't feel passionate anymore about teaching and teaching for me I didn't go for training just because of the cause, teaching is in my blood it was my passion. I am a parent I teach even where I must not teach, even when I'm with adults I teach, so it is painful to know you are not serving your purpose as a teacher (SA F2 P2)".*

A few of the participants asserted that their concern about certain learners who they are not able to help puts a burden on their shoulders and contributes to sleeplessness and feeling sick. *"You also become sick because when you are sleeping you thinking about those learners so you don't feel well every time you do you feel heavy on your shoulders but you can't give the things you want to give for the learners (SA F2 P2)".* *"And you want to help them" (SA F2 P3)".*

All participants asserted that they were experiencing a considerable amount of stress, related to the teaching environment, which was reported by most participants as negatively affecting all areas of their lives. *"We are really experiencing a lot of stress, because of what happens in class and everywhere at school and this makes me feel bad everywhere, at home, with my friends and other places (SA F1 P5)".* Most participants explicated that for this reason they needed more personal support in the form of counselling. *"I need someone that I can share my feelings and what is happened at school just to release some of this tension (SB F2 P14)".* One participant explained that *"sometimes I just need advice, guidance and emotional support and I think that if we have counsellors, it will for sure help us ease the strain and pain (SB I8*

P8)". The need for counselling services was affirmed by another participant: *"Just someone who can help me with the ups and downs of life, maybe it's just something that happened that day or something I'm sad about for a long time or when I'm in grief, this will help to talk about the problem and help it not to get bigger stumbling blocks, but will help to feel better in the long way (SA I1 P1)".*

### **5.2.3.2 Disabling factors as influenced by the Department of Basic Education (DBE)**

Factors currently disabling teachers' self-efficacy as emanating from the DBE resulted in five sub-themes. These include ineffective implementation of inclusive education; inadequate training; incompetent departmental leaders/managers; a lack of support and acknowledgement; and curriculum constraints.

#### **5.2.3.2.1 Ineffective implementation of Inclusive Education**

The way in which the Department of Basic Education (DBE) introduced and implemented inclusive education was reported by most participants to be ineffective. *"It was not effectively done, we still don't know how to make use of effective inclusion strategies (SA F1 P4)".*

Most participants proclaimed that teachers are being failed by the system in terms of *"the way they plan and introduce new things"* One participant openly expressed that the system was harming the teachers' self-efficacy because of the way things are being done: *"also how the system expect us to deliver, and the way things were happening previously, like changing of the curriculum, and stuff, the way they introduce new things, to teachers it harms the effectiveness of teachers (SA F1 P1)".* It was also stated by one participant that the district officials criticized teachers instead of training or supporting: *"I mean some of the facilitators that comes to the school just looking at everything you are doing wrong, instead of training or supporting us with more knowledge (SB F2 P4)".*

A few participants believed that this affected the dignity of the teaching career. *"It's because the teaching career, I would say in our country has lost its dignity. It's lost its dignity in the way that the system failed the teachers (SA F1 P3)".*

One participant explained that because there is no link between the national and provincial departments' planning, it confuses teachers. *"And another thing, when people are planning, you can see that they are planning in isolation. They don't connect these things; you know there is a gap. You see let me say like national is maybe planning this way, comes provincial teachers are here, you know they are separate. And they are supposed to be a link, so you know what is happening right up to there. From the bottom to the back, but now there is this, this, this one is doing this, this one is doing that. There is no connection, and people are always confused. And teachers are confused because of this connection, even in the classroom you need the learners to connect. Something to make sense, you must connect it with you know everything to see the root (SA F1 P2)".*

A participant illustrated the ineffective implementation of inclusive education in his collage (cf. Figure 5.10). He sketched a picture of a closed and empty pot which represents inclusive education (A). All around the pot are pictures of individuals who are currently playing a role in inclusive education and he referred to them as *"systems that are not in place"*. These included the following: The frustrated parent (B) *"so this old lady is a frustrated parent not knowing what is it that is going on, how am I going to deal with this child, you know, all the problems that are there"*; The learner who *"needs care and are not currently assisted the way she is supposed to"*, is projected in a picture of a sad learner being hugged (C); The picture of the man sitting with his hands folded, represents the teacher, *"not knowing and who are forced to sit and think of ways on how to cope with inclusive education"* (D). These three individuals B,C and D, are the first, second and third leg of the pot in the inclusive education system, *"struggling to cope on their own, in order to hold the inclusive pot and feeling lonely and isolated, but struggling together"*. At the top, he illustrated the management including the Institutional Development Support Officers (IDSOs) (E), Department of Basic Education (DBE) (F), and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (G), who are not supporting the teachers, learners or parents below, the way they are supposed to be supported. He explained that all of them, from the parents to the management, represented chunks of food that are placed outside the pot, instead of being inside cooking together, to make a tasty meal. *"I'm just trying to say we are not included together as we are supposed to and not*

cooking together, not cooked enough. It's just bits and pieces, but we must be included in one pot. And understand in one pot, I think we can understand and what is it that we have to deal with because the most important thing is educators are not enough, equipped enough to deal with inclusive education so they stand to be frustrated, they are not innovated enough to deal with that so it depends on individual strengths, if I can't see it the way you see it and we can't talk about it we are separated at the end of the day we are not going to reach our goal". He concluded that in the end "we are going to produce a half-baked learner (SB C8 P8)".

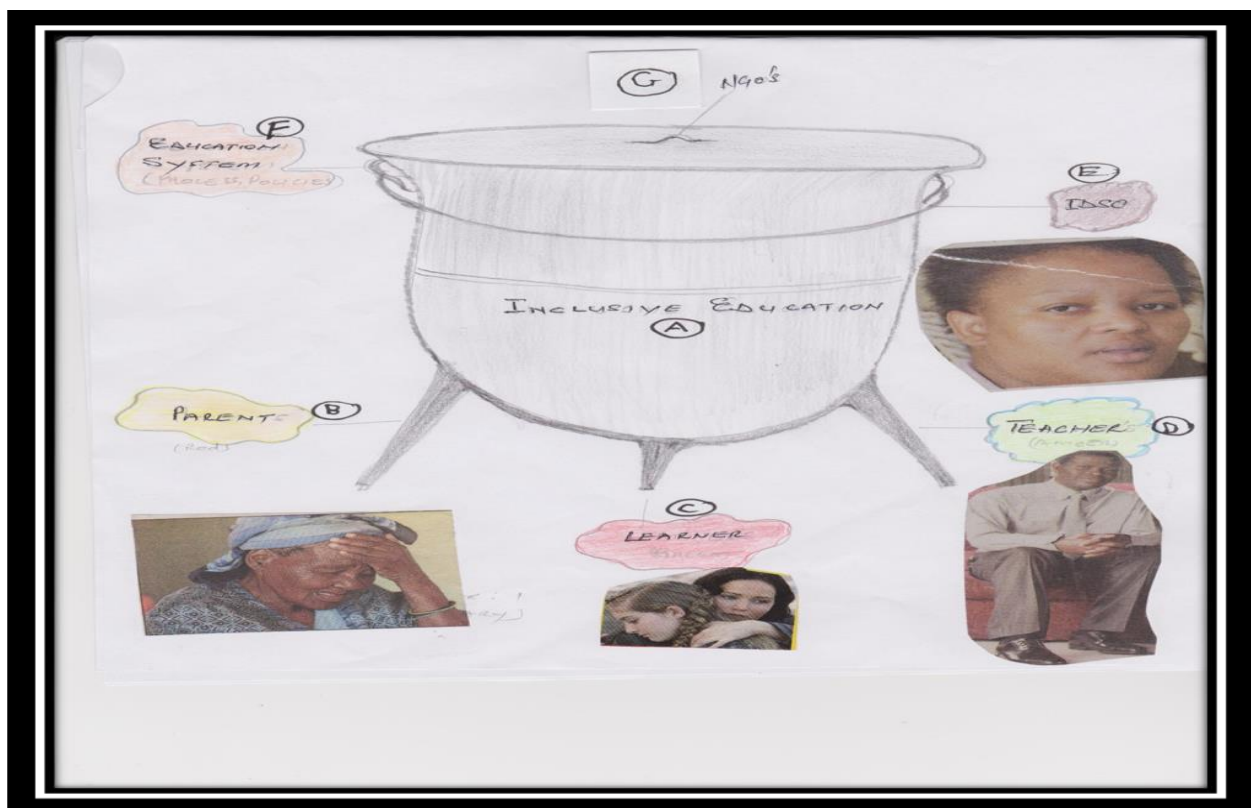


Figure 5.10: Collage A (SB C8 P8)

### 5.2.3.2.2 Inadequate training

All the participants asserted that training was an important prerequisite for enhancing their sense of self-efficacy. It was felt that more training leads to increased knowledge and skills and this consequently improves confidence in their own ability: "the department expects us to implement without proper training (SB I8 P8)".

*“When we get enough training we feel more empowered to practice inclusion and therefore we must get more opportunities to go for training (SB F1 P6)”.*

*“You know, I know much that the district or, or the education department is relying on individual strength as the pioneer of education, they rely on us but we also need to be nurtured, we also need to be informed of some of these things we don’t know. In most of the instances we are not quite sure of the current changes in education; you see it through correspondence, to say this is it what is happening (SB I8 P8)”.*

One participant further added the need to be granted more time off for training and studies. *“It is very hard to train and work full time all at once, we just have too much work, they must see to it that we get time off work to go and study (SA F1 P1)”.* This participant also suggested that provision had to be made for teachers to take turns to go for training. *“Why the system doesn’t maybe, maybe if they could say, they say they give educators an opportunity maybe for a year to go and study. And then maybe they say for this year we maybe allow maybe two teachers per school. I know we can’t just go all of us, maybe for a year you and you go and study that thing, while the others stay and teach and then when those two return, others gets a change to go for training, we will all see results (SA F1 P1)”.* Furthermore, some participants mentioned that they should also be provided with more financial resources for training opportunities. One participant explained this from within her own context. *“I think if we can have opportunities like my colleague is saying training opportunities that we can grab to develop ourselves I will set an example like maybe within myself I am one person I want to study to enhance myself financially because I am a single parent - I am not financially stable, maybe when the employee can have sufficient funds to cater for people who are willing to learn and relay the funds back to the education system (SA F2 P1)”.*

Training opportunities to gain more knowledge and skills about inclusive education were specifically mentioned by all participants as an urgent need. *“If they want us to implement inclusive strategies in an effective way, they must give us so much more training on that (SA F2 P10)”.*

The participants mostly asserted that they need more knowledge with regard to identification, addressing and supporting learners who experience barriers to learning and development. *“We need to know more about including those learners with barriers, I want to be able to determine what he or she is struggling with, is it a serious problem like an illness or is it something simple, like a spelling problem, and if I find out, I want to know how I can help this learner with whatever they needs and know what my tasks are (SA F1 P1)”*.

*“I don’t know how to cater for those learners with serious barriers, I want to be informed (SA F1 P4)”*; *if I can just have more information (SB F1 P1)”*.

*“I want to be aware of what I am dealing with and how I can assist, I want my learners to reach their potential and that’s why I need to know how to help a learner with a problem (SA I1 P1)”*.

*“If I could be trained more on the different barriers there are, and learn how to spot what the problem is and recognize it, and then know how I can help, if I can be thought what strategies I can use, I will feel more secure and have self-efficacy in this inclusion thing (SB F2 P10)”*.

However, in-service training workshops for the implementation and practice of inclusive education that have been provided by the DBE, have been described by most participants to be inadequate and not enough. It was recommended by participants that it could be better refined. *“The workshops are not ample, but if they can give us detail on how to implement inclusive education, it will be more sufficient (SB I7 P7)”*.

*“The workshops are not ample enough, especially for those that has been in the system a long time and did not get any pre-service training about inclusion (SA F1 P1)”*.

*“The workshops does not cover everything about inclusive education and they don’t teach us about all the barriers that there are (SA I1 P1)”*.

*“We don’t get enough training or workshops on inclusion and the little that they provide are not effective, it makes us very tense (SB I1 P6)”*.

Most participants felt that consultation with them to determine how they feel before the training is needed. *“I would say proper consultation should be made with our training, before the training they should come to our level, to understand our situation here then that can help them to give proper instruction and demonstration for us, on how to do things They must also interview us more to see how we feel and, and be there in the classroom and make an evaluation of what we need to know and give us training on that, then we will feel more supported and confident in how to approach certain problems (SB: F1 P 2)”*.

Most participants also felt that the presenters of the workshops were not competent in their tasks. One participant described the trainers as follows: *“And since I’ve been getting to the workshop, I never come to a facilitator I don’t know who reached me (SA F1 P1)”*.

Most participants indicated that the in-service workshops need to be better with regard to length, more practical examples and more demonstrations. *“They should reconsider how they are training us, we want better training (SA F2 P10)”*.

*“The workshops must be longer for us to learn something and we need from them to give us practical examples, so that we can understand what to do (SB F2 P12)”*.

*“And also the demonstration lessons are also important, as you have been trained as educators we need demonstration (SA F1 P1)”*.

A need for workshop presenters to actually work through documentation and not simply distribute it for own reading was asserted by many participants. *“Teachers cannot just be trained by giving them work papers to read and just be expected to follow them....We need them to work with us through all the documentation in workshops, they cannot just hand out the paperwork and expect us to read it on our own (SA F1 P3)”*.

One participant compared this ineffective training to an army organisation. She viewed the DBE as a *“major in the army, who only commands his troops”*, (referring to teachers), *“to execute orders with a beginning and end result”* and expect them to *“get there on their own, without any guidance (SB F2 P3)”*.

Many participants emphasised that the in-service training workshops were conducted in such a rush that it is difficult to understand and implement. *“I am saying it is a challenge to me because the way of department of education has designed it or the way the government has designed it in our training, cause the training is rush rush, you are training today and they expect you to implement tomorrow there is no follow ups whether you have understand to what has been offer to you so it is a challenge of implementation, but is a learning gap for me (SA F2 P2)”*. Participants affirmed that the length of the workshops is too short to be effectively trained in addressing all the diverse needs of learners. *“And even if they have workshops for us for inclusion for the learners with barriers, they just take two weeks or one week. So how can you cope when the learners are more diverse, they are too much for us. The workshop is too short (SB F2 P1)”*. *“And they train us for a short period and then expecting us to be experts (SB F2 P3)”*.

Most participants recommended that the workshops should be a more interactive learning experience between the teachers and the trainer, instead of only reading from notes. *“And you know, Isabel, the training can be more productive if we are part of the exercise, if the trainer includes us in the workshop and we do group discussions or talk to each other and the trainer, cause when the trainer does all the talking and just read from a paper, we fall asleep, but if he or she makes us part we concentrate and learn more effective, and then feel good about ourselves and our contribution (SA F2 P11)”*.

The assessment of teachers after training was suggested by a few participants to master their knowledge. *“I think teachers must be assessed after training to improve their learning, for instance three months training whereby they expect you to come and say, you went for training, you wrote the test, and you are assessed. And you gained the best on the results, and you passed the training. That says you can implement the inclusion or whatever that needs to be implemented. Now that person when he comes back, definitely there will be a change. The period he or she trained for will give results back (SA F1 P3)”*.

The current workshops were also reported by a few participants to be scheduled for times when teachers are tired and consequently learning was believed to be ineffective:

*“Really, can you go and focus in a workshop after a hard day’s work, at two, half past two, to have to attend a workshop and take everything in? (SB F1 P1)”. One participant commented that “you could see us go to workshops, teachers will be asleep, and I have seen it. So very tired we sit like this slouching, and when we go outside say: Why, I don’t remember it (SA F1 P2)”.*

Besides knowledge of inclusive practices, many participants added that they wanted more training focusing specifically on the teachers themselves, in order to improve their self-efficacy and become better teachers. *“Yes, I agree that you need to know how to practise inclusion, but you must also have a grasp of who you are to, before you can really help a learner and I think we need more opportunities where we can get information and learn about ourselves personally to be effective teachers (SA F1 P2)”.*

A participant added *“yeah you know that saying, before you can help another you must first help yourself, it’s so true (SA F1 P3)”.*

*“Training focusing on myself we can get that things maybe if they like motivational speakers and attending motivation and workshops seminars like having team building at the workplace, which helps you to grow personally also (SA F2 P1)”.*

*“Get chances where we can learn about things that help you to organise yourself inside, how to be able to cope with our inner thoughts, to keep track of ourselves and make us feel in the driving seat of our own performance (SB F1 P4)”.*

A participant added and suggested that a course had to be introduced to develop teachers at an *“intra-personal level”*. She shared information about how training on emotional intelligence had helped her and described the importance of this for teachers. *“To just add, I don’t know whether maybe if the department can communicate with the higher institutions to add training on specific self-development themes, just to help especially on the development of moral of the teacher. Maybe introduce an emotional intelligent course. I will tell you why I say this, you know it has helped me so much that, before I did that I couldn’t even understand how to separate feelings, emotions and actions. So you have to know this is a feeling, and understand you know that self-awareness. It I don’t know you know, it’s will change somebody especially their attitude.*

*It will just happen like this it seems if you go in the process through the process there is something which is in the brain to change you to view things in a certain way. You know to view things to say I am not going to pass the bark, I take responsibility. I know that there are things there but let me change these things there and do this. If they can try and introduce those courses in teaching maybe emotional intelligence, that will also help. Because even within the society the parents need that. I have changed I know that, okay I used to be, I used to say I understand myself the feelings, I could express myself. But when I did this course its then I realise, hmmm ai, hey, hey, hey, you know somewhere I didn't know anything, that can also help especially in changing attitudes. Especially for the educators, because they are going to work with the learners. Transferring this, you know, transferring the energy the mood. You can influence somebody with your mood. So you see you got to understand where it comes from. If they introduce this maybe for six months just as a course I think it's compulsory. Maybe you should try to change some of the things (SA F1 P2)".*

#### **5.2.3.2.3 Incompetent DBE leaders/managers**

The participants declared that leaders or managers of example, the District Based Support Team (DBST) do not always seem competent to provide support. *"Even the districts officials there are those, those who are appointed there not knowing most of the things and if you go to them and you need help, they are unavailable and if you find them they say no you don't do that. She or he will give you the wrong information" (SB F2 P1)".* This resulted in many participants trying to find information on their own because they believed that they were not given the correct information and consequently mistrust develops between teachers and District officials. *"Then you have to go through the documents and you google on your own and then get the correct thing, your facilitator didn't tell you the correct thing, so the trust for that person is, you know, not there (SB F2 P1)".* One participant experienced this incompetence of District officials in such an acute way that she felt like killing herself. *".....affects you at school level, your leader has no or little knowledge, you think of killing yourself sometimes (SB F2 P1)".*

#### **5.2.3.2.4 Lack of support or acknowledgement from the DBE**

All participants emphasised that support from the DBE does not only need to be increased but needs to improve. *“The department must support us more and the way they are helping should be better (SA F1 P2)”*. A participant stated that an effective support system is needed: *“If we can have a support system that is effective within the education system in schools (SA F2 P1)”*.

Most participants argued that support was only given to help the learner, instead of supporting teachers personally. *“The little support from the department is only for the learners, but what about the teachers, what about us, what about supporting us, I don’t say they must give us food to eat, they must give us support to feed our inner strength (SB I6 P5)”*.

*“I don’t know so far with the department of education is having some programs to motivate teachers, but setting up programs where teachers can be supported personally will help a lot (SA F1 P2)”*.

A significant issue for most of the participants was that they do not receive adequate support from the District officials, but still a heavy workload is demanded from them. One participant explained: *“I think lack of support instead of getting supported. Especially when the department expects so much, they are expecting too much from the educators, you have to submit this, you have to record this and you have to make this, and some of the things is you can assist the learner but it is a lot of work, to go and write down and say I was doing this and that, and that, and that, so it makes your workload to be very heavy, so it makes us to have negative thoughts (SB F2 P2)”*.

A few participants indicated that the DBST, through a learning support educator (LSE) does support the schools regarding learners who experience barriers to learning, but they are not able to support all the learners and can only visit the schools once a week. Learners are consequently placed in a special class where one teacher is responsible for them. Therefore, they had to place all these learners into one special class. *“Fortunately, we have one, which cater only for 20 learners, eh, then we got eh DBST people from the district that assist us with those learners who are in the mainstream but*

*who have barriers. Eh, they've got one on one, eh, session to talk about their problems but not almost but not all the learners are covered, so they normally comes on Monday, one person on Monday to check on those learners, eh, so it's not even enough. It's not even enough. So unfortunately, we had to place them into a special class, which caters only for those 20 learners, which they are in a particular class, so the class is under the management of one teacher (SB F1 P2)".*

A few of the participants felt that the lack of support from the DBE cause teachers not only to become demotivated, but also induced a propensity to resign from teaching. *"I think most of the teachers are frustrated at present moment and this contributes to the fact that most teachers are moving away from the systems because they are frustrated, they are not motivated, nothing is done from the system's side to support them so it is a factor that is contributing for most teachers to resign (SB F1 P1)".*

*"If there are no effective strategies that are exposed to educators for supporting learners with barriers, that really have a serious barrier to individual teachers, because of the pressure, because of the problems of frustration, teachers tend to resign without even understanding the consequences thereof. In the system when they see, all these dynamics, the new things that are coming and that are not working for them, that makes them feel that they are no longer belonging here (SB F1 P3)".*

An accusation made by two participants is that they are expected to know everything and are then treated like children by District officials if they do not have enough knowledge. They asserted that a happy conducive environment should rather be created where contributions are acknowledged. *"Okay, let's say the facilitator from the department they come to school and you are new in this field you don't know too much or you don't have enough knowledge, and what they expect you as a teacher, they expect you to be an expert in whatever you do. Instead of giving, we do get support but not enough of it, not enough. Instead of getting enough support they shout at you, you see you feel like you are a child, a child instead of being treated like an adult, you see (SB F2 P2)".*

*“You are not supported you are always accused; you feel that you are not doing enough. Then to do enough. What is it that they are expecting? It is better they tell you the expectation and they didn’t give you a clear criteria of how do they want whatever they need from you and when, it becomes better. And when they come and say how far, how far your work, it becomes a serious problem. But you know what makes teachers happy, an environment, a conducive environment, where their contributions are accepted, where parents really accept whatever we are doing, the department is giving recognition, even just to reward you to say you are a teacher of the term or the year that in itself motivates, but there is nothing, from the institution itself, that alone, the district or the colleagues, the school itself, there is nothing of that kind that come from the institution, you become demotivated (SB F1 P4)”.*

A need for individual recognition of their qualities and contributions to teaching was mentioned by some of the participants. *“They should acknowledge us each according to our strengths, we need to know that somebody else has seen what you are doing (SB F2 P3).”*

Most participants reported that they felt the need to be heard and be involved in the policy development as well as decision making process. *“You know it’s a chain, we depend on one another, that inter dependence and we should be see things together we cannot see things each our own way. But if there is somebody who can listen, to say let’s I got this please hear me. If they can hear us, cause most of the time we are not being heard, you understand. We say things, you don’t even hear it, you know I become so happy if I give somebody an idea, and somewhere when I read something you know, this thing is like me, you relate with something. And it you know its boost you. It makes you to be effective. But if you say something but you are not heard it’s difficult. You try but it is difficult for teachers to be effective (SA F1 P2)”. We need them to come down to our level and see what is really going on in the classroom, if they do that and involve us, we could help with combining a good policy, cause we can tell them what works and what don’t (SA F1 P1)”. “We have to be included in the making of decision making, how can we practise inclusion together if we as teachers are not even included (SB I8 P8)”.*

A participant added by emphasizing the need for continued positive feedback and encouragement. *"But that and also positive feedback all the time, we need that positive feedback we need that, just like learners. If somebody tells you, to know appreciate like words of encouragement, and again together feedback, when somebody will be saying I can see that you have the following strength can you kindly use them you know to help us in developing something, realising each and every one's strength's and potential in inclusion that will also help (SA F1 P2)".*

One participant added that *"the DBE must also acknowledge teachers"* more and suggested that there should be a system in place to promote this. *"There should be a system of at least saying thank you for those who have worked well by the department. It should not be a blanket form, because we know each other we know who is working and who is not working. But if they say thank you all of you we know that they are not realistic. What they are saying is just a word of mouth, they don't know what they are saying. But at least if they see exactly what one is doing, they have such a system to make one to be very proud of what he has done. I know mostly with teachers, teachers will produce doctors, they will produce engineers, and all those other things, many of them will pass with cars very high, and the teacher will be passing with his own bicycle in most cases. But at least that thank you for what you have done for me, I mean it makes a teacher to feel proud of himself (SB F2 P4)".*

Being acknowledged for hard work at all grade levels, and not only as a Grade 12 teacher, is important for a few participants. *"They only acknowledge the Grade 12 educators and in the Free State they acknowledge the subject advisors at district level, so the educators the Grade 12, what about the primary ones because we are the ones doing a lot of work more than them. We are the ones who teach learners most of the things, especially at the foundation where everything starts, so they don't acknowledge those educators that are at the low level (SB F2 P1)".*

Self-efficacy was also reported to be mostly affected negatively by the labelling of underperforming schools, making teachers of these schools feeling incompetent. One participant stated: *"Mam, self-efficacy of educators can be affected positively sometimes negatively but most of the time it is negatively, as mister M.... said, because of a lot of*

*confusion in our education system. There is a lot of confusion this year because in the first term they are coming up with something, and then the labelling of schools, the underperforming schools, you know, those make us feel incompetent and they affect the self-efficacy of educators negatively (SB F2 P2)".*

#### **5.2.3.2.5 Curriculum constraints**

The general sentiment about the curriculum (CAPS) seems to be that it places constraints on the participants to be flexible as teachers. This frustrates them and results in the participants experiencing feelings of incompetence. These feelings originate in the continuous curriculum changes that take place resulting in them being unsure about what they are doing. *"Because if they have a system a consistent system you are going to have confidence you can do it. But if the system keeps on changing from time to time, like you see this year we are doing this and then you do CAPS and next time you are doing another thing. I think that there are also a lot of changes if the system is not consistent, it will also cause people not to know exactly what they are doing. Those changes that are coming up from time to time, they also make you as a teacher to unsure of what you are doing (SB F2 P1)".*

Most participants reported that the administration load of the curriculum restrains them from being teachers and educating learners. *"We hoped when they introduced it that it will be so much easier and that there will be no administration, but we were shocked when we realised it is lots and lots more administration work whereby teachers were frustrated about, we now spent most of our time with the admin, and we spend less on implementing, and teaching, and making sure that the learners are getting educated (SA F1 P3)". "The expectation of the department saying that, we have to teach, we have to do you know a lot of paperwork, this paperwork, you have to teach these learners at this percentage, and those changes (SB F2 P5)".*

Most participants indicated that the constraints of the CAPS with regard to prescriptive requirements for completion of the curriculum and limited flexibility are problematic for them.

One participant compared the current policy (CAPS) with the previous one (National Curriculum Statements [NCS]) in terms of flexibility and accommodation of learners with barriers: *“The previous policy when it came into operation was very, very flexible and accommodative towards learners that struggles. But the current one that has been introduced is more prescriptive (SA F1 P2)”*.

Other participants agreed with this and blamed the DBE for their difficulties. They believe that the inflexibility of the CAPS restricts lesson plans and time frames, which contributes to being limited in accommodating learners who experience barriers to learning. As a result, many learners do not cope with the current curriculum. *“I really struggle to teach now, I will say it’s because of the school; I will say it is the department of education. First of all previously as teachers we used to be given scheme of works, whereby as teachers we used to write our own lesson plans. But follow this scheme of work, and by so doing when planning your lesson plan you know what type of learners you are having in your class. And the scheme of work in those days, it’s not the same like now. You have given lesson plans that you must stick to and it is difficult with the time they give you, you teach this concept today, tomorrow you teach another concept. But during those days the concept was taught in a full week’s time works plan. Even those learners who are struggling would grasp it. There were consistencies, but now you cannot help a struggling learner with these lesson plans and time restrictions, so I wouldn’t say the school as such. I would say the system (SA F1 P1)”*.

*“The CAPS now give us the lesson plans. The planning is there, it got their own things. Planning is so frustrated, that if you thought for so many years, as Mam has taught, and you know that you used to, you use to, deal with certain aspects for this long. And here comes the CAPS that says; no you have to introduce two songs actually for a week. It is for Grade ones, and you know that those learners cannot, they cannot, and you are in the classroom, you can see they are not coping. The other thing is the age thing. Admission of learners who are at age 6 it is a big problem, the teachers are frustrated (SA F1 P3)”*.

One participant emphasised that by being restricted from being able to do her own adaptations to her lesson plans makes her feel as if she is trapped in a cage and this

frustrates her. *“It falls back to planning it falls back to say if somebody gives you a program to follow it. We are in a cage, you cannot fly. For me it’s not working. Somebody says do this, you know I become frustrated. But when somebody says use this and fly, adapted it in different ways, I’ll do that. Because some of the things are not all here, and when I look at the programme it just unlocks something which had been hidden there. But now if the problem comes there are problems like that. Especially here in the schools, the full service, they wouldn’t even understand. But they bring programmes here; you want this thing to be finished, by this week, by this day you should do this. You see now the teachers are, and they are frustrated. That also affects a teacher’s self-efficacy (SA F1 P2)”*.

Some participants felt that the CAPS allows flexibility, but other integrated programmes, such as the Gauteng Programme for Languages and Mathematics Support (GPLMS), are too prescriptive and makes the curriculum inflexible. They experienced this as a task-focused and not a learner-focused programme. It also appears to the participants that the trainers/coaches of this programme do not really understand this. *“But CAPS they allow flexibility. But now there are other integrated programmes that we have. That is prescriptive. You find it now; they move away from CAPS and are prescriptive. So even the people that are bringing them they don’t even understand. They can say I want you to do this, but when you look at CAPS, CAPS allow you to say fly, if you want to fly. Create material, adapt material, if you want, give provision, does that. But when they come why didn’t you do this because you are expected to finish this. So is it of my word they don’t understand the policy and the program (SA F1 P2)”*.

*“GPLMS the things that the department is doing with the schools for instance the strategies that are being introduced like GPLMS we had to rush with it, because if they say today is lesson 21 then we must write it, if we can’t do it today we will never complete it because tomorrow you must do something you are just running this strategy of GPLMS is not learner focused it is task focused. They just want us to do task work with learners so those are the challenges (SA F2 P2)”*.

One participant felt that the GPLMS only makes provision for clever learners. *“These GPLMS is a struggle, really a struggle, because as the lady has said if the learners*

*must do lesson 21 even the dates are indicated there so if you can never do that, you are behind. They used to give us photos to see what the teachers do, but it is only for the clever pupils not for those who struggle. I want to see when the teachers who teach the learners, who struggles that are very slow you can have a nice look over there it is only for the clever learners (SA F2 P1)”.*

*“Like they have said our problem is the lesson plan if they can conduct the lesson plan for slower learners so that they can catch up (SA F2 P3)”.*

All participants reported that the District officials do not check the quality of their work but only if the prescribed work is completed. The focus is therefore mainly on curriculum coverage. When there are learners who need to work slower, the teachers are continuously pressured to work according to the planning (i.e. the dates set for completion of lesson plan). *“And they don’t check the quality, you are doing. Because if you can complain about this module work and you forgot that you said there is this learner who can only do the practical work, there is this learner that cannot go from, not go from, if he is still on concrete level, how do you go to abstract. And when they come they just expect you to go with dates, what is that (SA F1 P3)”.*

One participant admitted to her tendency to pay less attention to learners with barriers and focusing more on the learners who were more likely to pass because of the emphasis on curriculum coverage. *“Because if they checked the children books, the slow ones we can’t help them because it is rush rush we just concentrate about the pass of learners and the coverage of the work, we just ignore the slow ones (SA F2 P3)”.*

Another participant added *“Let me also consider it this way, according to the present curriculum, there is a dipstick, a dipstick that measures our performances as teachers, and you find out that you are one of the two that they are using, its SBA and syllabus coverage. And when you indicate how far you are with the syllabus coverage that matter, you find out those learners who fell far behind, and when you are going to indicate, how far have you went, I am indicating the pace of the fast learners. Those who is a little behind schedule, I don’t even mention it. Because why what is going to*

*happen now they will say throw another management plan, come up with the strategies how you are going to help those who are behind, in theory it works, but in practice, impossible. That is how it looks to me, I have tried it myself. I can't cope with it (SB F1 P2)".*

Most participants felt that the CAPS had not been researched thoroughly enough. However, teachers are instructed from higher authorities to implement it. This results in poor results and the learner suffers as a result.. This frustrates the participants. *"It's like whoever was planning, whoever made draw the policy, it's like he never made or she never made enough research on what he or she is really supposed to be. Because you find out that that it is like instruction comes from up there, it comes and it comes, when it gets to the teacher, when it gets to a teacher, the teacher is frustrated. Who is suffering? The learner! Then I think that is why we don't have good results, because of this big confusion. And like I said previously, just to joke about it. That when we are like colleagues like I would say, if the minister wants to know how we want things (SA F1 P3)".*

### **5.2.3.3 Disabling factors within the school system**

Factors that have been reported as disabling teachers' self-efficacy from within the school system originated from the school management, a lack of support and resources, peer relations, parents and overcrowded classrooms. These will be discussed as sub-themes next.

#### **5.2.3.3.1 School management**

Most participants reported a need for acknowledgement, being valued and experiencing trust from the school management team. *"It's not easy to be a teacher. But at least if in the management of the school somebody will acknowledge if you put more effort into your work. But normally it is not the situation, under normal circumstances, in very few instances where you will find somebody acknowledging that at least I can see what you are doing (SB F2 P13)".*

*“I am also thinking about the school principals, they are sometimes the ones who can make us feel very bad to be teachers. If they could also be trained in how to work with people. Some of them are very good they can work very well with you but some of them are like they are coming from another planet. They expect what you don’t think is achievable in this life. So I think also principals, because I think they work with their own personalities, there is no specific training for them, as to how are you going to work with people, some of them will work with people as they are working with, with let’s say horses that are pulling a wagon. For they know each and every horse must be whipped so that they can pull very hard, so the training of the principals also, I think that is important how they manage the schools (SB F2 P2)”.*

An issue that was mentioned by most participants is the lack of knowledge that they felt the management of the school has regarding inclusive education. This made them negative towards implementation.

*“Most of the principals, most of the HODs (Head of Departments) don’t know what they are doing. You know with me I think we’re I have a problem at the subject level I must be able to be assisted by my HOD or at least by the principal if the HOD has a problem. But mostly in our South African schools there is nobody to assist you. You will research for yourself, and at the end of the day maybe you must go to the district, and it’s a little bit difficult to go there. And then you go around searching for other teachers who can assist you. And you know sometimes you just leave it, and say ai let me leave it. So it is very, very, very good to work with a person who’s knowledgeable. But they frustrate us these people who are not knowing what they are doing (SB F2 P4)”.*

A need for well-trained managers and leaders on inclusive education was mentioned by many participants. *“If I’m getting led by a leader who knows what he is doing and I know he is trained, I will feel more equipped in teaching with inclusion (SA F1 P6)”.*

A participant also felt that *“appointing someone (in management) “with a lack of knowledge” will feel intimidated by someone more knowledgeable. This makes her negative and increases her inclination to leave the school. “Let me say as an educator you know a lot of things, and you learn the person who doesn’t have that knowledge*

*that you have, and you try to help the leader, then the leader saw you are capable you are competent, you know more than him or her, then the attitude become negative towards you, wants to oppress you. So you become frustrated, you want to leave that place you want to go somewhere (SB F2 P3)”.*

The participants asserted that some seniors (School Management Team [SMT] as well as senior teachers) do not understand inclusion, but still tells them what to do. They seem to believe that this influences their effectiveness. *“Sometimes you may find in schools the appointment, some of the people who are looked up as our seniors, they don’t even understand what we are doing, they don’t understand what is inclusion, but they are the ones that will say you must follow this, and you want to say I see it this way. It really affect you effectiveness to be not good (SA F1 P2)”.*

A few participants added that the appointment of principals and Head of Departments (HOD) who seem incompetent, negatively influence the teachers self-efficacy because they lead them to less competence. *“To add to that one, also the appointment of our principals, our HODs, but you cannot appoint a person who was not competent when he was an HOD or an educator he was incompetent, so you appoint that person to lead the school. How can you appoint a blind person to lead the other ones who are not blind. So the appointment of some educators, some principals, and most of the principals and the managers, the HODs, deputies really makes me to feel as a teacher with no self-efficacy, cause you are leading to less competence than you have (SB F2 P3)”.*

One participant commented that she was more motivated when she came to her current school, because she had heard that the principal had a post-graduate qualification which made him more knowledgeable. *“I also want to add to that one, when I came to this school I heard that the principal was in a master degree training and because of that, I became very much happy that I am now going to work with a person who knows, because I’ve learned that working with a person who does not know, is a serious problem. It is a frustration to you as a teacher. I really don’t want to be led by a person who does not know”.*

Some of the participants commented that as a teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy you want things done correctly, but when they try to correct management, it leads to conflict. *“Sometime you see that person in management he is using this management style that is not right, or is I cannot say to that person you can use that style or give advice. But they criticize most of the time, but cannot take it when it comes to them. And if you are a self-efficacy educator you become frustrated, because you want things to be done correctly, and then it leads to conflict sometimes, you see (SB F2 P2)”*.

#### **5.2.3.3.2 Lack of support and resources**

The lack of support is stressed by most participants as making it very hard to implement inclusive education. *“Inclusion is very hard for us when we don’t get any support, it really makes your job very difficult we cannot do this on our own (SB F1 P3)”*.

The participants affirmed that they do not have psychologists and other human resources, as other schools have, which causes negativity towards inclusive education. *“And maybe one other thing that makes me to feel this negative about inclusion is about the lack of resources. Because I have seen school who have so many things like psychologies, human resources, which we don’t have at our school (SA F1 P1)”*.

Most participants reported that help from professionals such as doctors, nurses, psychologist and social workers had to be increased. They explained that inclusion policies require them to work with these helping professionals, but explained that there have to be more of these services available for learners as well as teachers. *“The policy says we must work with doctors and professionals to help us with the learners, but there must be more of these available to us for assistance with our job and our personal health (SB I6 P6)”*.

One participant expanded the idea that counselling services should not only be for learners, but also for teachers. *“Personal support like counselling, because we also need those things, not just the learner, sometimes we get sick and not get aware that we are sick and having in the education system or in the school maybe if there is a counsellor like maybe if I feel down I can approach that person. And knowing whatever I have shared with them is confidential (SA F2 P1)”*.

One participant explained that the current lack of support contributed to her sense of low self-efficacy as a teacher. *“I don’t have a word to describe it because to my mind if I am creating this picture with this picture of high self-efficacy then in that picture that person world is so colourful and beautiful, but the support that’s not there makes this picture dull (SA F2 P1)”*.

In addition to insufficient support, a lack of resources make the participants feel they cannot help learners who experience barriers to learning and then they feel incompetent and not motivated. *“I want to help learners who have barriers, but we don’t have the resources to assist them, I know I cannot help them and I feel so incompetent I’m not motivated then, ‘cause I know my arms are cut of (SA F1 P1)”*. The urgent need for enough resources was asserted by most of the participants. *“To assist all needs we have to have the supplies, materials and assets that they need, to help us help them (SA F2 P12)”*.

One participant illustrated the need for resources in her collage (cf. Figure 5.11). She stated in her collage that the *“successful inclusive classroom requires enough resources”*. She presented this in a picture of a teacher standing in the middle of the class, with diverse learners, enough space, books and bookshelves, tables and chairs and a learner in a wheelchair which portrayed the reality *“that there must be equipment for specific needs (SA C5 P5)”*.

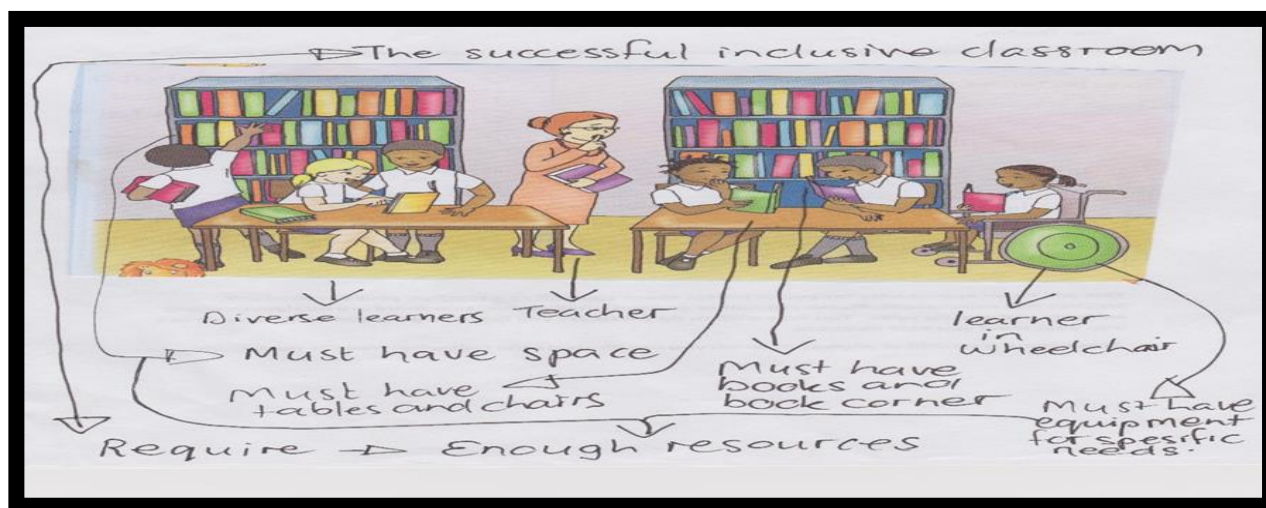


Figure 5.11: Collage A (SA C5 P5)

One participant explained that she had a learner with a sight problem due to a degenerative disease but she did not have resources such as braille learning material to help him. *“My most awful experience was this learner who could not see clearly and it was getting worse, then I contact the parents and they took him to the doctor at the clinic and he said that this eye doctor must look at it and then the eye doctor said he had a disease in his eyes that will lead to him being blind, and when this learner got to this point where he couldn’t see any more I did not have my lessons and books for braille, so I couldn’t help him (SB F2 P1)”*.

Most participants proclaimed that their school environments do not provide for learners with physical barriers, which increasingly have made their assistance more difficult. *“If you look at our school, we don’t have space for wheelchairs, even our learner’s bathrooms, there is no provision for a learner that cannot walk, no railways. I mean if you look at Oscar Pistorius that guy without legs that won the Paralympics, he had support, and he had artificial legs, that’s what made him reach his potential, how can they expect us to provide support if the learners are not even getting supported. This makes our task difficult (SB I9 P9)”*.

One participant added: *“We had a learner in our school who struggled to walk due to an accident, and I had to pick him up and carry him around, helping him to be mobile, but it made me so tired, because if only there were handles next to the toilet and in my classroom, it would have helped him and myself (SB F1 P5)”*.

#### **5.2.3.3.3 Peer relations**

Most participants reported that their colleagues who teach with them in the same school were on different paths regarding the implementation of inclusive education: *“With the school I don’t see that we are not on the same path. There are those who understand and mostly, they’re still puzzled and confused on how to implement inclusive education. And you know some other thing with their colleagues, some people don’t feel free to come and ask or to share ideas if they knew. Some people, you know, he or she decides to just go on with the wrong thing in their classroom (SA F1 P1)”*.

These different paths made the participants feel that they are working in isolation and creates a negative attitude and demotivation. One participant explained: *“A colleague working in isolation and functioning in his own world and who don’t share the common world philosophy belief with other teachers, it makes us negative discouraged (SA F2 P3)”*. Consequently, it was emphasised by most participants that: *“We have to realise that we need each other to be better teachers, to grow personally, to improve our education in South Africa and inclusion for all. You cannot just do it on your own (SA F2 P14)”*.

*“As a teacher I must play my cards openly not closed you are going to be there to share and gain knowledge and will make me mature as a teacher (SA F2 P3)”*.

Most participants agreed that teachers who collaborate with other teachers enhance their sense of self-efficacy, because they feel less isolated and more strongly supported. *“You will have more self-efficacy when you work with other teachers and become open to learning, realise that you cannot be perfect, be open to learning from others, and accept help from others, then you will feel less lonely and assisted (SA F2 P12)”*. A participant explained this process as realising that *“you cannot know everything”*, and need to ask for help: *“but there is this person who knows how to treat this aspect, especially you cannot be selfish for learners, you cannot.....just invite that person to come and help, tell him you problems (SA F1 P3)”*.

A lack of co-operation between colleagues increased demotivation and lessened passion for most of the participants. One participant explained this in an example where she attempted to arrange co-operative meetings to plan together but it seems that they were disinterested to attend. *“Maybe let’s say an example I’m here at school and at the time I arrive I just have this and in this time, I am so passionate of working together, finding solutions and then when I am saying let’s meet and then they say today we cannot meet, because of other meetings, then I understand and postpone and when again they say teacher a and b will not be there, because they are going to town or some other excuse, then it really makes demotivated (SA F2 P1)”*. Another participant added that *“when people are demotivated and disinterested to work together, not only demotivate you, but you also no longer going to be that passionate” (SA F2 P2)”*.

Many participants stated that opportunities had to be created where teachers could talk and interactively learn from one another. *“We should try and exchange ideas like with one another, then that can also help (SA F1 P2)”*.

One participant described these interactive opportunities as involving open discussions to identify strengths in one another, where they give and receive encouragement from other colleagues in order to develop themselves and others. *“Maybe I would response action exactly but the other thing is this as a person. I might have good things that I am doing but I am not aware of them. But if my colleagues can indicate and encourage me to keep it up and tell me I am doing good work and then I am going to feel that way, it is very important, because if I am saying it only to myself, in closed a walls, It’s not as effective. But it is very important for us to always strife drive to those good qualities install or identify in others, or good things we have to install especially in things for developing ourselves. So if we can share our ideas and sometimes sit around the table like this but we call it an open discussion tell me more about myself how do I see people and we must be honest with each other that is part of development (SA F2 P1)”*.

A few participants added that cooperation with other colleagues, in terms of planning and sharing personal experiences, would be developmental and enhance their self-efficacy. *“I am thinking about a development in our situation, thinking about a situation were different teachers sit together to do planning where they sit together to discuss assessment, where they sit together to discuss the problems that they are facing. I think whatever my colleagues experiencing, if she has told me about it when I experience it I would be more interested in that particular incidence that my friend has already experienced. So I am thinking that if we work together as teachers it will really make us to be very well in that relation and self-efficacy. I think if we work together from planning, teaching, and all those other things. I think it will help a lot (SB F2 P1)”*.

Negative responses from a colleague affected one participant to feel under-appreciated when she tried to help. *“I tried to help this one colleague, she was struggling with a learner that gave her a lot of problems, I gave her advice and I’ve noticed that she does*

*not appreciate my help, while I am really doing my best, she made me feel as if In talking nonsense (SA F2 P4)".*

Poor relationships and conflict situations with other colleagues cause tension and influences most of the participants' self-esteem. *"You know what frictions, I really don't like frictions, especially if you don't know how to handle them. The relations between some teachers are not good, and you can see it, also if you don't like someone in your work it makes tension. Maybe you came out with positive attitude and you then have a friction with this person or you see this is happening with others, your self-esteem and everything has just dropped immediately, and that's disturbing. And it can disturb you in so many ways. If you don't get along with people you work with (SA F1 P3)".*

More support from colleagues within the school was recommended by most of the participants as a means to enhance teachers' self-efficacy. *"I would think if we can have much more support from one another in the school and the principal, it would definitely give us self-efficacy (SA F1 P1)".* The participants explained that they felt *"motivated"*, *"confident"* and *"reassured"* when they received support from their fellow colleagues. *"If I get support from my colleagues, I feel like I have a backup, I can do things, I can make things happen, it helps me move forward"*. A participant described a supportive encouraging colleague as: *"Having that someone who praises a person in the sense of recognition and recognizing this particular person and can enhance this thing within her and when I am talking about praise it is not based on money and emotions but it is about recognizing the efforts that person is doing, that is what I am referring to (SA F2 P1)".* A few participants asserted that attitudes rub off and that positive colleagues will make others also feel positive *"Attitude is contagious it rubs off on you, If your co-workers are being positive you will also be, so in that way they can support you (SB F2 P9)".* The same was reported about the management of the school. *"If your leaders or your principal is positive about something, you will also have a positive attitude (SB F1 P4)".*

A participant added that more opportunities should be created for colleagues to talk to each other about their problems. *"We are giving and receiving support from our fellow teachers and principal, but I think this should happen more frequently and they should*

*make it like an event where you can talk about your personal problems and problems at work (SA F2 P10)*". All the participants agreed that *"there must be a support system in the school where we teachers can come together and share personal or stuff from the school (SA F2 P11)"*. One participant suggested that teacher support groups had to be created to provide the same supportive measures, such as substance-abuse support groups. *"They must have the same support groups as they have for the alcoholic people, I mean a situation where we can empathise with each other (SA I2 P2)"*.

A few participants further explained how support from colleagues could help them to experience less stress and help alleviate the burden. *"It is better to open up to someone, like if you maybe have trouble at home and you are here at work, you spend most of your time here and if you have somebody like the colleagues when you cough out the thing that is given you problems and if you talk then you discuss the thing now rather better and it is not going to be a burden anymore you can go home after school and feel a little bit okay (SA F2 P4)"*.

#### **5.2.3.3.4 Parents**

Parental involvement clearly stood out as a problem. *"We really need the parents to be part of the learners' education (SB I6 P6)"*. Most participants asserted that parents are uninvolved and do not attend parent meetings. *"That's the other thing. With parents I'm so glad that the department of education took it further that they need to involve parents. I don't know why but they are still not giving us their participation (SA F1 P3)"*.

*"The parents they just don't show up in meetings (SB F1 P2)"*.

One participant explained that most parents did not even give their cooperation when they were personally contacted or invited. *"Hey, with that one that you, let me tell you the honest truth, even with learners who have been identified as those who need to be contained because of the problems that they have been experiencing. The very same parents of the same learner don't turn up. You struggle just to get their signature, you visit them at home, and they will tell you that they are coming tomorrow, they didn't turn up. What is it that you are doing, when the district is here they want the parents to be*

*informed, you take up a letter, it is the letter where you invite the parent, the parent didn't come, next time, this is the letter that I have given to the parents, they didn't come, I phoned, I went out there personally. And when you get there you see even the parents self are so ignorant. I have just dumped the child, the teacher will see to finish (SB F1 P1)".*

Most participants affirmed that parents who attend teacher parent meetings, were the parents of learners who performed well in their schoolwork, instead of those who really needed more support. *"When you make a parent meeting, only the parents of those learners who are performing will come to the meeting. Those who you need they don't come, it is a serious problem (SB F1 P1)".*

Parents who are not involved, *"not giving their side of the deal, or not doing their side of the deal"*, make most of the teachers feel frustrated. *"And we become frustrated also because most of our parents they are distant they must be involved in their children education they are not, they are not (SB F2 P1)".*

Most participants reported that the lack of support from parents, as well as *"uneducated and illiterate"* parents, make teachers feel that it adds a heavy load on them and this makes them negative about inclusive education. *"And secondly maybe one other thing that made me feel negative about inclusion is because the lack of support of the parents. You do certain things with them, and because they having intellectual problem, and at home parents are also uneducated tomorrow they are lost and you are also going work with them. So I am a little bit frustrated (SA F1 P1)".*

One participant added the following: *"Sometimes we have problems when parents are illiterate they don't know how to assist the learners, then the learning of those learners takes mostly place at school, which places a heavy load on us (SB F2 P2)".*

However, one participant asserted that parents should not be afraid if they were illiterate, they should be made aware that teachers would help them too. *"If the parents can just know that even if they don't understand the work or have not gone to school themselves, they can still come and ask us, we will give advice, not judge (SB F1 P2)".*

Participants mostly felt that the parents were viewing them as enemies. *“We have these negative parents, who don’t support learners. And I don’t know why they take us as enemies (SA F1 P1)”*.

A participant expressed his need for gratitude from the parents. *“Also the parents, if the parents are just silent and not say anything it is also bad. At least if the parents can come and say that I have seen that my child are struggling with this but I can see the difference, that will make me work more (SB F2 P3)”*.

A negative attitude of parents towards teachers was experienced by most participants. The participants indicated that the parents state that teaching is the teachers’ responsibility and not theirs. This is then reiterated by the learners. One participant expanded on this: *“One parent said that she is your teacher, she has to do her work, it’s her work not mine. I am not here to teach she should do it. You see the attitude. And the learner will come back to you a teacher and tell you exactly, like the mother or father told, said it like he said it (SA F1 P3)”*.

Another participant added: *“Because in meetings, if they show up, they are told what to do, and then if you have a parent that must come to you and you need help, and the parents say I am not paid for that, you are the educator so do your job. You see that can frustrate us. Sometimes I feel pity for a poor kid, because I know I must do something with this child’s future (SB F2 P1)”*.

According to most participants, a lack of parental collaboration causes learners to take advantage at school because they get away with things at home: *“And if they don’t want to work along with us, learners will take advantage, especially learners that know they don’t perform well. If he does something at school he knows at home I will get away with it, nobody cares at home, so we need to involve parents as much as we can, to know what are their expectations for their children at the schools (SA F1 P3)”*.

Many participants reported that many parents leave their children with caretakers (such as grandparents). These caretakers cannot help the learners, making it more difficult for teachers to support these learners. *“Let me just say something of note, in our community you find that my daughter has left her children at the grandmother and the*

*one who is responsible is staying somewhere or is married somewhere, I have to bring the children up, when the school start I have to come to school, I am old, I can't go to school, they give the child homework, there is nobody to help him you will say you go next door they will help you, I know nothing about this maths and what, so it is very difficult, so what you are dealing with are learners whose mother or whose parents are not staying with them, most of our children. When you do see them coming here, coming to fill those forms. Grannies are coming here, some of their parents are dead, and they are orphans. So find that the grannie comes here to come and fill the form. So where are you as a teacher there? It is very difficult, even when you say you have to go and tell your mother, that child will say I am staying with my grandmother, so what am you going to say to a grandma? It is very difficult (SB F1 P2)".*

A lack of acknowledgement from parents that their children are struggling is experienced by most participants. *"Also the parents, most of the parents are just silent and not say anything it is also bad. At least if the parents can come and say that I have seen that my child are struggling with this but I can see the difference, that will make me work more (SB F2 P3)".*

One participant declared that teachers need to know what parents are expecting for their children, but they also should explain to them how to support teachers and learners at home. *"We need to involve parents as much as we can, to know what are their expectations for their children at the schools, even have a meeting with them, whereby they are explained to on how to support teachers, how to support their learners, their kids. They need to see that whatever we are doing at school, a learner can do at home, actually whatever I as a teacher at school, he or she can also help at home. But it won't be at the same level (SA F1 P3)".*

*"The parents must help with the homework we give to the learners or just make sure that the child is doing it, we cannot do it all alone, that parents should know that they are just important as us in the education process of their children (SB F1 P3)".*

Many participants emphasised that parents must be persuaded to assist with the learners who experience barriers to learning. *"Our parents must be persuaded to assist*

*us with learner's barriers, that will make our task easier, and I think this will make my self-efficacy better, cause I will then know I am not alone in this thing, but I have help (SA F1 P6)".*

*"They must be made aware that we are all in the same boat working together flowing towards their child's future (SB F2 P8)".*

One participant added that a working relationship between parents and teachers will influence learners' self-esteem positively and this will consequently alleviate problems for teachers. *"If the parents know the school has been teaching, and also their own expectation and how we are going to combine this to realise the vision of our institution. I think that in itself, if there is that working relationship between the educators and the parents, it also, it is going to influence the children self-esteem to say if I don't know my work I know my parent is going to be here and the teachers will tell them and that means it also makes the learner to be, to be positive. About their work. And if they are positive about their work it is also alleviating the problem for the teacher, to work harmoniously with them, because there will be a lack of stress (SB F1 P1)".*

A participant added that even a small amount of help would make a difference: *"The parents should know, that even the slightest contribution or aid can help us to improve their child's education, I'm not talking about giving money, I know that most parents are struggling financially, but just be there for a meeting or if I ask you to come (SA F2 P9)".*

#### **5.2.3.3.5 Overcrowded classrooms**

Overcrowded classes have been asserted as a major cause of adding to the participants feeling ineffective, because they cannot give attention to all the learners. *"Eh, I think the other problems we are facing as teacher is the ratio, the learner ratio between the teachers, you find that in some classes it is 1 is to 60, the teacher has to teach 60 learners in one class so that is impossible to give your full notice to all and it's also a factor that is contributing maybe a lack of our effectiveness (SB F1 P2)".*

Addressing specific learning needs, such as language diversity, was also mentioned by many participants as difficult to deal with. *"Sometimes these learners are the immigrant*

learners. So the child comes to your school you notice home language South Sotho, and then that child is from Mozambique or Swaziland speaking English, so as an educator you become frustrated and had a lot of work because we have to speak two languages. You have to translate for a child you have to attend to the child as an individual. So you have to help the child to understand the language. And also you having a big class with 60 learners in your class, you see (SB F2 P4)”.

Large classroom numbers made some participants feel as barriers themselves, especially to those learners who tend to learn faster. “And the other challenge is large classes like in the Grade one, you are not able to reach each learners and give individual time and then help those who are in more need, because you get learners who are must faster so you turn to neglect them and by neglecting them you will become a barrier to them a barrier so if there is a few who can work faster, work with them. Let say I am having 42 learners in my class but I would say to you although they are not intelligent, but there are those who are faster to do the tasks so when preparing I am preparing for the faster one, the middle one and the slower ones, but when you present a lesson it is a blanket lesson for them and when we are giving them the tasks, the faster ones complete the task immediately so I became a barrier by not delegating more routines to them maybe giving them more activities because my focus is on those that is slower, I’ve got a large group of learners who has slow ability so I focused on helping them, I turned a blind eye to those that are fast, hence I’m saying so sometimes I am the barrier to them (SA F2 P2)”.

One participant added that overpopulated classes contributed to teachers being negative towards inclusion. “I think what makes me feel bad about inclusion is mostly the problem of big classes, to meet a group a whole lot of a group of people about 40 something sometimes 45 up to 50 learner’s needs and for this you have to try to understand each and every one of them, it is just unreachable, some of them gets less attention (SB F2 P3)”.

Many participants also indicated that they feel less in control in overcrowded classes and have difficulty in managing discipline. “Sometimes I don’t even feel like the teacher, because they don’t listen to me and they are so many learners in front of me, I’m

*struggling to let them behave in the correct way, if they are that much, they rule me (SA I2 P2)*”.

#### **5.2.3.4 Other discouraging external factors**

External factors that discouraged teachers’ self-efficacy that were identified included influences such as the media and disrespect and false perceptions by society.

##### **5.2.3.4.1 Negative influences from the media**

Negative comments from the media instead of recognising the important contributions of teachers’ work and effort, demotivated the participants. *“Sometime the media always criticises teachers, when they talk about the negative things about the teachers, how, they make it on the front page, and so they are demotivating us as educators. So most of the time they don’t show the quality things, they always show negative things that have been done by the teachers, the quality one is always at the back, they are hiding, but the good ones, ah the bad ones, so when you look at the media always it see negative things about the teacher, you become demotivated so we need positive affirmation (SB F1 P3)*”.

Many participants asserted that the media creates a misleading impression of teachers and this makes them feel under-appreciated. *“Why don’t they say that a teacher does so much, but no they only say what we are doing wrong. It’s unfortunate, we feel so under-appreciated. No one makes them aware of that we really putting out there very much and in fact we deliver so much more anyway, sometimes you don’t even realise how much you are really giving (SA F1 P3)*”.

*“The media always criticises teachers, when they talk about the negative things about the teachers, how, they make it on the front page, and so they are demotivating us as educators. So most of the time they don’t show the quality things, they always show negative things that have been done by the teachers, the quality one is always at the back, they are hiding, but the good ones, ah the bad ones, air so when you look at the media always it see negative things about the teacher, you become demotivated so we need positive affirmation (SB F1 P3)*”.

A need for positive affirmation instead of destructive criticism from the media was therefore proclaimed by most participants. This would enhance their self-efficacy. A participant asserted that: *“they should make statements that boost our image like, that teacher did this and this good or he helped that struggling learner, they must report the truth about what teachers are really putting out there (SA F2 P9)”*.

Another participant added: *“And if the educators are more boosted by the media, the teachers can get that respect. Educators were respected by the community, children and our country. If that can come back that also enhances a teacher self-efficacy (SB F2 P3)”*.

#### **5.2.3.4.2 Disrespect and false perceptions by society**

Fallacious perceptions by society about teachers such as *“teaching is an easy course or a half day job”* demoralize the participants and make them feel as if they are *“not trusted and respected by the community, learners or country (SB F2 P4)”*.

The following participants stated that: *“it is like our profession is nothing (SB F2 P3)”*, *why can't they change their perception of teachers and realise that it is a full time, 24 hour job, because you always take work home (SB F2 P1)”*.

*“We have to be respected, because we are not and it discourages us and the very same learners that we are teaching, in thinking “I don't want to be a teacher; they don't even have money or respect”. It's like you are nothing. You are just there, teachers has lost that thing that dignity (SA F1 P3)”*.

One participant reported that she feels teachers are unfairly blamed by society for everything that is going wrong with education, instead of looking at the system itself. *“No one look at system only at teachers and expect results: “I never heard of someone say no, no, no let's look at the system, how the system work. How does the system work with the teachers? Hehe nobody. Nobody say it like it. It's unfortunate” (SA F1 P3)”*.

It was emphasised by most participants that society has an inaccurate perception that teachers make all the decisions about education since they are the ones working

directly with the learners. “*Society thinks that we are make all the decisions, because we are facing learners directly and the parents will blame us, the community will blame us, everyone will blame us, because we are teachers we are there with the final product (SA F1 P1)*”.

### **5.3 INTEGRATED DISCUSSION**

It is evident from the data collected that teachers’ self-efficacy can be conceptualized and associated with certain traits and skills. The participants have also mentioned factors within themselves, as well as contextual ecosystemic factors that are currently enabling and disabling their sense of self-efficacy. These issues will be discussed in this section. The findings of the first phase’s secondary data will also be incorporated in the discussion. At the end of the discussion key factors, as identified by the literature and the participants, that will impact on the development of recommendations for teachers, schools, as well as the DBE to enhance teachers’ self-efficacy to function more optimally in an inclusive education environment, will be highlighted.

#### **5.3.1 Defining teacher self-efficacy**

The participants of this study conceptualised their own understanding of teacher self-efficacy as a self-developmental or self-growth process towards teacher effectiveness, as well as being motivated to realise one’s teaching potential (*cf.* 5.2.1.1). Self-efficacy was also described by the participants as being based on a person’s experiences and understanding of oneself within their working environment, including a perception of their abilities with regard to educative approaches; their sense of control of their classroom and how they believe they can influence and involve their learners. Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy were also seen as more persistent at a task (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1), taking more risks, open to new teaching strategies and are more likely to use innovative elements in their teaching (*cf.* 2.3.2.1; Gavora 2010:19). It is believed by the participants that this steers to a more positive self-concept and improved self-confidence (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1). Klassen and Chiu (2010:741; *cf.* 2.2) confirm that teachers’ self-efficacy can be considered as a teacher’s personal belief in their own confidence in teaching capabilities within three key classroom domains: implementing instructional

strategies, managing learners' behaviours, and engaging learners in the learning process.

A key factor identified from the findings is that, since self-efficacy was also viewed as a feeling of self-worth, it influences the participants' job satisfaction. The literature relates teacher self-efficacy to increased job satisfaction (*cf.* 2.4.2; Hanif, 2004:154; Caprara *et al.*, 2003). Hanif (2004) and Caprara *et al.* (2003) affirm that self-efficacy is an important contributor to teachers' job satisfaction, because it influences their attitudes towards their job as well as their job performance. Klassen and Chiu (2010:747) found in their research that there is a definite relation between teacher self-efficacy, job satisfaction and job stress. Low self-efficacy is associated with high stress levels and burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007:624), because the lower the belief in capability is, the higher the stress levels are. This leads to increased levels of feelings of incompetence and inability to cope with certain demands such as, for example, not feeling able to support a learner with a severe barrier to learning and development, which could result in more serious consequences, such as emotional burnout and exhaustion (*cf.* 2.4.2). The findings of the secondary data, obtained from the first phase of the project within which this study is conducted, indicated that although the principle of human rights influences South African teachers to believe that learners with disabilities should be included in the mainstream, the practicality thereof concerns them (Malinen *et al.* 2013: Savolainen *et al.* 2012).

Low teacher self-efficacy was depicted by the participants as involving high levels of stress, emotional exhaustion, unhappiness, negative attitudes towards inclusive education, as well as a lack of confidence, motivation, purpose and meaning with added feelings of isolation and confusion due to a lack of knowledge and support (*cf.* 5.2.1.1.4). These feelings can be associated with having a low self-esteem, which results from harbouring pessimistic thoughts about accomplishments and personal development (*cf.* 2.4.2; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008).

The participants believed that teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy are more relaxed, happy, positive, self-confident, motivated, inspired, satisfied, they feel

supported and are less confused (*cf.* 2.3.3; 5.2.1.1.4). These findings are supported by various studies, which indicate that teachers with high self-efficacy experience less stress, because they are able to cope better with stressful situations, they feel more confident in their abilities as teachers and find meaning in their jobs. They are therefore more motivated, inspired by and satisfied with their jobs as teachers (Barker *et al.*, 2008; Walker & Frimer, 2008; Grencer & Cakiroglu, 2007; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007; Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). Ross and Bruce (2007) assert that because of reduced stress levels and better coping skills, teacher are less likely to experience burnout.

A positive attitude was reiterated by participants as an essential characteristic of high self-efficacy (*cf.* 5.2.1.2.1). Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) as well as Gorozidis and Papaioannou (2011:251) affirm that high teacher self-efficacy is associated with a positive attitude. Positive teachers exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching, have greater commitment to teaching and are more likely to remain in the teaching profession (*cf.* 2.4.1; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). There is also evidence in the literature that suggests that teacher attitudes are a decisive factor in determining the success of inclusive education programmes and the philosophy of inclusion (*cf.* 3.5.3; Nel *et al.*, 2013; Jerlinder *et al.*, 2010). In the first phase of this study, it was found that South African teachers' attitudes are positive towards the rights of learners with disabilities being in the mainstream in general, but are more critical when it is expected of them to teach these learners (Malinen *et al.* 2013; Savolainen *et al.* 2012).

The participants also regarded highly efficient teachers as being role models to society, learners and other colleagues and were encouraged when their efficient teaching behaviour reflected in learners' performance (*cf.* 5.2.1.2.3). Research has found that teachers' efficacy beliefs not only have a considerable influence on their instructional practices and classroom behaviour, but also have formative effects on their learners' achievements and motivation (*cf.* 2.4.2; Siebert, 2006; Goddard *et al.*, 2004; Shaughnessy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Gavora (2010:19) explained that teachers with high self-efficacy are easily identified by certain teaching actions such as the use of more open-ended questions, inquiry methods, or small group

learning activities for learners. Teachers with high self-efficacy are also more open to new ideas, more willing to adopt innovations, support learners' autonomy to a greater extent, and are more attentive to learners with lower abilities (Brouwers & Tomic, 2003; Henson, 2001; Ross & Bruce, 2007). Gavora (2010:19) asserted that teacher self-efficacy has been found to be consistently related to positive teaching behaviour and strong learner achievement, and therefore learners learn more from teachers who have a high sense of self-efficacy.

The participants mentioned that a teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy have intra-personal skills which are essential for them to feel self-efficient. These skills included self-regulation, self-confidence, a positive self-concept, self-understanding, self-reflection, self-motivation, personal goal setting, and an internal locus of control, persistence and emotional intelligence (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1). Literature affirms that teachers with high self-efficacy are able to regulate him/herself in terms of setting reachable goals, being self-driven in moving forward to achieve their goals and feeling in control of a situation (*cf.* 2.4.2; Ziegler *et al.*, 2011; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2008; Winne & Hadwin, 2008; Ormrod, 2006; Matthews, 2007; Boekaerts & Corno, 2005).

Having emotional intelligence, by being able to regulate emotions, was named by participants as an important skill to become self-efficient (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1). Researchers who have investigated the relationship between pre-service and in-service teachers' emotional intelligence and their self-efficacy beliefs (e.g. Sarkhosh & Rezaee, 2013; Moafian & Ghanizadeh, 2009; Rastegar & Memarpour, 2009; Fabio & Palazzeschi, 2008; Penrose *et al.*, 2007; Chan, 2004) have reported a strong relationship between these two aspects. Bar-On (2006:14) defines emotional intelligence as a type of intelligence that involves the ability to be sensitive to one's own feelings and those of others, to be in control of oneself, to motivate oneself and influence others, as well as to manage emotions effectively; moreover, it can be developed to promote emotional, intellectual, and professional growth (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1).

Confidence in one's abilities to be an effective teacher has been asserted by the participants as essential in having a high sense of self-efficacy (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1). Research

confirms a correlation between self-confidence and teachers' self-efficacy (*cf.* 2.4.3.2; Alias & Hafir, 2009:6). Self-confidence is an individual's characteristic (a self-construct) which enables a person to have a positive or realistic view of themselves or situations that they are in (Bandura, 2006). It refers to a person's expectation of his or her ability to achieve a goal in a given situation and is a very influential factor in ensuring that a person's potential is realised (Stevens, 2005). In other words, persons with high self-confidence have a realistic view of themselves and their capability, which helps them to persist in their endeavours (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1). According to Neill (2005), self-esteem and self-efficacy in combination are the qualities that constitute self-confidence. Neill (2005) defines self-esteem as a general feeling of self-worth or self-value. A person with low self-esteem believes that he or she is worthless or inadequate while a person who has high self-esteem believes otherwise. Self-efficacy, on the other hand, is the belief in one's capacity to succeed at tasks resulting in feeling more confident (Dimopoulou, 2012:509). The participants described a teacher with high self-efficacy as being confident in his or her actions, effective in planning, better capable to solve problems and who will consequently experience lower levels of stress (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1). This also includes confidence in the ability to influence learners' performance positively.

Critical self-reflection skills were mentioned by the participants as a way of improving intrapersonal skills and development, as well as to learn from their experiences. They believe that this could enhance their sense of self-efficacy (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.1.1). Opportunities where teachers can do personal exercises such as introspection and self-reflection cultivate a stronger sense of self-efficacy (*cf.* 2.3.2.3; 2.4.3.1; Loughran, 2002; Larrivee, 2000). Reflection, as part of introspection, is a vital process of learning from experience that allows a teacher to evolve through learning from past experiences (Paterson & Chapman, 2013). Reflection on professional practice is therefore a core quality of effective teachers (Frick *et al.*, 2010; Wilson & Demetriou, 2007; Bezzina, 2006; Seferoğlu, 2006). Participants who participated in the collage activity, which was a form of critical self-reflection, reflected on their experiences and proposed that the same kind of opportunities must be given for all teachers to reflect on themselves. They deemed that this process made them aware of their skills, their contribution to teaching

and helped them to examine their thoughts on how inclusive education can be improved (*cf.* 2.3.2.3).

Inter-personal skills are required for teachers to experience a high sense of self-efficacy, according to the participants (*cf.* 5.2.1.3.2). These skills include effective problem-solving, cooperation and communication, planning and organizing, adaptation to change and being a good leader. The literature supports the importance of these interpersonal skills to experience a high sense of self-efficacy (*cf.* 2.4.3.1; 2.3.3; Erozkán, 2013; Royston, 2013; Bangs & Frost, 2012; Koçođlu, 2011; Scheerens, 2010; Jarošová *et al.*, 2007). Specifically, it has been found that individuals who can more easily adapt to change, who perceive themselves as competent in problem-solving and communication are more extraverted, positive, and have a positive self-perception in interpersonal relationships (Çam & Tümkeya, 2007; D'Zurilla & Nezu, 2007). Results of some studies have also indicated that having effective problem-solving skills improved communication skills (Meador, 2015; Erozkán, 2013; Jarošová *et al.*, 2007; Smith & Guarino, 2005). Being a good leader entails taking responsibility, as well as being able to plan and organise efficiently (Lappalainen, 2015) which were asserted by the participants.

It is obvious from the above discussion that both the participants, as well as the literature, view teacher self-efficacy as a complex concept with a range of facets. In the challenging environment of an inclusive full-service school (*cf.* 3.5.2) this seems to be even a more intricate concept to fully describe and understand. It is therefore important that in providing recommendations for teachers, schools and the DBE, for the purpose of developing and enhancing a sense of self-efficacy, these facets cannot be regarded as loose entities, but as integrated characteristics.

### **5.3.2 Enabling factors influencing teachers' self-efficacy**

The factors discussed in this section can all be classified under the microsystem (*cf.* 3.2.3.3.1) of Bronfenbrenner's (1986; 1979; 1977) bio-ecological system, since it entails

direct interaction between the participants and certain factors that impact on their sense of self-efficacy.

The participants of this study identified some contextual factors from within the school environment such as learning through exposure (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.1), positive influences of others in the school (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.2) and successful teaching strategies within the classroom (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.3) as currently enabling their sense of teacher self-efficacy.

The participants asserted that they learn by being exposed to different difficult situations in their classrooms and then by dealing with them effectively (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.1). Peebles and Mendaglio (2014:250) affirm that it seems that when teachers are forced to face difficulties and they actually learn from the experience, it increases their knowledge which contributes to teacher efficacy, job satisfaction and motivation. In full-service schools, teachers are currently facing challenges such as addressing a diverse range of barriers to learning and development in one classroom (*cf.* 3.5.2; Oswald & Swart, 2011; Engelbrecht, 2006). Research has shown that by being forced to deal with this diversity of needs, teachers' preparedness for teaching in inclusive classrooms seemed to have increased. It emerged that the more exposed they became through this obligatory experience, the more they learned how to approach and accommodate diverse needs better (Burton & Pace, 2009; Forlin *et al.*, 2009; Jung, 2007, Voss & Bufkin, 2011). One of the major findings of the first phase (Malinen *et al.* 2013; Savolainen *et al.* 2012) was that experience in teaching learners with disabilities is a strong indicator for enhancing a positive sense of self-efficacy. This is called a mastery experience and can be presumed to be the strongest source of self-efficacy evaluations (*cf.* 2.3.2.2.1.; Bandura, 1997).

Positive influences of others (such as the principal, other colleagues, parents and learners) from within their current school environment, make participants feel more appreciated (*cf.* 5.2.2.3.2) and seemed to enhance the participants' sense of self-efficacy (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.2; (*cf.* 2.3.2.2.3; 2.4.3.1). Being acknowledged, valued and trusted by teacher colleagues, the learners and the parents, were expressed as a sincere desire by participants. Ting and Yeh (2013) found that teachers who receive gratitude

from learners, parents and colleagues made them feel appreciated, respected and reliable and had positive effects on teachers' feelings of being trusted, as well as more satisfied with and committed to their work.

The important role that principals play with regard to the effective implementation of inclusive education was emphasised by the participants. This included an openness towards inclusive education and making provision for training opportunities. Feeling trusted and appreciated by the principal by acknowledging their work and effort by always thanking them, and giving constructive feedback, increased the participants' confidence and motivation to implement inclusive education. The literature verifies that open-minded principals with friendly, relaxed, attentive, impartial, supportive behaviour, being better communicators and people who value their teachers contribute to greater teacher satisfaction and motivation (Jošanov-Vrgović, 2012; Cerit, 2009; Sharma & Jyoti, 2006; Mehrotra, 2005).

Teachers' self-efficacy was reported to be positively influenced by other teacher colleagues within the same school, because of the inspiration and support they provide (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.2). Teachers can experience greater personal satisfaction and higher beliefs in their own efficacy when they have strong collegial relationships in which they are supported (*cf.* 2.3.2.2.2.; 2.3.2.2.3; Thomas-McClure, 2008). Inspiration from other colleagues positively influences teachers' self-efficacy, because it helps to facilitate a stronger commitment towards one another (Ghamrawi, 2011). Support from other colleagues within the same school also seems to play a role in heightening motivation and increasing persistence (*cf.* 2.3). The participants mentioned that by being motivated by other colleagues has helped them to persevere, instead of retiring as teachers. Ghamrawi (2011) agrees that motivation from and between colleagues, increases their will to persist. Colleagues who share successful teaching experiences regarding inclusive education, appears to create a learning opportunity for other teachers. The participants reported that this kind of sharing allowed them to gain more knowledge on certain inclusive matters. Chong and Kong, (2012) support the idea that the collective sharing between teachers in the same school, subject, or grade bring about greater learning opportunities. Gavora (2010) adds that teachers can learn from other teachers

through vicarious experience, by observing the successes of other teachers (*cf.* 2.4.3.2).

The involvement of parents, or the lack thereof, was a crucial issue mentioned by the participants in enhancing their sense of self-efficacy. They emphasised that the support of parents leads to positive learner behaviour such as better participation and being more disciplined which, in the end, improved the learners' learning (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.2). Olsen and Fuller (2010), as well as Patrikakou (2008:2), confirm that learners whose parents are involved in their learning do better at school, both academically and behaviourally, and this can therefore be beneficial to teachers in terms of completing tasks successfully (*cf.* 3.5.1.2.3.1).

Positive learner behaviour towards teachers is mentioned by the participants as constructively influencing teachers' self-efficacy (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.2). This includes behaviour such as positive acknowledgement of and reaction to teaching. The participants were also encouraged when learners trusted them by sharing personal problems, or when the learners improved or developed academically, because of their input. Al-Alwan and Mahasneh (2014) explain that teachers with high self-efficacy believe in their learners and this, in turn, is reflected in learners' behaviour towards them. The same authors state that learners who feel connected to their teachers are more likely to commit themselves to the learning process and exhibit more positive behaviour and attitudes towards them (Al-Alwan & Mahasneh, 2014). Aguilar (2014) affirms that when learners acknowledge teachers' efforts, it helps them to feel noticed and this contributes to a feeling of having a purposeful impact on learners. Positive teacher-learner relationships result in a high degree of closeness, trust and support in the classroom, which creates reciprocal trust (Rimm- Kaufman, 2015). When learners achieve their academic goals because of the participants' input, it seemed to have contributed to the participants' feeling of making a difference and having an enhanced belief in their teaching abilities. This results in elevating meaning and confidence in teachers, which increases a sense of self-efficacy (*cf.* 2.3.3; Cavora, 2010: 2-3). This confirms findings of the secondary data that South African teachers' belief in their ability to effectively handle behaviour has

a positive effect on their sense of self-efficacy (Malinen *et al.* 2013; Savolainen *et al.* 2012).

The participants shared certain successful teaching strategies within the classroom that had proved to be successful and were currently enabling their teacher self-efficacy (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.3; 2.3.3). Efficacy in instruction (i.e. teaching strategies) was identified as a key predictor of enhancing a sense of self-efficacy in the secondary data (Malinen *et al.* 2013; Savolainen *et al.* 2012). Teaching with rules and discipline made the participants feel in control of the class and capable of teaching effectively. Eggen and Kauchak (2010) agree that it is essential for teachers to keep a classroom orderly and focused on learning, with specific regulations and order. This will make learners feel physically and emotionally safe. When daily routines, constructive learning activities, and standards for appropriate behaviour are all designed to encourage and stimulate learning, it will also contribute to teacher empowerment and effectivity (Moore & Hansen, 2012).

The participants also mentioned the use of interactive and reflective teaching strategies as being effective in increasing learners' learning and consequently their sense of self-efficacy. Interaction has been described by the participants as the way in which teachers behave towards learners by listening and talking to them. Zakrzewski (2012), is of the opinion that a teacher who actively listens to his/her learners, through listening for meaning from what emerges from what the learners are saying, and then checks in with them to make sure they have understood properly, affirms learners' dignity and helps develop a trusting relationship between teachers and learners. DuNeen (2013) also asserts that successful teachers take time to reflect on their methods, their delivery, and the way they connect with their learners, during teaching.

Planning for a diversity of need requires effort (Horne & Timmons, 2009:280). Participants expounded that during their planning they visualised individual learners and then adjusted teaching methods according to the learners' needs. This helped them to deal with specific needs successfully and increased their confidence. Moore and Hansen (2012) agree that by making use of visualization and planning for the best potential of learners, can increase teaching effectively. They explain that careful

planning entails preparing for differentiated instruction for learners with diverse needs and customising their instructional delivery to address the needs of all learners. This will ensure that all learners participate in high-interest educational activities that are personally relevant to them.

Personal factors (*cf.* 5.2.2.2) such as own personal effort (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.1), personal background experience (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.2), religious views (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.3), significant others (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.4) and positive views on inclusive education (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.5), were reported by the participants as currently enabling teachers' sense of self-efficacy.

To effect inclusive education, teachers are expected to pursue their own continuous personal, academic, occupational and professional growth (Krüger *et al.*, 2011). Teachers, who adhere to this requirement, and take responsibility for their own training through their own personal input such as self-directed learning, experience a higher sense of teacher self-efficacy (*cf.* 2.3.3). It seems, from the findings, that the participants realised that to solve their problems, when dealing with a diversity of needs, they needed to take control over their own learning, instead of waiting to be trained. Rossouw (2009) considers the ability to solve problems in the classroom as a characteristic of expert teachers. He explains that teachers, who interpret classroom activities critically, to identify and solve problems regarding their teaching practice, and make thoughtful or reflective instructional and classroom management decisions that are conducive to learning, will be more effective. The participants who made a personal effort through self-discovery and interaction with colleagues proclaimed that they gained more knowledge on how to teach and support learners who experience barriers to learning. The actions they took include asking questions, doing introspection and also reflecting with others after a workshop. Questioning others is a great way to expose oneself to new ideas and perspectives as well as doing introspection about your own ability, knowledge and skills (*cf.* 2.4.3.1; 3.5.1.2.4.1; Rasmussen, 2014; McKay, 2007: 2). Rossouw (2009) refers to this as using reflective thinking through interactive learning.

The participants' background experiences (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.2) such as being personally exposed to persons with disabilities, resulted in impacting on them being able to understand and deal with barriers to learning in the inclusive classroom better. It increased their interest and passion and have helped to be more open towards inclusive education (*cf.* 3.5.3). Subban (2005) declares that direct experiences to teaching learners with disabilities in mainstream settings appear to be an essential factor in shaping teachers' views of inclusive settings (*cf.* 3.5.3). This has also been an important finding in the secondary data of the first phase of the research project that this study originates from (Malinen *et al.* 2013; Savolainen *et al.* 2012).

Participants' personal religious views (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.3) seemed to have aided them in finding meaning in the teaching profession, which resulted in forming a stronger sense of commitment and feeling spiritually supported. They believe that daily prayer and faith supports them in their jobs as teachers. Religion has been associated with happiness for many reasons, according to Borchard (2010), such as having a purpose, meaning in life, a devotion to people or goals that are larger than themselves. It also provides essential social support. He further explains that some religions might increase subjective well-being in the sense that they provide optimism and hope for a better life and afterlife (Borchard, 2010).

Support from the participants' significant others (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.4) such as spouses, siblings and children were avowed as motivating and supporting them. When they share problems with these significant others, whom they trust, the burdens seem lighter and the problems seem less of a concern for them (*cf.* 3.5.1.2.3.1; Bosch, 2015). The love of their own children was especially mentioned as motivating them to persist as teachers. Stumpfenhorst (2011), contends that by being a parent themselves makes a person a better teacher.

It was evident from the findings that even though the participants are frustrated and sometimes feel demotivated, they still have positive views about inclusive education (*cf.* 5.2.2.2.5). They are willing to implement it, because of the advantages such as equal treatment and quality education it holds for learners (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011; Thi Nguyet

& Thu Ha, 2010) and urged them to look again at their current practices in accommodating all learners (Subban, 2005). These kinds of positive views seem to enable the participants' sense of self-efficacy. However, the more teachers believe they are able to implement inclusive practices on a concrete and pragmatic level, the more positive their attitudes towards inclusion will become (*cf.* 3.5.3; Savolainen *et al.*, 2011).

The participants stated that reinforcing external factors (*cf.* 5.2.2.3), such as current rewarding opportunities (*cf.* 5.2.2.3.1), feeling appreciated by others in the school environment (*cf.* 5.2.2.3.2) and training (*cf.* 5.2.2.3.3), invigorate their sense of teacher self-efficacy.

Positive feedback from external rewarding opportunities (*cf.* 5.2.2.3.1) for teachers, such as competitions, was asserted as important for the participants to feel self-efficient (*cf.* 2.4.3.1). Lewis (2015) confirms that competition in the workplace can act as a spur towards commitment to self-improvement which may include actions like changing work habits to be more organised, using visualisation and goal setting to achieve goals and simply performing higher quality work, especially when rewarded with bonuses or various types of rewards. The participants mentioned that the competition opportunity in which teachers could take part in, not only motivated the teacher who won this, but also inspired the rest of the school's teachers, with increased acknowledgements from parents. One of the main advantages of competition in the workplace is that it can create an environment where employees push each other to exceed their normal limits, which can result in increased production, both at an individual level and among the entire workforce (Lewis, 2015).

Training opportunities, such as post graduate training and in-service training (*cf.* 5.2.2.3.3) seemed to empower the participants, because their knowledge was increased about teaching within an inclusive education system (*cf.* 3.5.3). The participants stated that by completing post-graduate training, such as the B Ed Honours in Learner Support while in-service, their knowledge about how to practically accommodate learners helped them tremendously. However, it was emphasised by the participants that in order for teachers to develop the skills, experience and confidence to be an inclusive teacher for

all learners, teachers must not only learn about inclusive education, but also practice it during pre-service, as well as in-service training. In-service teachers, especially, therefore need to be given opportunities for continuing professional development, which extends beyond only attending training courses, but also implementing what they have learned (UNICEF, 2013).

An advantage of in-service training workshops for the participants was that it creates an opportunity to share and discuss own practices with other teachers. Such interactive learning is asserted by Zulkifli Che Omar (2014) as motivational. Participants also acknowledged that the training workshops added to them feeling more confident about teaching in an inclusive environment. Valazza (2015) expounds the notion that gaining self-confidence and developing teaching ability are closely related. Giving attention to either one leads to improvement in the other. Therefore, the more teachers develop their teaching ability, the more confident they will become in their teaching (Valazza, 2015).

In this discussion, an array of factors within the microsystem were mentioned that enabled the participants' sense of self-efficacy when confronted with teaching in an inclusive education environment. Overall, people tend to focus mostly on the negative. However, their focus should rather be to make the strengths or positives stronger without ignoring the problems (Forgeard *et al.*, 2011). It is therefore important to emphasise these enabling factors in the recommendations to enhance feelings of self-efficacy.

### **5.3.3 Disabling factors influencing teachers' self-efficacy**

Factors that are currently disabling teachers' self-efficacy seem to be a lack of knowledge and skills (*cf.* 5.2.3.1) (i.e. micro [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.1] and macrosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.4] factors) exacerbated by the role the Department of Education plays (*cf.* 5.2.3.2) (i.e. mesosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.2], as well as exosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.3] and macrosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.4] factors) within the school system as well as other external

discouraging factors (*cf.* 5.2.3.3) (i.e. mesosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.2], as well as exosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.3] and macrosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.4] factors).

The lack of knowledge and skills in terms of being able to teach within an inclusive education system results in a lack of confidence in the participants' own teaching ability (*cf.* 5.2.3.1.1), and also makes the participants feel like a barrier themselves (*cf.* 5.2.3.1.2). They felt that this also causes psychological and physical problems (*cf.* 5.2.3.1.3).

Inclusive education has brought about new requirements and changes for teachers in the classroom, according to the participants. Various researchers concur that, with the introduction of inclusive education, classrooms now have a wider range of diverse learning needs and this impacts significantly on classroom practice (*cf.* 3.5; 3.5.2; Sharma *et al.*, 2012:12; Swart & Pettipher, 2011; Engelbrecht, 2006; Engelbrecht & Green, 2007:33). Since many of the participants were not exposed to inclusive education previously, as required by a full-service school setting, they particularly declared that their lack of understanding (what inclusive education is all about), knowledge and skills to deal with all the new challenges impacted on their confidence as teachers. This also made them feel frustrated and negative about inclusive education and not prepared to especially deal with more severe barriers to learning (*cf.* 5.2.3.1.1; *cf.* 3.5.2). A variety of local and international research studies (*cf.* 3.5.2; UNICEF, 2013; Kilanowski-Press *et al.* 2010; Sucuoğlu *et al.*, 2012; Ali *et al.* 2006; Singh & Sakofs, 2006) have found that teachers in general are still not thoroughly prepared to teach learners with disabilities because of insufficient knowledge and skills. The main cause of this seems to be inadequate training (Hwang & Evans, 2011; Subban, 2005). The enforcement of a policy (in this instance EWP6) can be classified as a macrosystemic factor that directly impacts on the participants' microsystemic experiences.

Evolving feelings of incompetence due to an incapability to address all learners' needs make the participants believe that they are failing the learners, and are therefore the barrier to the learners' successful learning themselves (*cf.* 5.2.3.1.2). In research conducted by Agbenyega, (2007) and others (*cf.* 3.5.2.) feelings of fear, frustration and

negativity are experienced by teachers as a result of them being unprepared to deal with disabilities in regular classes. They then consider themselves as being a failure and believe this could lead to lower academic standards (*cf.* 3.5.2). Horne and Timmons (2009:280) add that many teachers experience guilt due to the fact that because so much time is spent with learners who experience barriers to learning, the majority of other learners in the classroom do not get the attention they deserve.

The participants expressed that many of them are currently experiencing physical and psychological problems (*cf.* 5.2.3.1.3) which they relate to the pressure of teaching in an environment for which they are not prepared and makes them feel inefficient as teachers (*cf.* 2.3.3; 2.4.2). Feelings of insecurity, anxiety, a lack of purpose and job satisfaction, as well as depression are reported by the participants as affecting their physical health negatively. El-Sayed *et al.* (2014) and Meador (2015) affirm that a lack of self-confidence and feeling ineffective as a teacher lead to occupational stress and burnout and will have a negative impact on teachers' self-efficacy. This could lead to reduced initiative, impaired individual functioning, low motivation, reduced interest in working, high absenteeism rates, decreased capacity to perform, poor job performance, reduced efficiency, as well as poor health, mental and physical wellbeing (*cf.* 2.4.2; Meador, 2015; El-Sayed *et al.*, 2014). The participants emphasised that they were tired out, drained and are experiencing extreme fatigue and tension, because of all the overwhelming responsibilities that inclusive education brought. Shulman (2013) and Rosales (2012) confirm that teachers currently find the demands of being a professional educator difficult and stressful which result in feeling overwhelmed by the pressures of the classroom and causes exhaustion. This can have serious consequences for the health and happiness of teachers, and also the learners, professionals, and families they interact with on a daily basis (Shulman, 2013; Rosales, 2012; CYC-NET, 2004).

The findings indicated certain disabling factors as influenced by the Department of Basic Education (*cf.* 5.2.3.2). These involve ineffective implementation (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.1), inadequate training (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.2), incompetent DBE leaders/managers (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.3), a lack of support and acknowledgement (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.4) and curriculum constraints (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.5).

The participants felt that the ineffective management of the DBE in implementing inclusive education had a negative effect on them being able to enact inclusive education in the classroom (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.1). Since the introduction of EWP6 in 2001 many reports and studies have shown that the implementation of inclusive education remains a challenge in South Africa. This has been contributed to a lack of adequate training, insufficient resources and unsatisfactory support services (Nel *et al.*, 2014; Eloff & Kgwete, 2007; Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007; Engelbrecht, 2006). Even in DBE reports it has been acknowledged that much still needed to be done to ensure the effective implementation of inclusive education (Schoeman, 2012; DBE, 2015). Thus, even though EWP6 (SA, 2001) avowed that the system (i.e. education system specifically) needs to adapt to and address learners' needs in such a way that all learners will get the opportunity to achieve their potential it seems from these findings that the brunt of this responsibility came down on teachers' shoulders. The failing of the system to support teachers seems to be an international occurrence (Booth, 2011).

Although in-service training workshops with regard to inclusive education have been and still are provided by the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) the participants deemed this as inadequate (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.2) to effectively prepare them for the implementation of inclusive education. The participants asserted that they need more workshops on how to identify and support learners with different barriers to learning and development. The literature confirms that the current in-service training programmes are not sufficient for teachers to be fully equipped with knowledge on inclusive education, as well as practical skills on how to address a diverse range of barriers by being able to differentiate the curriculum and using a variety of instructional strategies (*cf.* 3.5.2; Dapudong, 2014; UNICEF, 2013; Mukhopadhyay *et al.*, 2012; Gök & Erbaş, 2011; Nel *et al.*, 2011; Odom *et al.*, 2011; Naicker, 2008; Ocloo & Subbey, 2008). Ross-Hill (2009:189) explains that not offering frequent and substantial training brings about "tension, stress, and strain for teachers in inclusive settings". The poor quality of the workshops was also attributed, by the participants, to incompetent presenters (*cf.* 3.2.3.3.5.1). The participants recommended that the workshops should be a more interactive learning experience between the teachers and the presenters, instead of the

presenters' only reading from notes. A need for clearer guidance and more practical demonstrations instead of only providing them with documents and expecting them to read it on their own, was demanded by the participants. Research confirms that more training on inclusive education should address characteristics of barriers to learning, strategies, and techniques to better instruct learners with more severe disabilities, as well as methods to implement inclusive practices in their classrooms (*cf.* 3.3.1; Kuhns & Chapman 2006:15). Despite the concern about the quality of the workshops, it appears the participants also felt that the workshops were scheduled on inappropriate times (e.g. after school hours) when they are tired and it is difficult for them to concentrate. They also indicated that the workshops were too short. In another research study of Eloff and Kgwete (2007:353), these feelings were also reported as influential to the limited success of in-service training workshops.

Besides the requirement for more training on inclusive practices, the participants also expressed a need for themes that involve their personal development. They felt that this is important for them to enhance their sense of self-efficacy by learning more about self-motivation, teambuilding, self-development, self-organising and emotional intelligence (*cf.* 5.3.1; 3.5.1.2.4; Sarkhosh & Rezaee, 2013:98). Since these are traits that the participants felt as enabling factors for enhancing a sense of self-efficacy (*cf.* 5.3.2.) it is an important recommendation to take note of.

Incompetent DBE leaders/managers (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.3) were mentioned as a source of frustration and demotivation for the participants, preventing them from being successful in the implementation of inclusive education. The district-based support team (DBST) was specifically reported as not providing adequate and sufficient support to teachers to assist learners who experience barriers to learning (*cf.* 3.4.2.1). It seems that the participants felt that the DBST members lack knowledge about inclusion. This results in them not trusting the DBST to provide adequate support. Savolainen and Häkkinen (2011) describe a leader's competence as one of the key dimensions in showing trustworthiness. Building and sustaining trust is reciprocal in nature (Savolainen & Häkkinen, 2011), therefore untrustworthy behaviour from a leader, such as a lack of knowledge or absence or limitations in support, as in this case, will decrease teachers'

trust in their leaders. As a result of this unsatisfactory support from the DBST (including the ILST), many learners are placed in a special class where, the participants asserted, a trained Learning Support Educator could rather teach learners with more severe barriers to learning (*cf.* 5.2.3.2.4). Makhalemele and Nel (forthcoming) as well as Mahlo (2011) affirm in their research findings that DBST's and ILST's are not yet functioning efficiently and this affects the successful implementation of inclusive education. In addition to the participants not receiving sufficient support from Departmental officials, they also indicated that their work is not acknowledged. It appears that the participants felt that they needed to be more individually recognised for their qualities and contributions to teaching. They also asserted that they have the practical experience to be involved in the policy development as well as decision making process. The HSRC (2005) found that these kinds of systemic practices and obstacles are some of the main reasons why South African teachers want to leave the system. This study affirms that a lack of support caused teachers not only to have been demotivated, but also to consider a willingness to resign from teaching.

It emerged from the findings that teacher self-efficacy appears to also be affected negatively by continuously changing curriculums as well as the curriculum constraints that are placed on them (*cf.* 3.2.3.3.5.1 and 5.2.3.2.5). The ever-changing expectations result in them feeling confused (Lilyquist, 2013:138). Current curriculum constrictions, such as prescriptive requirements for completion of the curriculum (CAPS) and limited flexibility (with regard to time frames and lesson plans) are emphasised by the participants as limiting them from addressing diverse learning needs (*cf.* 3.4.1.4). These concerns are confirmed in research by Engelbrecht *et al.* (forthcoming) as well as Geldenhuys and Wevers (2013) which indicated that this prescriptive approach to policy requirements restricts teachers from being flexible to address their own learners' context and needs. A key principle of inclusive education is that curriculum implementation should be flexible with regard to teaching methods, assessment, and pace of teaching and the development of learning material (SA, 2001). This, however, seems not to be adhered to (Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013). The pressure to complete the curriculum (also called curriculum coverage by the participants) within certain time limits, constrain

teachers to thoroughly address the needs of learners who experience barriers to learning (Msibi & Mchunu, 2013). The participants seem to believe that theory mainly influenced the development of the CAPS and this resulted in the requirements being more task-focused and not learner-focused. In an inclusive education system, the main focus should be on the learner which requires a flexible curriculum addressing learning needs creatively and appropriately (Nel, 2013; Booth, 2011; SA, 2001).

Factors that have been reported as disabling teachers' self-efficacy from within the school system (*cf.* 5.2.3.3) originated from the school management (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.1), a lack of support and resources (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.2), peer relations (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.3), parents (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.4) and overcrowded classrooms (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.5).

Besides the lack of support and acknowledgement from Departmental Officials, mentioned earlier, the participants also felt strongly about this issue regarding their own school management team (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.1). The participants conveyed that in many instances they do not receive the credit that they deserve from the school management and that only certain teachers are given gratitude. Ting and Yeh (2013) found that when given gratitude, it has positive effects on teachers' trust, satisfaction and commitment, but not being appreciated result in teachers feeling neglected, demotivated and dissatisfied in their job. Another concern mentioned by the participants, with regard to senior personnel at the school, is that they are not competent to deal with inclusive education, and consequently their management thereof is not acceptable (*cf.* 3.5.1.2.3.2). It has been found that incompetent leaders can destructively affect teachers' performance (Causton & Theoharis, 2013). When management teams are well-qualified, teachers seem to feel more trusted and secure in their work (Wahlstrom, 2008). This was apparent when one participant mentioned she respected her principal more because of his post graduate qualification. She supposed that this made him more knowledgeable. Conflict with senior personnel also occurs when the participants, who believe that they have a better sense of self-efficacy with regard to inclusive education, are rejected and criticised. This concurs with Bunch's (2008) finding that leaders without skills and knowledge to support teachers can

mistreat, exclude and disapprove of teachers who seem a threat to their seniority. This can lead to disagreements.

The lack of resources was identified as a major factor that disable teachers in their attempts to implement inclusive education effectively (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.2). The absence of resources (*cf.* 3.5.2), such as adapted physical facilities for learners with physical disabilities or teaching aids for learners with visual, hearing or learning impairments, as well as appropriate learning material, place an extra burden on teachers and create additional stress for both the learner and the teacher (Eloff & Kgwete, 2007:354).

Limited professional support services such as psychologists and other health professionals frustrate the participants. They asserted a dire need for such human resources, since they are not able to provide all the expert support that some disabilities require. Even though EWP6 (SA, 2001) ascertained that professional support services are a crucial feature of a successful inclusive education system functional and efficient support services for schools have been identified as an ongoing problem to effect inclusive education (Engelbrecht, 2008; Hay, 2003). This adds to teachers' feelings of demotivation and despondency, affecting their sense of self-efficacy (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014:192).

The participants asserted that some of their teacher colleagues who were not sharing the same positivity and passion about inclusive education made them feel negative, demotivated and as if they are working in isolation (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.3). They felt that better cooperation between colleagues in terms of planning and sharing personal experiences would be developmental and enhance self-efficacy. When peers at the same school are on different paths regarding a variety of implementation issues, it can result in teachers feeling isolated and negative (*cf.* 3.5.3). Poor relationships and conflict situations with colleagues make teachers feel negative about their working environment and impact on their self-esteem (*cf.* 2.4.3.1; Pinchevsky & Bogler, 2014; Siwatu & Polydore 2010; Neely, 2005). Pajares (2009) explains that teachers' self-efficacy can be positively or negatively influenced by the behaviour of colleagues who teach with them. If one teacher colleague is, for instance, negative about inclusion, there is a strong possibility

that he/she can cause the same reaction or attitude amongst other teachers that he/she is working closely with (Igbokwe *et al.*, 2014:92). Teachers who are working together, but do not share common ideas, creates separation (Robbins, 2005), which can lead to individual functioning (*cf.* 2.4.2). This can result in decreased job satisfaction (Rapti & Karaj, 2012; Arnett & Polkinghorne, 2010; Robbins & Judge, 2008). However, healthy collaborative partnerships will lead to improved teacher self-efficacy, since a sense of support and interdependency is created (Maika, 2012; Romi & Leyser, 2006). Yet, the participants suggested, for this to materialise opportunities have to be purposefully created where teachers could talk and interactively learn from one another. Interactive interpersonal opportunities can involve open discussions where teachers talk and effectively learn from one another, where strengths in one another are identified, and encouragement from other colleagues is given and received. This will contribute to personal development and the enhancement of self-efficacy (Oswald, 2007; Adler & Heckscher, 2006).

The participants explained that they felt motivated, more confident and reassured when they receive support from their fellow colleagues. This helps them to experience less stress and alleviate the burden. Research has found that, in general, teachers feel less tension, more encouraged, self-assured and comforted when they receive support from their fellow colleagues (*cf.* 2.4.3.1; Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Hsiao *et al.*, 2011; Smith, 2004; Strong, 2004; Hardre, 2003; Pajares, 2003). The participants recommended that there must be a support system, such as support groups, in place for teachers at the school where teachers can talk to each other about their problems. Various researchers have confirmed that supportive networks within the school can positively influence teachers' performance and effectiveness (*cf.* 3.2.3.2; Strogilos *et al.*, 2011; Lindqvist *et al.*, 2011; DoBE, 2010; Engelbrecht, 2007; Blue-Banning *et al.*, 2004).

In the previous section, parents were mentioned as an enabling factor. However, parents can also have a disabling influence in teachers feeling less self-efficient (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.4). Participants in general are concerned about parents not being involved in their children's education. They do not attend meetings or do not provide additional support when their children are struggling (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.4). When learners display

behaviour and discipline problems, participants particularly expressed that they need the support of parents. However, it was also acknowledged by the participants that parent support is a complex issue. Where parents are deceased, grandparents take care of the children or parents working long hours leave their children with unrelated caregivers. Child-headed households, poverty and illiterate parents/caregivers were also identified as a cause of poor parent involvement (*cf.* 3.5.1.2.3.1; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2005). Active involvement of parents in the teaching and learning process of their children is fundamental to effective learning and development (*cf.* 3.5.1.2.2.1; 3.5.1.2.3.1). The lack thereof places an enormous load on teachers in addressing the needs of learners, especially when they experience barriers to learning. This adds to a negative view regarding the viability of inclusive education (Mahlo, 2011; Ladbrook, 2009).

A lack of involvement was not the only disabling factor, with regard to parents, that the participants experienced. The participants believed that many parents regard them as the only responsible person for their children's education and in some instances they treat the teacher as an enemy if told about their children's problems. This kind of attitude also rubs off on the learners and they will then react disrespectfully towards teachers. Cavora (2010) and Ladbrook (2009) affirm that parents can influence learners' behaviour negatively which places a further burden on teachers. The participants asserted that in order for them to have a better sense of self-efficacy, they need to be acknowledged by parents for what they are doing for their children. Ting and Yeh (2013) found that gratitude from parents to teachers is an essential component in building relationships and effective teaching. Consequently, for inclusive education to function successfully, parents need to be considered and act as equal partners with teachers and other professionals in ensuring appropriate education for their children (*cf.* 3.5.1.2.3.1; Nel *et al.*, 2014; Friend & Bursuck 2009; Engelbrecht *et al.* 2005; Dabkowski, 2004; Spann *et al.*, 2003).

A persistent factor that occurred throughout the literature (*cf.* 3.5.1.2.3) and empirical findings, which was also a key finding of the secondary data (Malinen *et al.* 2013; Savolainen *et al.* 2012), is that collaboration is a strong predictor of a sense of self-

efficacy. This includes collaboration between the participants and peers (colleagues), the school management, parents, learners as well as district officials, community role players and health professionals. These essential collaborative, supportive partnerships seem to be lacking overall and appear therefore to have a negative impact on teachers' sense of self-efficacy.

Overcrowded classrooms (*cf.* 5.2.3.3.5) are seen by the participants as an elemental factor in disabling teachers' self-efficacy to effectively implement inclusive education. South African school classrooms are overpopulated (Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013). It is consequently difficult for teachers to manage class discipline, while also dealing with every learner's learning needs (*cf.* 3.5.2). In many instances, the participants reported that in order to support learners who experience barriers to learning, they will give these learners more attention and as a result neglect the other learners. They will then feel as if they themselves are the barrier to those learners who learn faster. Research by Engelbrecht *et al.* (2014), Johnstone and Chapman (2009), Mukhopadhyay *et al.* (2012) and Eloff and Kgwete, (2007) found similar results. It can therefore be deduced that overcrowded classrooms causes a negative attitude towards inclusive education and a sense of low self-efficacy (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2014).

Discouraging external factors (*cf.* 5.2.3.4), such as the media and society, were also asserted as factors disabling teachers' self-efficacy. The participants felt that the media and general society (*cf.* 5.2.3.4.1) mostly criticise teachers instead of recognising the important contributions they are making in the education of learners. This adds to a feeling of demotivation (*cf.* 3.5.1). The participants reported that the media shape a misleading impression of teachers and this makes teachers feel under-appreciated. Disrespectful and false perceptions by the society (*cf.* 5.2.3.4.2), such as a disregard for teaching as a profession, viewing teaching as an easy course leading to a half day job also made the participants feel as if they were not trusted by the community. Shulman (2013), confirms that teachers are currently feeling that their jobs are not considered a profession. It was emphasised by the participants that it seems as if teachers, instead of the system, are mainly and unfairly blamed by society for everything that goes wrong in education when learners do not perform well on an academic level. It is affirmed by

Perold *et al.*, (2012) that South African teachers have widely received negative media publicity in the last few years and are often held responsible for the failure of educational inventions, which are displayed in the underperformance of learners. Yan (2009) declares that negative statements from the media as well as destructive perceptions from society, are primary causes of teacher demotivation.

In this section factors disabling teachers' sense of self-efficacy, as identified by the participants, were deliberated. It is discernible that there is quite a scope of issues, interacting between the different ecosystems (micro, meso, exo and macro) that negatively influences teachers' sense of self-efficacy. People tend to accentuate negative information more than the positive (Pietri *et al.*, 2013). It is therefore essential that although weaknesses and needs must be addressed in the recommendations, emphasis must essentially be placed on the enabling factors (Kwok *et al.*, 2015; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

### **5.3.4 Components to be addressed in recommendations**

From the findings and subsequent discussion, the conceptualisation of self-efficacy, as seen by the participants, as well as several factors, as identified by the participants, that either enable or disable teachers' sense of self-efficacy were presented. Since a key purpose of this study is to make recommendations for the participants, schools and the DBE, in order to develop and enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy within an inclusive full-service school, certain key components have been identified:

- A comprehensive conceptualisation of self-efficacy to create a complete understanding about what self-efficacy entails;
- Emphasising an awareness of what enabling and disabling means in relation to self-efficacy;
- Emphasising that, although disabling factors must be addressed, enabling factors should be a key focus in enhancing a sense of teacher self-efficacy; and
- Providing strategies for enhancing self-efficacy keeping the disabling and enabling factors, as identified by the participants, as central foci.

## **5.4 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I presented the findings of my study, followed by an integrated discussion. In the next chapter I will discuss the recommendations aimed at teachers, schools and the DBE for enhancing teachers' self-efficacy to function optimally in an inclusive full-service school.

# CHAPTER 6

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCING TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY

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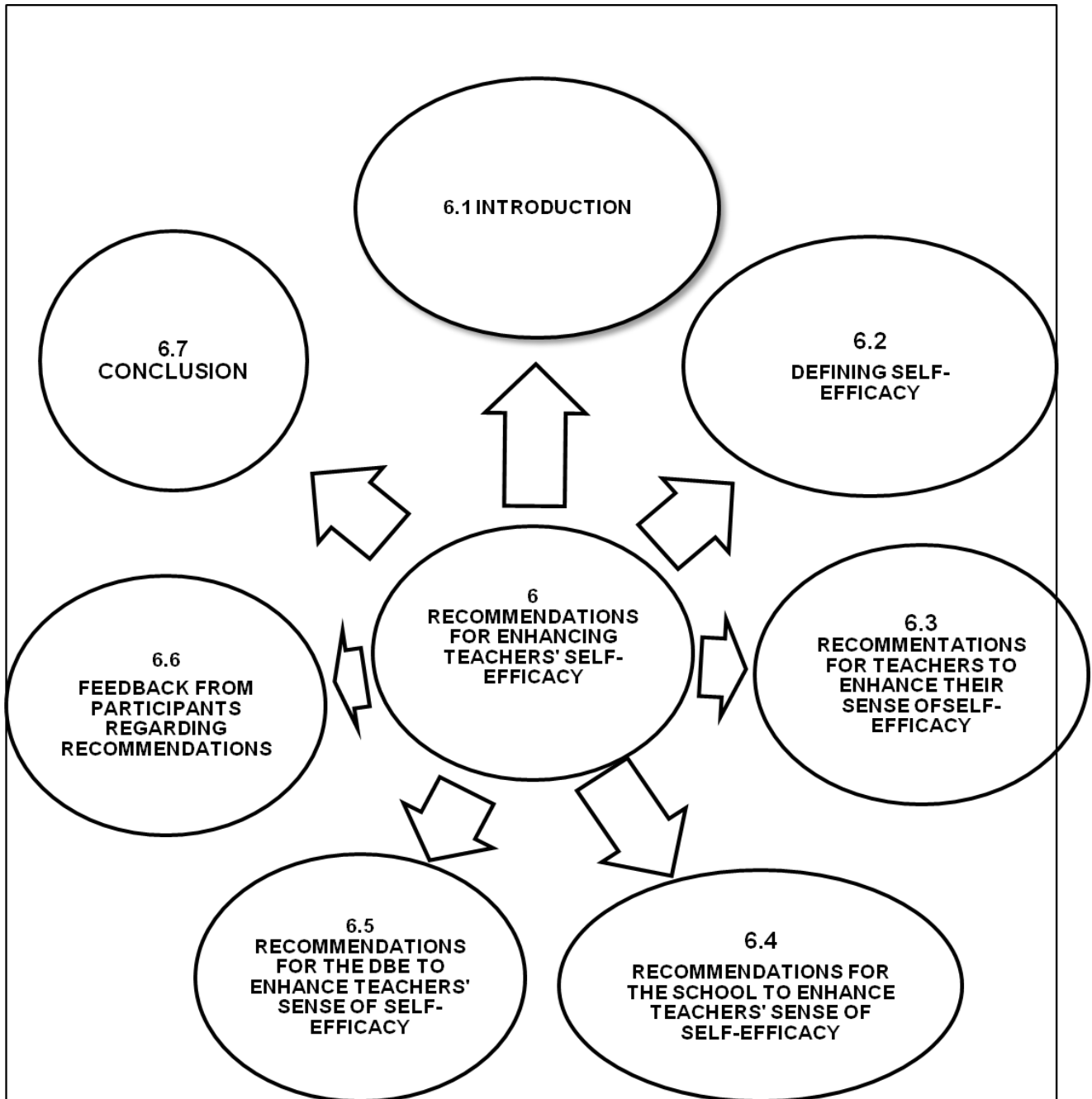


Figure 6.1 Overview of Chapter Six

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to furnish teachers, schools and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) with a summary of the key findings from the literature, as well as the empirical data, with regard to teachers' (specifically within an inclusive full-service school) self-efficacy. Firstly, it is essential that a clear definition of the concept self-efficacy, as related to teachers, is provided. Thereafter, the recommendations, including strategies to enhance teachers' self-efficacy, will be dealt with in three categories: the teacher, the school and the Department of Basic Education.

## 6.2 DEFINING SELF-EFFICACY



(Downloaded from <https://www.google.com>)

### 6.2.1 Understanding the concept self-efficacy

Before recommendations can be made on how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced, it is important to have a comprehensive understanding of the concept self-efficacy, especially as related to teachers within an inclusive education setting. In the following paragraph, a summary of the participants' conceptualisation, as well as how the literature describes it, will be provided.

Teacher self-efficacy can be defined (*cf.* Figure 6.2) as a teacher's personal perception or belief of their own capabilities and potential with regard to knowledge and skills to organise or execute the achievement of certain educational goals, requirements or outcomes (Pajares, 2009; Bandura, 1997, 2006b). Teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy view difficult tasks and problems as challenging tasks to be mastered rather than threats to be avoided (Lunenburg, 2011; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005:128; *cf.* 5.2.1).

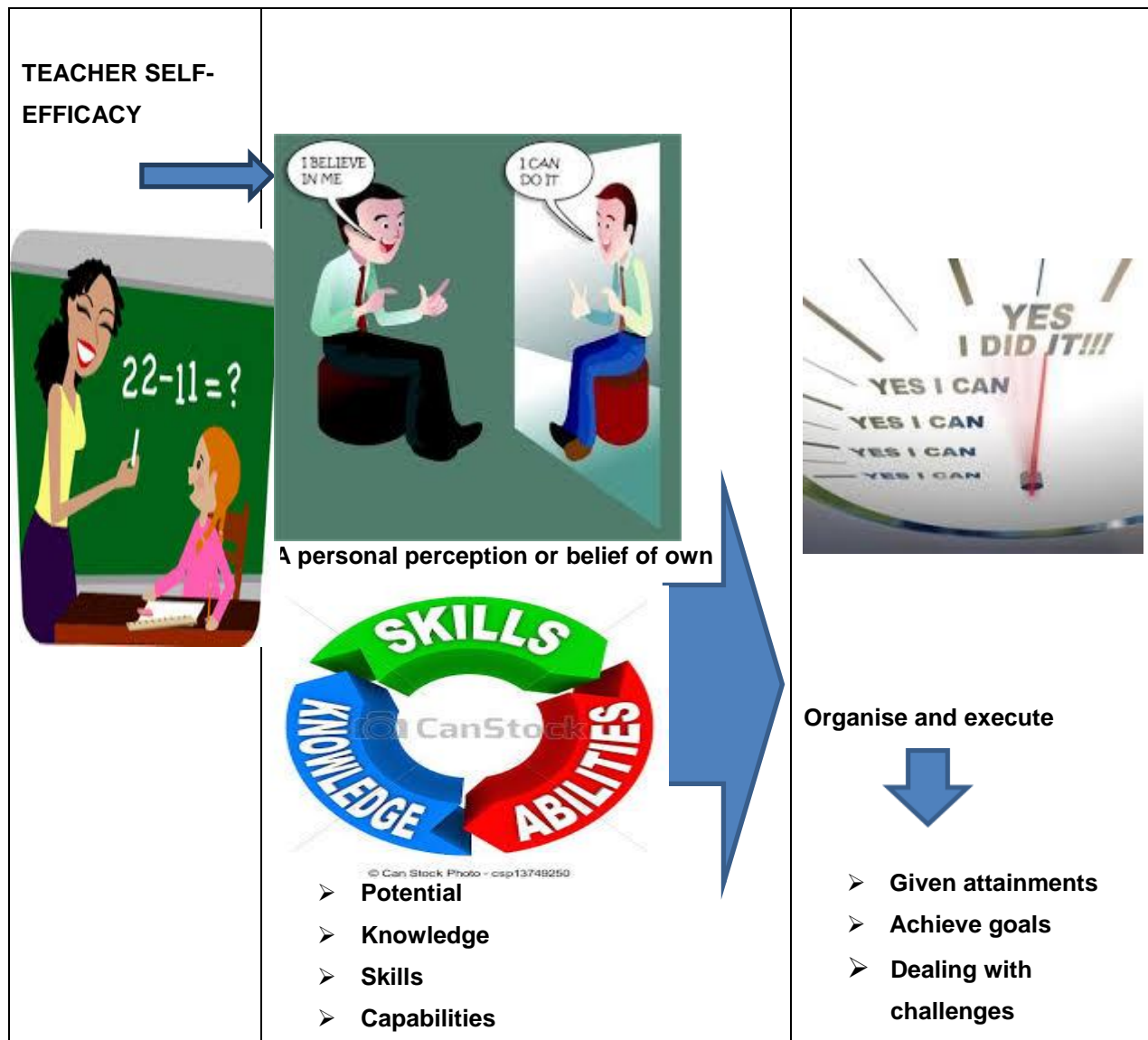


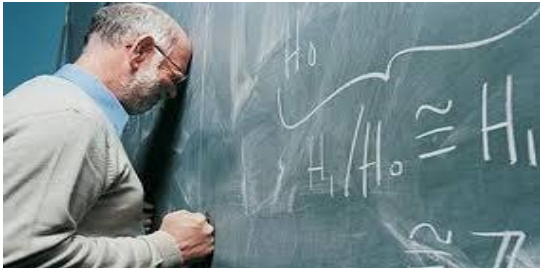

Figure 6.2 The concept self-efficacy (These pictures were downloaded from <https://www.google.com>)

The level of teachers' sense of their own self-efficacy can influence motivation, behaviour and choices, as well as the extent of input, persistence and emotions (Redmond, 2013:5; Pajares, 2009; Gecas, 2004). Therefore, it is important to take note of the differences between low and high teacher self-efficacy (*cf.* Figure 6.3).

### 6.2.2 Low versus high teacher self-efficacy

The following table summarises characteristics of low versus high teacher self-efficacy that are influenced by disabling and enabling factors. Disabling factors can be viewed as 'progressively limiting someone in their movements, senses or activities' and enabling factors as 'making something possible, activated, equipped and empowered' (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). Low teacher self-efficacy is caused by disabling factors (*cf.* 5.3.3), and high teacher self-efficacy by enabling factors (*cf.* 5.3.2).

All of this was informed by the participants' descriptions as well as a wide range of literature resources (Klassen & Chiu, 2010:747; Barker *et al.*, 2008; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008; Walker & Frimer, 2008; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007:624; Gencer & Cakiroglu, 2007; Ross & Bruce, 2007; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007; Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005; Hanif, 2004:154; Caprara *et al.*, 2003).

Low teacher self-efficacy (Disabling factors)	High teacher self-efficacy (Enabling factors)
 <p>(Downloaded from <a href="https://www.google.com">https://www.google.com</a>)</p>	 <p>(Downloaded from <a href="https://www.google.com">https://www.google.com</a>)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High stress levels and teacher burnout</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More relaxed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional exhaustion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotionally intelligent</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unhappiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Happiness and high state of job satisfaction</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative attitudes towards inclusive education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive attitudes toward inclusive education</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harbour pessimistic thoughts about their accomplishments and personal development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View challenging problems as tasks to be mastered</li> <li>• Develop deeper interest in the activities in which they participate</li> <li>• Recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of confidence and low self-esteem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger confidence in own ability and a healthy self-esteem</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of motivation, purpose and meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivated, finds meaning and purpose in job</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feelings of isolation and confusion due to a lack of knowledge and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feels supported, less confused and has more knowledge</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear of decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficient in making decisions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low sense of commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Remain in teaching despite overwhelming challenges</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a stronger sense of commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leaves teaching</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-adaptive teaching behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Remain in the comfort zone of traditional teaching behaviour</li> <li>○ Fear change and uncertain on how to deal with learners who experience barriers to learning, especially more severe disabilities</li> <li>○ Do not set good examples as effective teachers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constructive teaching behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use open-ended questions, inquiry methods, or small group learning activities</li> <li>○ Open to new ideas, more willing to adopt new innovations, support learners' autonomy to a greater extent, and are more attentive to learners with lower abilities</li> <li>○ Good role models for other teachers to learn from</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Figure 6.3 Low versus high self-efficacy

Besides the above mentioned characteristics of low and high self-efficacy, the participants, as well as the literature, mention certain intra- and interpersonal skills related to a sense of self-efficacy.

### 6.2.3 Intra- and inter-personal skills needed for teachers self-efficacy

<p><b>Intra</b> means within. Intra-personal is about our thoughts and emotions that happens within ourselves.</p>
<p><b>Inter</b> means between. Inter-personal is about ourselves (personality), behaviour and conversations among other people we meet and interact with.</p>

Figure 6.4 The meaning of intrapersonal versus interpersonal (Oxford Dictionary, 2014)

Both above mentioned skills are essential in enabling teachers' sense of self-efficacy.

Teachers with high self-efficacy exhibits the following intra- and inter-personal skills (*cf.* Figure 6.5).

Intra-personal skills	Inter-personal skills
<p>(Erozkan, 2013:740; Royston, 2013; Sarkhosh &amp; Rezaee, 2013:98; Bangs &amp; Frost, 2012; Dimopoulou, 2012; Koçoğlu, 2011; Ziegler <i>et al.</i>, 2011: 145; Gavora, 2010; Scheerens, 2010:191; Alias &amp; Hafir, 2009:6; Moafian &amp; Ghanizadeh, 2009; Rastegar &amp; Memarpour, 2009; Fabio &amp; Palazzeschi, 2008; Schunk &amp; Zimmerman, 2008:33; Winne &amp; Hadwin, 2008:297; Çam &amp; Tümkaya, 2007; Penrose <i>et al.</i>, 2007; Matthews, 2007; Jarošová <i>et al.</i>, 2007:2; D'Zurilla &amp; Nezu, 2007; Bandura, 2006; Ormrod, 2006; Boekaerts &amp; Corno, 2005:200; Neill, 2005; Stevens, 2005; Chan, 2004; Hermann &amp; Betz, 2004; Di Tomasso <i>et al.</i>, 2003; Judge <i>et al.</i>, 2002:695).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-regulation</li> </ul> <p>A self-directive process or ability in which a person manages his/her own thoughts, behaviours, and emotions in order to successfully navigate a learning experience, acquisition of information or skills (Baumeister &amp; Vohs, 2007; Harris <i>et al.</i>, 2005; Zimmerman, 2002:65).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> </ul> <p>Skills that include the establishment of an inspiring vision of the future, motivates and inspires others, coaches and builds a team to engage with the same ideal and succeeds in the delivery of the vision (Coffield, 2008:22; James &amp; Biesta, 2007:37).</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal locus of control</li> </ul> <p>The belief that people have in themselves with regard to their ability to control events affecting them in their situation or to be in control of their circumstances (Dormann <i>et al.</i>, 2006).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation</li> </ul> <p>The ability to work together with other people in groups or one to one settings, to achieve a common/mutual goal (Doll, 2012).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-motivation</li> </ul> <p>The internal driving or inspiration force, a person own to take action in performing a task (Childs, 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective communication</li> </ul> <p>The ability to transfer a message clearly to another person or institution (Oxford Dictionary, 2014).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal goal-setting</li> </ul> <p>The ability to set effective goals which are detailed, assessable, applicable, possible and realistic (MindTools, 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict management</li> </ul> <p>The ability to make use of different conflict handling behaviour styles, such as compensation, collaboration or compromise, to manage conflict effectively (Barmao, 2013: 15-16).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and organising</li> </ul> <p>The ability to effectively plan and organise oneself effectively in order to reach personal goals for successful living and learning (Lodhi, 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint planning</li> </ul> <p>The ability to effectively plan together with other people in groups or in one to one settings, to achieve a common/mutual goal (Doll, 2012).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptation</li> </ul> <p>The ability to adapt efficiently to sudden changes in the environment (Oxford Dictionary, 2014).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint problem solving</li> </ul> <p>The ability to effectively solve problems with the help of other people or with other people in groups or in one to one settings, to achieve a common/mutual goal (Doll, 2012).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-confidence</li> </ul> <p>The ability to trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgement (Oxford Dictionary, 2014).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interdependence</li> </ul> <p>Interdependence is the mutual dependence between two or more groups or degree to which members of the group are mutually dependent on the others (Donald <i>et al.</i>, 2010).</p>

- Assertiveness

The ability to stand up for one's personal rights by expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways (Oxford Dictionary, 2014).

- Emotional intelligence

The capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships thoughtfully and empathetically (Oxford Dictionary, 2014).

Figure 6.5 Intra- and inter-personal skills for teachers with high self-efficacy

In the above section, a description of what the concept self-efficacy means as well as the characteristics and intrapersonal and interpersonal skills needed for self-efficacy was presented. In the following section, some recommendations and strategies for teachers, the schools and the Department of Basic Education to enhance self-efficacy of teachers will be given.

## **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS TO ENHANCE THEIR SENSE OF SELF-EFFICACY**

### **6.3.1 Strategies to improve own sense of self-efficacy**

From the findings, it was evident that in order for teachers to enhance their own self-efficacy, it is important to address the following issues: self-development, peer support, working with parent/caregiver, classroom management and personal wellness.

#### **6.3.1.1 Self-development**

All teachers, teaching within an inclusive education system, should take responsibility for pursuing their own personal development and growth with regard to personal, academic, occupational and professional aspects (Krüger *et al.*, 2011). By taking responsibility for self-directed learning, instead of waiting for an external entity, can be an enhancing quality of self-efficacy in itself.

The following recommendations are made with regard to self-development:

- Enrol for further formal studies, such as post-graduate training in learner support (Kaye & Brewer, 2013);

- Attend workshops presented by the DBE, NGO's, HEI's, conferences and symposiums on a continuous basis;
- When attending workshops, make a personal effort to augment own learning by asking questions, applying critical self-reflecting and also reflecting during and afterwards with other peer teachers. These are great ways to expose yourself to new ideas and perspectives (Rasmussen, 2014);
- Make a personal effort to increase knowledge on inclusive education by reading related books and articles;
- Conduct small research projects within the classroom to check if new teaching and assessment strategies are working; and
- Also focus on continuous professional development opportunities which improves intra- and inter-personal skills as discussed in 6.2.3. Inter-personal skills such as leadership, cooperation, effective communication, conflict management, assertiveness and interdependence are essential for teachers' self-efficacy (McConnell, 2004). The same is applicable for the development of intra-personal skills, such as self-regulation, internal locus of control, self-motivation, personal goal setting, planning and organizing, adaptation, emotional intelligence and self-confidence (Peeters *et al.*, 2013; Lodhi, 2015).

#### **6.3.1.2 Peer support**

Support from other teacher peers can influence teachers' sense of self-efficacy positively in terms of motivation, persistence, inspiration, and facilitates a stronger commitment towards one another (Ghamrawi, 2011; Thomas-McClure, 2008;). Teachers, therefore, need to make a personal effort to interact with other peer teachers and form personal relations with them to increase support for themselves on personal and work related matters, as well as interactive learning. This can be done in the form of a support group for teachers teaching in the same school, which can focus on the following:

- Exchanging information about what was experienced in class, such as successful new teaching strategies or certain adaptations that worked for learners with a certain barrier to learning. Collective sharing between teachers in the same school, subject, or grade usually bring about greater learning opportunities (Chong & Kong, 2012);
- Talk about one's personal challenges in personal life that influence work performance. It is suggested to maybe ask a counsellor to help with this, since talking and sharing issues with someone in the same context can help teachers to experience less stress (Smith, 2004); and
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in each other, with a stronger focus on strengths. Provide suggestions on how to improve on weaknesses and how to increase strengths.

An additional recommendation was made by one of the participants to also include peer relations with other school teachers.

### **6.3.1.3 Working with parents/caregivers**

Parental/caregiver involvement impacts on teachers' sense of self-efficacy and is also essential to make inclusive education work more effectively. Therefore, teachers should do whatever they can to get them to participate. The following suggestions for teachers can help to encourage parental/caregiver engagement (adapted from Wallace, 2008):

- Suggestion Box: A suggestion box provides shy parents/caregivers with a way to communicate in an anonymous manner; a displeased parent/caregiver a way to vent; a supportive parent/caregiver an opportunity to make helpful suggestions; and the happy parent/caregiver a way to give compliments. Place the box, note paper, and pens in an easily accessible location, but a place that assures some privacy and anonymity. Check the box frequently;
- Parent/caregiver survey: A survey will tell you how the parents/caregivers believe your teaching meets the needs of their children. What do they like most about

your teaching? How would they like to get involved in their child's learning? Make the survey short and provide some type of incentive so that parents will return it;

- Parent/caregiver Advisory Council: Recruit a group of helpful, concerned parents/caregivers to assist with certain tasks, for example arranging school activities, giving extra reading or maths classes;
- Communication connections: Include parents/caregivers in school activities, such as fundraisers or sport and cultural events. This could create a sense of belonging, trust and loyalty;
- Parent/caregiver notebook, or newsletters and memos: Create a notebook for parents/caregivers where you can write down any important information about their child or what is happening at the school. You can also provide detail about your teaching philosophy, relevant policies and procedures of the school. Newsletters about school activities, interesting topics and other important news could make parents feel more integrated into the school community;
- Parent/caregiver support programs and seminars: It was mentioned by the participants that many parents are uneducated. This could result in them not being able to support their children's learning or fearing to be labelled as uneducated by teachers. It would, therefore, be a good idea to arrange information sessions or workshops about issues such as brain and child development, literacy, the importance of play, barriers to learning, etc. You can invite speakers from the community who are experts;
- Visiting homes: Although available time is a challenge, a lot can be learned from visiting a child's home. This can also break down barriers, because families often feel most comfortable on their own territory;
- Creating a welcoming environment for parents: Always make parents/caregivers feel respected and comfortable when you communicate with them;
- Parents/caregivers as volunteers: Parents, grandparents, even older siblings are often willing and able volunteers. Ask them to assist in the classroom or

chaperone a field trip. Some may even help with repairing school buildings. It is important to show appreciation; and

- Nurture your relationships with parents/caregivers by listening, responding, involving, and appreciating their inputs. It could make your job easier (Wallace, 2008).

A participant appended a suggestion in the case where parents are not able to assist, due to various reasons, by making use of older learners with more experience to help these learners with homework.

#### **6.3.1.4 Classroom management**

Being able to manage a classroom efficiently, especially when it is overcrowded and there is a diversity of needs, could have a significant effect on teachers' sense of self-efficacy.

Varying and differentiating activities to address different learning needs, as well as by integrating the learners into teaching and learning actions, are important strategies for an inclusive classroom. Learners should be given the opportunity to participate actively in all the activities in the classroom. This will allow teachers to identify and accommodate their diverse needs (Nwacoye Mpya, 2007).

Even though it is clear that smaller classes are the preferred option for teachers and learners, a positive discipline climate and a pleasant learning environment are possible in overcrowded classes. The following strategies can start teachers on the way to successfully managing the problems of overcrowded classes (adapted from Thompson, 2012):

- Teachers need to immediately assume a strong leadership role, otherwise they will be so outnumbered by the learners that they will be in charge of the class, and not the teachers;
- Classroom arrangements are very important in overcrowded classes. Clutter in the room must be reduced. For example, learners can be asked to put their schoolbags next to the wall and not next to their tables;

- It is important to pay careful attention to traffic patterns and learner movement in the classroom. For example, request learners to dispose of trash at the end of class and to sharpen pencils only at the start of class;
- A seating chart is a good strategy for an overcrowded class. Then learners know from entering the classroom, where to go;
- Establishing rules about the noise levels from the beginning of a school year will let learners immediately know where they stand with a teacher. However, it is also important that these rules are implemented consistently;
- Being well-organised and an exemplar of efficiency for learners who could be enticed to use overcrowding as an excuse not to do their best and be disorderly are vital. The teachers need to keep their own personal space in good order and make sure that learners leave their area tidy at the end of class. Learners can also be encouraged to check their classmates to not leave personal belongings behind when class is over;
- Confusion and discipline problems can be prevented if learners hand in work promptly. However, learners who experience barriers to learning can take different periods of time to complete their work. It is therefore important to make allowances for this without disadvantaging other learners, but still accommodating these learners. It is suggested to explain to all learners in the classroom how this will work. A teacher also has the responsibility to return classwork to learners as speedily as possible. This forces them to stay focused;
- Explaining and establishing routines early in a school year will create a safe environment for learners, especially when they experience barriers to learning. Learners should be able to envisage what they are supposed to do in class;
- Horseplay should not be allowed. This could waste time, and rules about this must be established;

- Prevent the cheating that can happen because learners have to sit close together. Providing a cover sheet and monitoring carefully are good methods to apply;
- Encouraging a sense of togetherness and a spirit of cooperation in learners will result in learners feeling they belong in the classroom. A bit of humour and a positive attitude from the teacher could set an amiable tone for learners to model;
- When learners are greeted at the door, it helps the teacher to keep in touch with them and they will feel acknowledged;
- Creating teams of study buddies is a good strategy to give learners a sense of togetherness and connectedness among themselves. When learners have partners to ask for help and support, they will feel like a part of the class instead of being just one of many;
- Teaching learners the importance of courtesy to the teacher and other learners by insisting that they treat everyone with politeness could help in preventing a discriminating attitude as well as bullying. A large courteous class is much better and easier to deal with than a small rude one; and
- Planning carefully for interesting lessons will keep learners' attention. Teachers should try to connect with each learner when presenting lessons. The success or failure of the discipline climate in a class can depend on this.

Disruptive learner behaviour or discipline problems are serious challenges for teachers to deal with in a class with diverse needs and can have a disabling effect on a teacher's self-efficacy. The following strategies are suggested (adapted from Marais & Meier, 2010):

- Adopting a proactive approach to manage disruptive behaviour in an attempt to positively redirect learners' behaviour is essential. It is important to become knowledgeable about typical behaviour of specific age groups. This would help to benchmark, measure and understand as well as predict learners' behaviour;

- Thorough planning and creative presentation could prevent learners from switching off or becoming busy with something else. Interaction and allowing learners to be actively involved in their own learning will make them more attentive;
- Attention-seeking behaviour can be neutralized by simply changing tone of voice;
- Model correct behaviour. If teachers yell at learners, while expecting from them not to yell, learners are taught that undesirable behaviour is appropriate when you are an adult or if you have the power in your hands;
- Class rules will enable learners to understand what kind of behaviour is expected from them. It is important that learners can see these rules every day. They can also agree to sign these rules. This would encourage them to take responsibility to adhere to them. These rules should be few in number, easily understandable, justifiable and enforceable; and
- When dealing with fighting, it is a good idea to remove the victim first and prevent the bystanders from becoming part of the situation. Learners must be made aware of the consequences of fighting by means of anti-fighting posters, class discussions and group projects. These could also be integrated into lesson plans, lesson activities and plays. Parent involvement in this regard is crucial.

A participant suggested that in order for teachers to manage their class effectively, they must know their learners very well in terms of emotions and make use of more group work activities to manage behaviour.

### **6.3.1.5 Personal wellness**

Enabling self-efficacy entails taking responsibility and developing a sense of agency in one's own wellbeing. This is important for productivity, general wellness and a sustained teaching career.

The following strategies to ensure wellbeing are recommended (adapted from McCallum, 2010):

- Teacher wellbeing requires active participation, comprising physical activity, cognitive stimulation and social interactions;
- Surrounding oneself with supportive communities (e.g. family, friends and trusted colleagues) is essential for a healthy wellbeing;
- A positive attitude, as well as taking ownership and responsibility for one's own wellbeing, are elemental characteristics of wellbeing;
- Being a lifelong learner sustains teacher wellbeing and a professional identity;
- Maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal lives is fostered by teacher resilience; having collegial support; regular professional development; working with others who have similar values and beliefs; valuing positive relationships with others that promote teacher learning; and developing teacher confidence; and
- Sustaining the following could help in ensuring wellbeing and consequently, also a high sense of self-efficacy (adapted from Patterson *et al.*, 2004):
  - Setting up the classroom to achieve a productive working space;
  - Establishing behavioural boundaries within the classroom;
  - Attending to light and room temperature;
  - Establishing a positive, bright, cheerful, inviting environment in the classroom and staffroom;
  - Knowing and working within the school policies;
  - Managing personal time, setting priorities and avoiding work overload;
  - Planning lessons to meet learner needs;
  - Having a positive self-esteem;
  - Taking an active stance towards obstacles;

- Developing the ability to see a difficulty as a problem that can be worked on, overcome, changed, endured or resolved; and
- Having a level of reasonable persistence; and developing a range of strategies and skills to bear on problems in flexible ways.

Suggestions were made by many participants to learn more specific personal organisation skills such as time and stress management and include knowledge on how to live a more balanced life (including related inspiring articles, books and movies).

#### **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL TO ENHANCE TEACHERS' SENSE OF SELF-EFFICACY**

The teacher plays a central role in ascertaining the successful transformation of a full-service school into becoming a fully functional inclusive school (SA, 2001). Since the school has a pivotal role in effecting inclusive education, it also needs to take action in ensuring that teachers' self-efficacy is enabled and enhanced.

##### **6.4.1 Arranging continuous professional development opportunities (CPD)**

The following actions with regard to CPD can be taken by the school, as recommendations to enhance teachers' self-efficacy:

- Schools, therefore, need to create opportunities and encourage teachers to gain more knowledge and skills to develop an increased confidence in addressing diverse needs in an inclusive classroom by, for example, organising workshops and inviting experts from the community to give presentations (UNICEF, 2013);
- Since training is an important prerequisite for enhancing teachers' self-efficacy, it is essential that more financial resources, if possible, for increased CPD opportunities need to be provided (Eloff & Kgwete, 2007:354); and
- Teachers should also be motivated and supported to go for more post-graduate training. Being further trained while in practice has an advantage, since what is learned in theory can be applied in practice.

##### **6.4.2 Increased support for collaboration**

### 6.4.2.1 Establishing support groups

A support group is a group of people who come together to talk about a challenge and/or experience that they have in common without being judged, blamed, stigmatised or isolated. By joining support groups, people realise that they are not alone in their situation. Such a group is a forum where members can share problems and concerns, brainstorm solutions, give each other advice and form friendships. Support groups are effective because members receive first-hand advice and the approaches that they learn come from peers who are coping with similar circumstances. This implies that the support is not superficial, but practical, personal and relevant (Fanelli & Moyo, 2008).

- Support groups could be established within the school to provide personal and work related support (*cf.* 6.2.2.2). These should not be just the teacher's responsibility, but also the school's management's and peer teacher's obligation. The following instructions can be followed to establish a support group (Fanelli & Moyo, 2008):
  - Develop a clear and shared purpose among the group members (teachers could for example discuss personal or teaching related matters);
  - Decide among each other whether or not the information that are shared in the group, could be discussed outside of the group, if not take a pledge to keep it confidential;
  - Choose a group leader to coordinate activities of the group;
  - Develop a realistic programme of action for the group;
  - Evaluate the programme regularly to make sure you are still on the right track;
  - Decide on how many members will make the group to function effectively; and
  - Hold meetings at suitable times for all members and at accessible and comfortable venues.

A participant added that sharing about training could be included in the support groups.

Additional advice was given by a few participants to involve learners, who do not experience barriers to learning, in support groups for learners who do experience barriers to learning.

#### **6.4.2.2 Higher education institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)**

- Schools must reach out for inter-dependent support and collaboration by establishing partnerships with higher education institutions and NGOs (Mahlo, 2011); and
- Non-governmental and community organisations, such as churches, support lines, the police, health professionals and disability groups/associations, and other support structures can be involved to assist teachers in supporting learners who experience barriers to learning.

A participant recommended that support groups must be formed between teachers and stakeholders to share ideas and problems, where teachers could also get advice and approaches.

#### **6.4.2.3 Establishing functional ILST's**

- Functional ILST's are important support structures at schools that should help teachers in identifying and supporting 'at risk' and vulnerable learners. This assists teachers to not feeling solely responsible for learners who experience barriers to learning. It is also the responsibility of the ILST to ensure opportunities for more training (SA, 2001). However, an effective and well-functioning DBST will be helpful if the ILST is intended to be a team that collaboratively coordinates learner and teacher support services in a school. Yet, the ILST should not only depend on the DBST for support. They should form an inter-sectoral collaborating team with relevant stakeholders such as health professionals, community organisations (e.g. helplines, churches and welfare organisations), and HEI's (DoE, 2005:23) to address barriers to learning and to provide support to learners, teachers and the parents/caregivers.

### 6.4.3 Strategies to get parents/caregivers involved

The following recommendations can be made for the school, specifically the school management, to get parents involved (Patrikakou, 2008):

- Teachers need to send home words of praise and encouragement about learners. Parents need positive acknowledgement too;
- Parents must be kept informed of school and class rules, expectations, and activities. A weekly or biweekly school newsletter could help with this. In such newsletters, it is important to use simple, familiar language, and include “attention grabbers” (e.g., upbeat graphics, bold headings, boxes around special items, etc.);
- A welcome letter to parents before the beginning of the school year will help get their children ready for the new year (e.g., list major goals for the year, materials needed for class, contact information);
- Parents should be encouraged to ask questions if they need information or assistance;
- Parents have to be allowed a chance to express their goals for their child’s education;
- It is essential that parents/caregivers are regularly informed about their child’s progress. If parents are aware of this, it could help them to understand better when barriers to learning occur;
- Parent/caregiver meetings at least once each term is crucial;
- Academic and behavioural achievement can be recognised by sending achievement certificates home and encouraging parents to display them;
- Communicating respect for and appreciation of parents/caregivers and families should result in more positive and equal collaboration between teachers and parents/caregivers;

- Cultural differences must be dealt with sensitively. It is therefore vital that teachers learn about their learners' cultures; and
- When parents attend special events such as sport and cultural activities, they could become more involved with the school community.

A participant added that they currently have a programme at their school whereby they invite parents and prepare some lunch for them to discuss issues around learners' progress and barriers to learning. Since this motivates parents to participate, it could be added as an additional recommendation.

#### **6.4.2.1 Teacher acknowledgement and wellness**

The management of the school needs to take responsibility for teachers' wellness which in turn will enable their self-efficacy. This entails:

- Providing support when needed and assuring teachers that they are part of the school community ;
- Respecting, and rewarding their staff, as well creating opportunities for further development;
- Consultation that values the voice of teachers and listening to their views; and
- Relationships must be based on trust and shared values (Bajorek *et al.*, 2014).

Innovative ways in how schools can celebrate teachers can include the following (Education World, 2011):

- Host a "Thank You" Breakfast, lunch or dinner;
- Have a Teacher Appreciation Week;
- Teachers are given gift certificates who have perfect attendance each quarter. It can be a certificate for a manicure, a CD, a movie, or a dinner;
- Celebrate birthdays;
- Establish a bulletin board on which to spotlight a different teacher(s) each month;

- The principal reminds learners to show appreciation for their teachers in all kinds of ways. For example, creating a special card of appreciation;
- The management needs to praise teachers often in staff and parent newsletters;
- Teachers can be given extra release time to observe another teacher in the school or a nearby school. In this way, teachers can pick up new ideas and skills;
- Schools should allow teachers adequate time to deal with a medical or family issue, for example, a doctor's appointment, or seeing their own child take part in sport or culture events; and
- Post a weekly trivia question on a bulletin or white board in the staff room. Provide small prizes, and announce the trivia answers and winners each week. The focus of this should be to develop knowledge about inclusive education and supporting learners who experience barriers to learning.

A participant made an additional suggestion for the school to assist teachers in their wellness through designing an article by the teachers and the school with positive statements. This article or book of positive code could be shared by a different teacher in every morning's briefing session to positively recharge teachers before they begin with their classes.

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DBE TO ENHANCE TEACHERS' SENSE OF SELF-EFFICACY**

### **6.5.1 Improvement in the current in-service workshops**

From the participants' responses, it seems that the current in-service workshops, as provided by the DBE, are not addressing the needs of teachers. It is essential that more effective learning experiences for teachers to gain more knowledge and skills in order to increase their self-confidence and self-efficacy is created. It is therefore important to give attention to the following:

- Consult teachers beforehand about what they already know and what their needs are;

- Including practical demonstrations during the workshops will ensure better enactment of inclusion in the classroom. The combination of practice and theory in in-service training will increase teachers' confidence levels (Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009:357);
- The provision of more time for workshops to effectively learn, instead of a rushed experience, will enhance the learning experience and make teachers feel more effective;
- More interaction between the teachers and the presenters, as well as between the teachers themselves, instead of the presenters only reading from notes, is essential (Zulkifli Che Omar, 2014; Oswald, 2007; Adler & Heckscher, 2006; Kozdras *et al.* 2006); and
- Workshops should be scheduled at appropriate times, instead of in the late afternoon when teachers are tired (Eloff & Kgwete, 2007:354). This could rather be scheduled during school holidays.

#### **6.5.1.1 Providing continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities**

Professional development opportunities that focus on inclusive education, intra- and inter-personal development by improving teachers' knowledge and skills, can enhance teachers' self-efficacy. These will be discussed next.

##### **6.5.1.1.1 Training on inclusive education**

The findings of this study, as well as other research findings, indicated that teachers do not have enough knowledge about inclusive education and how to support learners who experience barriers to learning (Dapudong, 2014:21; Gök & Erbaş, 2011; Odom et al., 2011; Fuchs, 2009). Since teachers must have the ability to accommodate learners with barriers to learning and development, specific training on inclusive education is essential (Dapudong, 2014:21). This will contribute to quality education (Zulkifli Che Omar, 2014:1). Therefore more focus in training should be on the following:

- Creating opportunities to fully comprehend the philosophy as well as the approach of inclusive education;
- How to identify, assess and support learners with barriers to learning and development;
- How to differentiate/modify teaching strategies, the curriculum content and assessment for learners with disabilities (Dapudong, 2014:21; Gök & Erbaş, 2011; Odom *et al.*, 2011; Fuchs, 2009); and
- Discussing real life scenarios and case studies during pre-service and in-service training so as to improve the quality of inclusive practices (Sucuoğlu *et al.*, 2013:119).

Enhancing practical skills to enact inclusive education is important. The more teachers believe they are able to implement inclusive practices on a concrete and pragmatic level, the more positive their attitudes towards inclusion are (Savolainen *et al.*, 2011). These positive views may urge teachers within inclusive classrooms to look again at their current practices (Subban, 2005). Research indicated that even a little training on inclusive education can promote a positive attitude (Campbell *et al.*, 2003; Shade & Stewart, 2001).

A participant also added that there should also be intensive training on inclusive education policy documents and how to implement the new CAPS curriculum.

#### **6.5.1.1.2 Inter-personal skills**

Improving inter-personal skills such as communication skills, conflict management, problem solving and leadership skills will enhance teachers' self-efficacy. These skills are acknowledged by various researchers as making a contribution to teacher self-efficacy and also being essential for effective teachers (Wynd *et al.*, 2011; McMillan, 2011; Eggen & Kauchak, 2009). Interpersonal skills will help teachers to deal with obstacles such as a lack of cooperation or conflict with other colleagues.

- Continuous professional development should therefore also include the acquisition of inter-personal skills such as conflict management, problem solving and leadership skills.

#### **6.5.1.1.3 Intra-personal development**

Research suggests that teachers' intra-personal skills need to be developed in order to enhance their self-efficacy (Wilson & Demetriou, 2007:214; Adler & Heckscher, 2006; Allington, 2002). This includes aspects such as self-motivation, teambuilding, self-development and self-organising (Abdolvahabi et al., 2012) as well as self-regulating skills (Pavlovich, 2007; Korthagen, 2004).

Emotional intelligence, which involves the ability to be sensitive to one's own feelings and those of others, to be in control of oneself, to motivate oneself and influence others, as well as to manage emotions effectively (Bar-On, 2006:14), must be developed to promote emotional, intellectual and professional growth as well as teacher self-efficacy (Sarkhosh & Rezaee, 2013).

- Intrapersonal learning opportunities such as reflection or introspection enhance teachers' self-efficacy, because it can make a teacher aware of what was experienced. This can create a way of learning about personal strengths and weaknesses, where to improve and what are needed to improve (Paterson & Chapman, 2013; Frick *et al.*, 2010; Bezzina, 2006; Seferoğlu, 2006; Wilson & Demetriou, 2007). Opportunities for self-development exercises, like the collage activity of this research can, for example, be included in CPD opportunities to assist teachers on a personal level.

#### **6.5.2 Increased and improved support**

Support from other professionals and the DBE, specifically DBST's, must be increased and improved on. Therefore, the following guidelines can be followed to enhance teachers' self-efficacy:

- Inclusion policies require teachers to work with health professionals such as doctors, school nurses, psychologists and social workers, but there needs be more of these services available for learners as well as teachers (Donald *et al.*, 2010; DoE, 2008);
- Support from the DBE and DBST's should not only be increased but also improved on in terms of availability and competent support regarding inclusive education (Coffield, 2008:22; James & Biesta, 2007:37); and
- Supportive personnel from the DBE and DBST's must be well-trained and equipped with skills and knowledge on inclusive education in order to effectively support teachers (Bunch, 2008). They should also focus on teachers' and schools' strengths and not only weaknesses. This is a crucial issue, since the participants indicated that they felt the focus from district officials was more on what was done wrong or not done than on the right and good teaching that occurred.

A participant also suggested that supportive personnel for teachers must be appointed to help with self-development.

#### **6.5.2.1 Wellness programmes**

- The participants felt that support is currently only given by the DBE to help the learner, instead of supporting teachers personally. Support from the DBE can be improved on by providing more support programmes or structures for teachers at a personal level, such as being able to deal with traumatic events, their stress and anxiety. Teachers are experiencing a considerable amount of stress, related to the teaching environment, which are negatively affecting all areas of their lives (Ratcliffe, 2012). This personal support can also be provided in the form of a support group for teachers at the school or in the district.

#### **6.5.2.2 Curriculum**

- Flexibility with regard to teaching and achieving curriculum requirements to ensure that learners' diverse needs are met is emphasised as one of the principles and characteristics of EWP6 (SA, 2001). However, it was reported by

the participants that they are not allowed to be flexible especially with regard to learners who experience barriers to learning. It is therefore essential that policies and the implementation thereof for full-service schools are specifically re-evaluated and departmental officials are once again made aware of this fundamental principle of inclusive education. This will take pressure off teachers to simply complete a curriculum and rather focus on their learners' individual needs.

### **6.5.2.3 Resources**

- Enough and appropriate resources, such as appropriate education equipment e.g. (hearing aids, braille machines), adapted learning material (e.g. braille), suitable physical facilities (e.g. ramps and wider doors) to accommodate learners who experience barriers will help teachers in feeling more effective as inclusive teachers.

The participants additionally recommended that resources to assist them with research should be provided, such as an internet service and computers/laptops.

### **6.5.3 Acknowledgements and rewards**

- Opportunities which reward teacher achievements such as competitions, receiving positive feedback and gratitude from the DBE should be increased, to enhance teachers' self-efficacy. This can increase commitment, self-improvement, achieving goals and performing higher quality work (Lewis, 2015);
- Teachers' knowledge, skills and experience should be acknowledged by making them part of the policy development as well as the decision-making process (Kuhns & Chapman 2006:15). Thomas-McClure (2008) found that teachers who are involved in decision-making, experience greater personal job satisfaction; and
- Problems and issues that are reported by teachers need to be dealt with and the necessary changes must be made. This includes issues such as overcrowded

classes, insufficient resources and learning material and inadequate training (Jensen, 2010). The DBE needs to recognise quality and innovation in the classroom as well as identify problems.

Objective four of the Department's Plan for Schools, is to provide teachers and support staff with access to support in order to approach their work with confidence, enthusiasm and commitment to ensure that all staff are valued and supported. To help achieve this objective, the DBE has, and continues to apparently implement health and wellbeing programs to improve morale, workplace safety and job satisfaction (DoE, 2008). Even though this is stipulated, there still seems to be a lack in the implementation of these programs. This needs to be addressed since it could be an important tool to enable and enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy.

The participants also suggested to reward teachers with more training opportunities and bursaries to attend training. Rewards in the form of laptops or computers to help them conduct quality research, could also be included.

## **6.6 FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this section, I provide a summary of the feedback from the questionnaires which include the participants' feedback regarding the recommendations. The questionnaire (see Addendum F) was developed by myself and controlled by my study leader. The purpose of this questionnaire was to determine if the recommendations address the participants' needs to enhance their sense of self-efficacy as identified from their interviews and collages. Each participant was provided with a copy of the recommendations to enhance teachers' self-efficacy as well as the questionnaire, where they had to motivate if they agree or disagree on each section. This questionnaire was completed by the ten participants who also took part in the collages. They were purposefully selected, since these participants also took part in a focus group and individual interview and therefore could give an informed opinion about the recommendations (see Addendum G for an example of a completed questionnaire of the recommendations on enhancing teachers' sense of self-efficacy).

During the analysis, direct quotations are used to enrich the discussion. The P indicates the participant whose quote was used and S for the school (A or B). For example “SA P1” indicates school A participant one.

In my summary of the feedback from the participants regarding recommendations, I refer to the number of participants as indicated below:

- “few” or “some” refers to between one and four participants;
- “many” refers to between five and seven participants; and
- “most” to between eight and ten participants.

### **6.6.1 Feedback from participants**

In general, most participants agreed to all of these recommendations, because of the practical and simple way it was written for teachers to understand. *“These are all very clever ideas and it is everything that we talked about with you in the interviews and it is ideas that we can grasp, it will be very beneficial for us to use (SB P4)”*. There were, however, a few additional recommendations made by the participants on some points, which were consequently included in the guidelines if applicable. Feedback on the suggested recommendations for teachers, the school and Department of Basic Education (DBE) to enhance teachers’ sense of self-efficacy will be individually discussed next.

#### **6.6.1.1 Suggested recommendations for teachers to enhance their sense of self-efficacy**

- **Self-development**

The participants mostly agreed with these recommendations, *“I totally agree with all the points made in this issue (SB P1)”*. The reason for the participants’ approval includes the importance of gaining knowledge on a regular basis, since knowledge is evolving. *“Agreed! No knowledge except for God is able to remain correct and relevant for all years. New conditions are discovered every year (SB P2)”*.

Many participants emphasised the suggestion to make a personal effort to take personal responsibility for self-directed learning. *“I agree because the teacher makes a personal effort to increase knowledge on inclusive education by attending workshops and reading related books and articles (SA P2)”*. *“Agree, because I want to make a personal effort to increase knowledge on inclusive education by reading related books and articles in order to help other teachers and learners (SA P3)”*. *“Yes, I like to empower myself by enrolling for further studies doing learner support, getting more knowledge so that I can have more to support the learners and even other teachers, I’m busy now with studying inclusive education and learning so much (SA P5)”*.

A participant explained that he is mostly in favour of the recommendation to attend training by higher institutions. *“I completely agree on what you are saying here about furthering your studies by higher education institutions (SB P3)”*.

Most participants pointed out that their favourable opinion is based on the advantage that development of oneself can bring to inclusive education. *“These can make us excellent teachers, because it will help us to develop ourselves in a way that will help a learner who struggles by knowing then what to do (SB P5)”*. Other benefits of these recommendations in self-development was included in the following statement: *“I agree with teachers being developed because so much has changed in education especially inclusive education there’s still a lot to learn as we encounter different learning barriers. When attending workshops it will boost my self-esteem in planning, organizing and supporting the learner (SA P1)”*. One participant explained that: *“This will help us to identify our strengths and weaknesses and we should realise that it should be ongoing to make teachers realise their knowledge and skills at the school and that will enhance our self-development, I definitely agree (SA P4)”*.

The participants were satisfied with all the suggestions on self-development and no additional recommendations were made by them.

- **Peer support**

The recommendations given with regard to supportive advice by peers was mostly asserted as important by the participants. *“Peer support is very important as no one*

*lives by herself or himself we need each other because I cannot say I know everything. I teach multilevel grades and that needs me to interact with other teachers for support (SA P1)*". A participant confirmed this in his answer and also emphasised on the importance of teamwork: *"Peer support plays an important role in an educator's life as teamwork is vital for institutions to progress positively. Sharing of ideas knowledge and skills in order to make a change (SB P3)"*.

Many participants highlighted the suggestions on how teachers can learn from their peers to support learners with barriers. *"I agree that this can be done as exchanging information about what was experienced in class, as successful and adaptations that worked for learners with a certain barrier to learning (SA P2)"*. *"I gain a lot from other teachers when sharing ideas with them, as we don't use the same strategies or adaptations (SA P3)"*.

One participant stated that although she agrees with all the points, in addition to working with peers in the same school, she would also recommend that teachers should be working with peers from other schools. *"I agree with all points, I just think we should also share with other teachers from other schools also (SB P1)"*.

- **Working with parents/caregivers**

The recommendations provided on encouraging parents/caregivers engagement were mostly acknowledged by the participants as good suggestions. *"Agree! Education is based on three legged pot that is the parent, learner and educator. They need to work together in harmony to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in order to be able to face all challenges, communicate their challenges, and come up with tangible solutions (SB P3)"*. *"It helps to know each other concerning classwork activities, support programs from parents, challenges experiencing at home and relationships with parents (SA P2)"*. *"Working with parents help us as we have one goal to support the child's needs (SA P1)"*. Most of the participants agreed with the suggestions on how to get parents involved to assist teachers in supporting their children. *Parents can also help us to support their children by helping them with homework (SA P3)"*. A participant conceded and expounded in her answer: *"Agree, parents should be encouraged to give their input*

*on strategies that can be used in the classroom this will make them have a sense of belonging, when ideas are also coming from parents it would not be overwhelming for teachers to be responsible for generating ideas alone, parents will also be support structures for teachers (SA P4)".*

Many participants explained that they are already adhering to some of the suggestions in the proposed recommendations. *"We communicate with parents with newsletters sometimes we invite them to discuss learner's newsletters, sometimes we invite them to discuss learner's progress, behaviour, challenges arranging school activities and homework (SA P5)". "We call the parent, because if we do not work with parents we will not be able to know the child (SA P3)".*

A participant added a suggestion regarding visiting the homes of children: *"the point of visiting parents, I think we can be selective, we visit only those parents whose learners have barriers. Other parents can be invited to school (SB P1)".* Another participant appended a suggestion in the case where parents are not able to assist, due to various reasons, by making use of older learners with more experience to help these learners with homework. *"The issue of uneducated parents cannot be an excuse for teachers to exclude them. I would suggest homework assistants (for instance learners that are more aged or clever) to help learners to their homework, if parents cannot be involved, but then parents must still be made aware by these supporting assistants through teachers of how their children progress (SB P2)".*

- **Classroom management**

Most participants agreed with the recommendations for managing an inclusive classroom effectively in dealing with diverse learner needs, overcrowded classrooms and disruptive learner behaviour. *"I agree with all these points (SB P3)".* Many participants answered that they agree with these suggestions, because they are already practicing some of these techniques and can therefore relate to the effectiveness of it. *"I agree with what you are saying here, because I have a diverse classroom whereby I teach different levels. I have a strong leadership role and I'm able to group my learners accordingly and give support to each individual (SA P1)". "Classroom arrangement in*

*overcrowded classes is important, establishing rules in the classes, explaining and establishing routines. Practise a spirit of cooperation and a sense of togetherness in the classroom. Planning for the interests of learners (SA P2)*".

Another participant emphasised the importance of "*strong leadership*" and added that in order for teachers to manage their class effectively, they must know their learners very well in terms of emotions and make use of more group work activities to manage behaviour. "*They are very important, teachers' must know children's moods arrange learners in groups give them work that you can control (SA P3)*".

A participant wrote that he "*agreed and in addition to your suggestions the teacher must prepare his/her lesson very well. If not he/she may struggle to present and will cause confusion (SB P2)*".

One participant furthermore added the following: "*I agree with all points. In the case where there are too much learners in one class, learners should be divided according to ability, the slow learners one class or side and the smart learners on the other side or class (SB P1)*". Unfortunately, this could not be mentioned as a recommendation, because it goes against a fundamental principle of inclusive education of not labelling and stereotyping learners according to their abilities. Interestingly enough, this was not mentioned in my previous data collection. However, this indicates that there is a critical need to engage teachers in in-depth training with regard to what inclusive education really means (*cf.* Chapter 2 and 5).

- **Personal wellness for teachers**

The participants mostly agreed about the importance of personal wellbeing in enabling teachers' self-efficacy. "*I agree with all points (SB P1)*". "*This is very important that as a teacher I make sure to maintain a healthy balance between work and my personal life. I keep a positive attitude all the time, because if I can bring my personal issues around my work learners will suffer greatly (SA P1)*".

Most participants felt that these are important points to address: "*Teachers should participate fully and comprising physical activity and social interaction. Have a positive*

*attitude and own responsibility for one's own wellbeing. Maintain a healthy balance work and develop confidence to other matters (SA P2)".*

Suggestions were made by many participants to learn more specific personal organisation skills such as time and stress management. *"You should focus more on skills that will help you cope with stress and time planning, they are very important, because if you are on time you won't be frustrated, you will be able to meet learners' needs. If you do your planning you will be able to attend all learners and meet their needs (SA P3)". "The most important thing is knowing one self, and doing things on time. A teacher who is unable to deal with stress must organise self to do things early before crises strikes (SB P2)".*

Another participant added that she agrees with the suggestions, but also provided more ideas to live a more balanced life. *"I agree on all these suggestions, but I also think that teachers should read inspiring articles, books and movies to relax and learn more about wellness and how to balance your priorities (SA P4)".*

#### **6.6.1.2 Suggested recommendations for schools to enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy**

- **Arranging training and in-service workshops**

Suggestions for arranging CPD by the school to enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy, were affirmed by most participants. *"I agree, because the teacher attending training and in-service workshops will gain more knowledge and develop skills in an inclusive classroom (SA P2)". "I agree, because this will encourage teachers to gain more knowledge and skills that will address issues they are facing in the classroom situations (SA P1)". "Agree, by attending workshops teachers will be able to gain more knowledge and skills to develop and creased their confidence in addressing diverse needs in an inclusive classroom (SA P3)".*

A participant added that the school must have a plan to give teachers time off work to go for training. *"I think more time should be provided by the school to go for workshops. If they can just have a system in place to support or replace us with our work, while we*

go for training (SB P1)”. It was also additionally suggested that *“the school management must analyse result and plan for trainings according to needs of teachers and learners (SB P2)”*.

- **Increased support and collaboration**

The participants mostly agreed about increased support and collaboration. *“Collaboration makes the learning environment to be a place of support that will impact positively to teachers and learners (SA P4)”*.

There were a few additional recommendations with regard to the school management and the appropriate use of developed skills. *“If people who are in leadership positions within the schools can use collaboration with staff and share ideas with teachers, teacher performance will increase and there will be job satisfaction (SA P4)”*.

*“It should be the culture of the school that once the skills and knowledge had been identified through self-development then teachers should use those skills identified to support each other (SA P4)”*.

- **Establishing support groups**

Most participants agreed with the suggestion to establish support groups for teachers in order to increase support and collaboration. *“At schools we form committees whereby we support each other on challenges we are facing and also progress on our work in general, that works, but I agree that there must be a system like this for personal support also, I agree on that statement (SA P1)”*. *“Support groups should be established to provide personal and work related support. A group leader must coordinate activities of the group. Ensure that the program is evaluated regularly (SA P2)”*. *“Support groups come together to talk about a challenge that they have in common. It is also a form whereby members share problems and concerns, brain storm solutions, give each other advice and form friendships (SA P2)”*.

A participant described in her answer why she thinks support groups could work. *“Support groups can work, because we already have a new thing that works, it is the rule now that those who attend workshops gives feedback to the teachers who did not*

*attend during meetings, which made progression in our teachers to learn from one another, I think if we establish a support work for sharing on training, it would help (SA P3)*". Sharing about training was thus included in the recommendations on establishing support groups.

Additional advice was given by a few participants to involve learners, who do not experience barriers to learning, in support groups for learners who do experience barriers to learning. *"I think the support group can be establish for where we use learners who don't have barriers to help slow ones, this will make our task easier (SB P1)"*.

However one participant disagreed with the establishment of support groups. *"I disagree with this statement, because people feel threatened when given advises or sharing some knowledge with them, sometimes it feels like one can keep quit and do his or her job with peace (SA P1)"*.

- **Higher education institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)**

Most participants agreed that HEI's and NGO's need to be requested to support schools. *"We need support from other stakeholders (SA P3)"*. *"Support is highly needed for teachers (SA P4)"*. A participant motivated her answer with the following: *"school need inter-dependent support and collaboration by establishing partnerships with higher education institutions e.g. NWU [North-West University] and NGOs (SA P2)"*.

A participant specified that teachers also *"need support from other stakeholders to provide personal and work related support (SA P1)"*. Another participant recommended that support groups must be formed between teachers and stakeholders. *"Support groups should be formed, because we will be able to share ideas and problems, we can also get advice and approaches (SA P3)"*.

- **Establishing functional ILST's**

The participants mostly agreed with the recommendations of establishing a functional ILST. *"Agree, we must have a functional ILST that support teachers and learners*

*through learning and teaching issues, also with some social, emotional issues from learners (SA P1)". "Agree, Sharing responsibility as committee members (SA P4)". Some even answered that their current "ILST's is functional at school. It helps teachers to identify and support learners at risk (SA P2)". "We have ILST's which is functional to support teachers and learners and that helps us to be more effective in inclusive education (SA P3)".*

One participant disagreed in a sense that *"small schools find it difficult, because every teacher leads many committees with different demands (SB P2)".*

No additional recommendations were made.

- **Strategies to get parents involved**

The participants mostly agreed with the suggestions. *"Teachers must send words of praise and encouragement home. Parents must be informed of school and class rules expectations and activities and also be informed about their child's progress. Meet parents at least once each term is also crucial (SA P2)". "Agreed that we can write news letters to parents, use communication books or contact them telephonically. Invite them to parents meetings at least once a term to give feedback about their children (SA P5)". "It is the responsibility of the school and the teacher to create a sense of belonging for parents to understand that we are all responsible for the education of our children (SA P4)". "We have a programme whereby they invite parents and prepare some lunch for them to discuss issues around learners' progress and barriers to learning. That makes parents to participate, so I think this could be added (SA P1)".*

- **Teacher acknowledgement and wellness**

Most participants emphasised the importance of teachers to be acknowledged by the school as well as making provision for teacher wellness. *"At my school the management rarely acknowledge what teachers are doing, they must try what you are saying here (SA P1)". "Provide support to teachers and assuring them that they are part of the school community. Respecting and rewarding teachers and creating opportunities for further development"(SA P2)". "Agree, they don't acknowledge how much we are doing,*

*they just give us more work and we are having overcrowded learners, especially in grade one which affects our health (SA P3)”.*

A participant made an additional suggestion which has been included in the recommendations of this study. She explained it in her answer: *“I agree here and I also think that teachers should read an article which can be designed by the school every morning’s briefing session positive statements should be read by different teachers to positively recharge teachers before they begin with their classes. All teachers should be involved in designing the book of positive code (SA P4)”.*

### **6.6.1.3 Suggested recommendations for the DBE to enhance teachers’ sense of self-efficacy**

- **Improvement in the current in-service workshops**

All participants agreed with the strategies recommended for the improvement of current in-service workshops, since this was one of their major complaints in disabling their self-efficacy. *“Agree, they must not train us for short courses it difficult for us to implement (SA P3)”.* *“Agree. Workshops should be relevant to the needs of the teachers (SA P4)”.* *“Agree, training should involve practical activities that addresses classroom management and organization (SA P4)”.* *“Training should be relevant to the learner’s circumstances at hand e.g. socio-economic circumstances (SB P2)”.* *Consult teachers beforehand about their needs (SA P2)”.* *“I agree that the trainings should not be short courses, because that makes it difficult for teachers to implement at schools what they were trained for (SA P1)”.* *“I agree that more training opportunities should be given, at least more than one per term (SA P5)”.* *“Workshops should be scheduled during the holidays not in the late afternoon (SB P5)”.*

- **Specific CPD (Training on inclusive education, Inter-personal skills, Intra-personal development)**

The participants mostly confirmed the recommendations. *“Teachers need training on inclusive education how to use different as techniques to assist learners with barriers (SA P4)”.*

*Inter-personal skills will help teachers with a lack of cooperation or conflict with other colleagues (SB P5). Intra-personal development create a way of learning about personal strength and weaknesses, where to improve and what are needed to improve (SA P2)*". A participant also added a need for more specific training on inclusive education policy documents. *"There should also be intensive training on inclusive education policy documents and how to implement the new CAPS curriculum (SA P5)"*.

- **Increased and improved support**

Since it is a challenge for the participants to work with learners who experience different barriers to learning, participants assertively agreed with these suggestions. *"It's still a very tough challenge, cause we do not have specialist's that are based at schools, and that's why I agree that this is needed (SA P1) (SA P3)"*. A participant confirmed the importance of more support by stating the following: *"Supported people are happier people and happier people perform best (SB P2)"*.

Support from professionals was emphasised in the participant's feedback. *"Support from professionals and the DBE, DBST's must be increased and improved. Schools need nurses psychologists, social workers etc. to visit schools on a regular basis. Surely their support and visits will improve the poor conditions at school (SA P2)"*.

Many participants accentuated the suggestion that DBE officials should be trained more intensively on inclusive education to effectively support teachers. *"There should be intensive training of departmental officials on inclusive education to support us (SA P4)"*.

A participant also suggested that supportive personnel for teachers must be appointed to help with self-development. *"I agree with all the points made in this issue. I also recommend that the DBE if possible could hire specialists to help us with self-development, which are people who will go around the schools to help with the support of teachers as well as learners (SB P1)"*. *"Agreed. The person who supports must be well trained and knowledgeable of inclusive education (SB P1)"*.

- **Wellness programmes**

The participants' answers were quite contradictory on this matter. Some stated that there are departmental systems in place for teachers' wellness and others asserted that support is needed from the DBE. *"Systems are at place for the learners and teachers, but not enough for teachers (SA P1), because the DBE does not mention it enough, it's low on their priority list (SA P3)". "Agree that there are systems in place to support the teachers with this, but teachers do not make use of them, because it is not emphasised by the DBE, teachers think that it is only for the learners (SA P5)".*

A participant confirmed that *"the DBE need to provide more support programmes or structures for teachers at personal level such as trauma counselling, stress, financial, legal relationships, addictions and health issues (SA P2)".*

The same participant suggested that he agrees *"but these programmes will give good results when done by experienced people who were once teachers and who are able to guarantee confidentiality (SB P2)".*

- **Curriculum**

The participants mostly agreed with the recommendation for a more flexible curriculum. *"Yes flexibility please regarding to teaching and achieving curriculum goals in reaching diverse needs of learners (SA P4)".*

*"The full-service school's policies should be revised to suit learners experiencing barriers to learning (SB P4)".*

- **Resources**

With regard to the recommendation on increased resources, all the participants agreed that *"schools and learners need resources for effective teaching and learning (SB P5)". "I agree that enough and suitable learning materials should be provided to accommodate all learners (SB P1)".*

Most participants motivated their answers similar to the following: *"There are not enough resources to accommodate learners needs (SA P1)".* They also confirmed that

the lack of *“resources are the main reasons why teachers are not prepared to go an extra mile in trying to address learning barriers (SB P2)”*.

A few participants additionally recommended that resources to assist them with research should be provided, such as the *“internet and a computer/laptop (SA P5)”*.

- **Acknowledgements and rewards**

Most of the participants agreed with the recommendations for teachers to get more acknowledged and rewarded. *“I definitely agree that teachers need to be awarded, because we deserve it (SB P5).”* Even though *“the DBE have teacher awards annually to encourage teachers (SA P1), “it should be increased to enhance teachers’ self-efficacy (SA P3)”*. *“Agree. The reward will motivate the teachers to more perfect work (SB P3)”*.

The participants made more suggestions. *“Sending teachers to overseas and to learn more about inclusion practically and come with different ideas (SA P2)”*, or *“providing them with laptops to make a quality research (SA P5)”*. *“The teacher award should not be just by incentives e.g. laptop, computers etc., but also getting awarded with it and also reward teachers with bursaries to study where inclusive education is successfully implemented (SA P4)”*.

## **6.7 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I provided recommendations, as identified from the literature and the empirical data collected, to enhance teachers’ sense of self-efficacy. A summary of the feedback from the participants about how they view the relevance and applicability of these recommendations was also given. In the next chapter, I will summarise the findings under the research questions as well as address limitations of the study and make recommendations for possible future research studies.

## CHAPTER 7

### SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

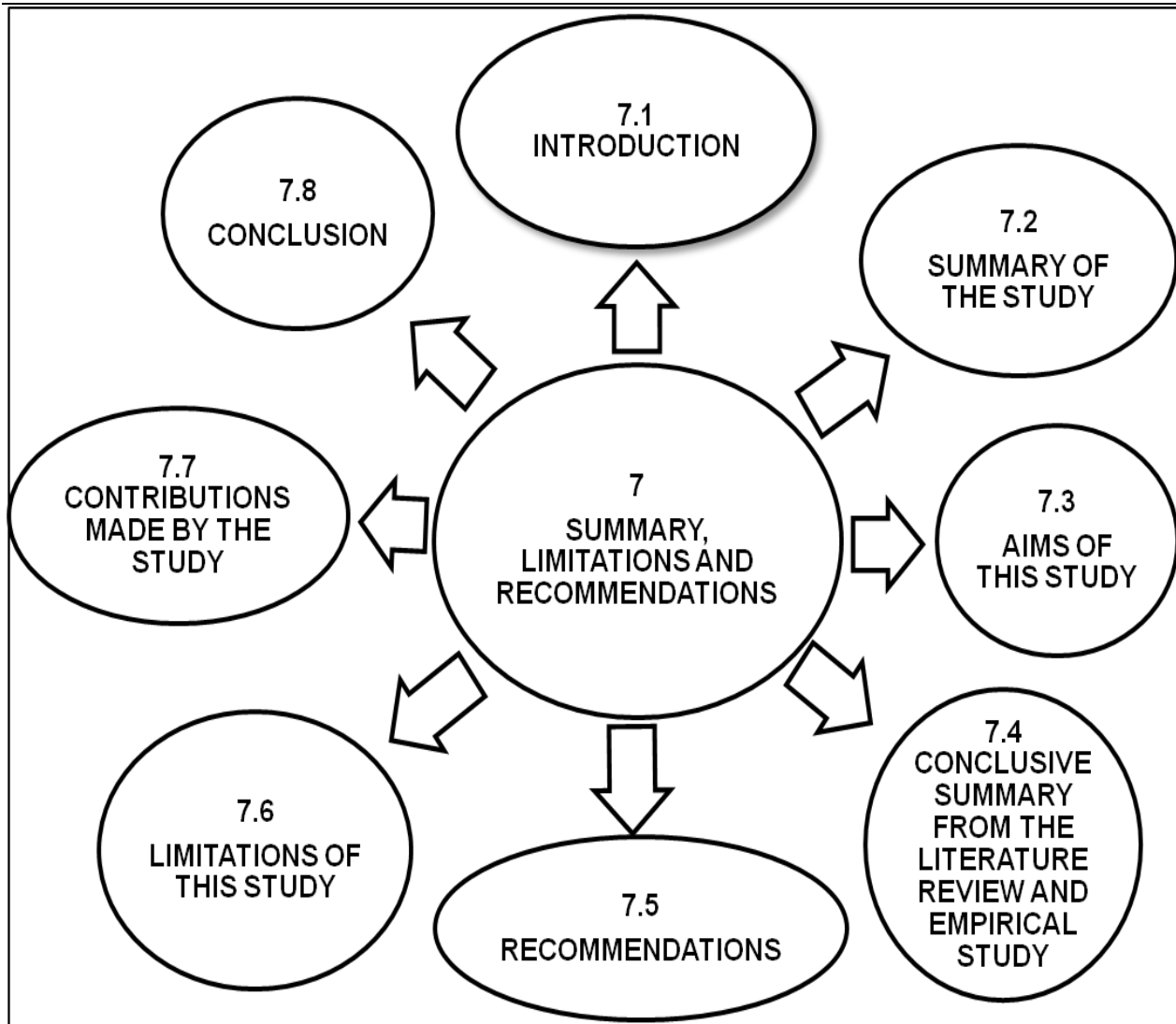


Figure 7.1 Overview of Chapter Seven

## **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of my research was to explore full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system. From the literature and empirical findings, I was able to answer my primary research question. This chapter includes a conclusive summary of the literature review and empirical study, and also provides recommendations, addresses limitations and emphasises contributions made by the study.

## **7.2 SUMMARY OF THIS STUDY**

In Chapter One, I presented the background and rationale for the study. The primary research question and subsequent secondary aims were outlined. An overview of the research design and methodology as well as the significance, feasibility and the theoretical underpinning of my study were introduced.

In Chapter Two, I provided a literature review and a theoretical framework of self-efficacy as well as possible contributing factors to the development of self-efficacy, as relevant to teachers within an inclusive school environment.

Since the study focused on the sense of self-efficacy of teachers within an inclusive school, Chapter Three deliberated inclusive education as well as the theoretical framework on which inclusive education is based.

In Chapter Four, I addressed the research methodology, design and research paradigm that I used in my study.

In Chapter Five, I discussed and interpreted the analysed data.

Based on the findings, presented in Chapter Five, in Chapter Six I offered the recommendations for teachers, schools and the DBE for enhancing full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system.

In Chapter Seven, I concluded my study by presenting the summary, findings and recommendations.

In the next section, I present a summary of the findings from the literature and empirical research in answering my research aims, so as to indicate how each aim was realised.

### 7.3 AIMS OF THIS STUDY

In the following table, the aims of this study (*cf.* 4.1.2) and the achievement thereof, are summarised.

AIMS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To determine what self-efficacy is;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I conducted a thorough literature review on the theoretical framework of self-efficacy and possible contributing factors to the development of self-efficacy as relevant to teachers within an inclusive school environment. This literature review was discussed in Chapter Two;</li> <li>• I then conducted empirical research and compared the findings with the literature review. I consequently determined how the concept self-efficacy is described by literature and other researchers, as well as how participants, in this case teachers, view and understand self-efficacy within an inclusive school environment.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To determine what knowledge, skills and values are regarded as essential for teachers' sense of self-efficacy in inclusive education;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the findings of the literature review as well as the empirical research, I identified certain knowledge, skills and values that seem to be essential for teachers' sense of self-efficacy. These will be discussed in 7.4.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore what the factors are that enable or disable teachers' sense of self-efficacy to implement inclusive education successfully;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The empirical research explored this aim and then compared the findings to extant literature. I determined that a range of factors within the microsystem enables the teachers' sense of self-efficacy when confronted with teaching in an inclusive education environment.</li> <li>• I also established that there is quite a scope of issues, interacting between the different ecosystems (micro, meso, exo and macro) that disables or negatively influences teachers' sense of self-efficacy.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore what the needs are of teachers to be self-effective in an inclusive education system; and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the findings I identified the needs of teachers to gain a higher sense of self-efficiency in teaching within an inclusive education system. These needs were then addressed in recommendations made to the teacher, the school and the DBE.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop recommendations on the strategies that can be developed to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in an inclusive education system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the literature review and empirical findings, teacher self-efficacy was conceptualised and several factors, that either enable or disable teachers' sense of self-efficacy, were identified. From these findings, recommendations for the participants, schools and the DBE could be constructed in order to develop and enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy within an inclusive full-service school.</li> </ul>
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Table 7.1. Aims of this study

## 7.4 THE CONCLUSIVE SUMMARY FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW AND EMPIRICAL STUDY

The key research findings from the literature review and empirical research presented in this section relate to the research questions as stated in Chapter One (*cf.* 1.4).

### 7.4.1 Findings from the first research question: What is self-efficacy?

LITERATURE REVIEW	EMPIRICAL STUDY
Self-efficacy can be defined as the belief, including a personal certainty in own capabilities regarding one's knowledge, skills, abilities and resources, to organise and execute the courses of action required to manage future situations (Pajares 2004; Bandura, 1997:95, 2005).	Self-efficacy as a concept ( <i>cf.</i> 5.2.1.1) was best described and understood by the participants in relating low with high teacher self-efficacy ( <i>cf.</i> 5.2.1.1.4) and viewed the teacher with a high sense of self-efficacy as a person who exhibited and portrayed certain traits ( <i>cf.</i> 5.2.1.2) and skills ( <i>cf.</i> 5.2.1.3).

Table 7.2 Findings from the first research question

#### **7.4.2 Findings from the second research question: What knowledge, skills and values are regarded as essential for teachers' sense of self-efficacy in inclusive education?**

The following was identified as most essential for developing teachers' sense of self-efficacy in an inclusive education environment:

- Knowledge and understanding with regard to what inclusive education entails as well as the relevant policy documents and how it should be implemented.
- Knowledge and skills with regard to the identification and support of learners who experience barriers to learning.
- Continuously gaining more self-knowledge was emphasised.
- Developing intra- and inter-personal skills.
- Holding and demonstrating values that is in the best interest of the child. (Even though teachers are negative about the implementation of inclusive education, they still value the principles it is based on, such as human rights, equality and participation).

#### **7.4.3 Findings from the third research question: What are the factors that enable or disable teachers' sense of self-efficacy to implement inclusive education successfully?**

The findings revealed that certain ecosystemic factors are currently enabling and disabling teachers' sense of self-efficacy to implement inclusive education successfully. These will be individually discussed next.

##### **7.4.3.1 Ecosystemic (cf. 5.2.2) factors currently enabling teachers' self-efficacy**

The factors discussed in this section can all be classified under the microsystem (cf. 3.2.3.3.1) of Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological system, since it entails direct interaction between the participants and certain factors that impact on their sense of self-efficacy.

The participants of this study identified some contextual factors from within the school environment such as learning through exposure (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.1), positive influences of others in the school (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.2) and successful teaching strategies within the classroom (*cf.* 5.2.2.1.3) as currently enabling their sense of teacher self-efficacy.

#### **7.4.3.2 Ecosystemic (*cf.* 5.2.3) factors currently disabling teachers' self-efficacy**

Factors that are currently disabling teachers' self-efficacy seem to be a lack of knowledge and skills (*cf.* 5.2.3.1) (i.e. micro [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.1] and macrosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.4] factors) exacerbated by the role the Department of Education plays (*cf.* 5.2.3.2) (i.e. mesosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.2], as well as exosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.3] and macrosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.4] factors) within the school system as well as other external discouraging factors (*cf.* 5.2.3.3) (i.e. mesosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.2], as well as exosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.3] and macrosystemic [*cf.* 3.2.3.3.4] factors).

#### **7.4.4 Findings from the fourth research question: What are the needs of teachers to be self-effective in an inclusive education system?**

Regarding the needs of teachers to be more self-effective in an inclusive education system, the following was identified:

- A need for more and effective continuous professional development opportunities, which focuses on the continuous development of knowledge and skills with regard to inclusive education as well as self-development;
- Support from the DBE (provincial and district) as well as the school concerning:
  - more and better quality in-service training;
  - opportunities for post-graduate education;
  - more efficient support from district officials;
  - more resources such as learning material and education equipment for learners who experience barriers to learning;
  - access to health professionals, such as psychologists, speech- and occupational therapists; and

- factors impacting on their personal lives and consequently influencing their professional lives (such as the establishment of wellness programmes and support groups).
- Support from peers (colleagues at the school as well as from surrounding schools) with regard to professional and personal lives;
- Improved collaboration with parents, NGO's and HEI's;
- A crucial need for a more flexible curriculum was stressed; and
- More acknowledgement for achievements from the school, parents and the DBE should be given.

#### **7.4.5 Findings from the fifth research question: Which recommendations can be developed to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in an inclusive education system?**

From the findings, it was evident that in order to develop and enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy, within an inclusive full-service school, certain important needs of teachers must be addressed by the teachers themselves, the schools and the DBE. Consequently, recommendations were made regarding the following:

- Teachers must have a comprehensive understanding of the concept self-efficacy especially as related to an inclusive education setting, including low versus high self-efficacy; factors that enable and disable a sense of self-efficacy; as well as intra- and interpersonal skills. Teachers need to take responsibility to develop and enhance their own sense of self-efficacy by giving attention to self-development, peer support, working with parents/caregivers, classroom management and personal wellness;
- Schools must arrange opportunities for continuous professional development; establishing support groups; collaboration with NGO's and HEI's; establishing functional ILST's; better parent/caregiver involvement; acknowledging teachers; and addressing their wellness; and
- The DBE has to give attention to improving the quality of in-service workshops; providing opportunities for continuous professional development on inclusive

education; intra- and interpersonal skills; increased and improved support with regard to human (e.g. health professionals), as well as physical (e.g. financial, learning material and teaching aids) resources; wellness programmes; the flexibility of the curriculum; and acknowledging and rewarding teachers for achievements.

## 7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The transformation of mainstream schools into full-service schools is in the very early developmental stages. However, since the implementation of inclusive education is experiencing many challenges in South Africa (Dreyer, 2014:181; Engelbrecht et al., forthcoming; Dreyer 2008; Oswald & Engelbrecht 2004:26; Swart & Pettipher 2005; Hay, 2003:136), this also impacts on the conversion of these schools to become fully functional inclusive schools. Teachers are central role players in ensuring that full-service schools become beacons of successful inclusive practices (SA, 2001). It is therefore essential that the enhancement of teachers' sense of self-efficacy is a key focus of research (Malinen *et al.* 2013; Savolainen, *et al.* 2012). This was a case study, only focusing on two schools' teachers, which identified several enabling and disabling factors to enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy. It is therefore important that this study is extended to more full-service schools in different South African contexts;
- It is also recommended that further studies are conducted with regard to how the enabling factors could be augmented in ensuring that teachers utilise them more in inclusive education environments and consequently experience an improved sense of success;
- The disabling factors should also be the focus of further studies to increase an awareness, and also consequent improvements of these factors to enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy in an inclusive education environment;
- Since inclusive education is the fundamental approach of the South African education system, exploring teachers' sense of self-efficacy in mainstream

schools as well as special schools as resource centres, should also be a key focus of further research; and

- Besides further research studies, it is important to distribute this study's recommendations to schools, district offices and the DBE in order to create a deeper awareness of the factors that impact on teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education environment. A result will hopefully then be that these recommendations are implemented and the outcomes thereof further investigated.

## **7.6 LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF THIS STUDY**

- Since this was a qualitative, multiple case study (two schools), the findings cannot be generalised.
- This study depended on the participants' continuous participation and much of their free time was demanded, especially the teachers that took part in all three stages of the study. I therefore kept in mind that possible challenges regarding this could arise during the course of the research. This challenge was effectively dealt with when I distinctly explained to the participants what the overall aim of the study is in the sense that it could possibly be beneficial for creating an awareness to improve inclusive practices at full service schools, but that it could also probably enhance their own awareness of their sense of self-efficacy. I had to fit into the schools' and the participants' programmes. As a result, many meetings had to be rescheduled.

## **7.7 CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY THE STUDY**

During the process of collecting data, the participants asserted continuously that they appreciated this opportunity to share their views. This made me feel as if I am personally making a difference in their lives and also inspired me as a researcher to create more opportunities for teachers to be heard. This was confirmed by all the following voluntary WhatsApp and text messages I received from the participants, after each data collection procedure:

*“Thanks for listening to us Isabel, it was nice talking to you today, you mean a lot to me, now I know something is going to be done for us who teaches”.*

*“I really enjoyed our discussion today, it made me realise that we need to talk about important stuff”.*

*“I am so glad you didn’t just come here today and read us stuff, we should be given more opportunities like that to talk and be listened to”.*

*“I believe that angels are provided for us by God in our lives. I believe that you are one of those angels, Isabel, thank you!”*

Although these messages were much appreciated, I maintained my professional stance as researcher by not getting involved in personal conversations. It was respectfully made clear to the participants that their appreciative communications were valued, but for the purpose of the research I needed to remain uninvolved and professional.

Furthermore, the participants who took part in the collage activity evidently found it very enjoyable and beneficial in terms of making them aware of their skills, contributions to teaching and also helped them to examine their thoughts on how inclusive education can be improved. They declared that this activity was a form of an introspection method.

*“This activity made me realise things about myself that I didn’t know “I’ve come to the conclusion that I do have what it takes to make inclusion work....., I became aware of my competencies and how I am really contributing in my teaching (SA C3 P3)”.*

*“I know now that I can do it and we can do it together, it is possible for inclusion to work (SA C5 P5)”.*

*“I got more clarity on who I am and what do we need for inclusion to work (SB C4 P4)”.*

*“It made me understand how I am part of this whole process (SB C6 P6)”.*

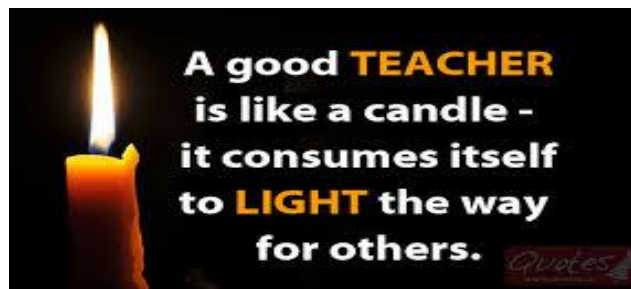
The major contribution of this study was the emphasis that it placed on the importance of enhancing teachers' sense of self-efficacy in ensuring that full-service schools become fully functional inclusive schools. It also identified key enabling and disabling impacting factors and recommendations as identified from the literature review, but more essentially from the teachers' own voices that were provided to enhance their sense of self-efficacy.

Two key aspects from my research findings that I feel need to be ardently attended to by further research, as well as key role players (such as school management teams, the DBE, NGO's and HEI's), are the direct need for more CPD opportunities, as well as better support structures for professional and personal issues.

## 7.8 CONCLUSION

Although education should be all about learners and optimising their learning opportunities so that they can achieve their full potential, teachers play a focal role in this. It is therefore crucial that the voice of teachers are heard, but also acted on, and their wellbeing looked after.

*“Teachers, I believe, are the most responsible and important members of society because their professional efforts affect the fate of the earth.” — Helen Caldicott*



(Downloaded from <https://www.google.com>)