CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS

'The meaning of inclusion is culturally determined and essentially depends on the political values and processes of the country and its response to the needs of individuals' (Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughn & Shaw, 2006).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected through interviews, observations, field notes, tape recorder, GDE 450 'A' documents and case history forms compiled through interviews with parents, SMTs and educators. The aim of this study is to investigate the nature of challenges that South African educators, Senior Management Teams and parents face in managing the implementation of White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education. In addition, suggestions are made regarding eco-systemic management strategies that can be used to help educators, Senior Management Teams and parents to develop the necessary capacity to effectively implement and manage the Inclusive Education policy as propounded by White Paper 6.

This study found that the learners have eco-systemic challenges that affect their academic performance. Interviews revealed that learners have physical and contextual challenges that play a major role in their academic performance at school. Some challenges will be highlighted as stated by the participants. Some of the information was disclosed only after the parents or the guardians gained confidence and trust in this researcher.

Forty (40) cases from the representative population were analysed and these cases were recorded. Copies of cases that were recorded on GDE 450 'A' forms for learners who need support in various learning areas, in addition referral forms that were filled-in were made available to the researcher. The original forms were submitted to the District Education office for them to decide on whether to condone the learners or endorse the given symbol as indicated by the educators.

From data gained from the responses during the interviews, observations, field notes and documents that were studied, the following themes have been identified:

- Management of the implementation of White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education challenges.

- Ecological management challenges.

- Systemic management challenges.

- Methodological management challenges.

- Management challenges for curriculum transformation.

- Socio-economic management challenges.

- Management strategies for learners with physical challenges.

These themes have been further categorized and sub-categorized as indicated in Table 5.1.

5.1.1 Themes, categories and sub-categories

Table: 5.1:   Themes, categories and sub-categories

THEMES	CATEGORIES	SUB-CATEGORIES
5.1.1.1 Management of the implementation of White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education challenges	5.1.1.1.1 Lack of direction and scope regarding inclusivity	Learners with academic problems Learners with behavioural problems
5.1.1.2 Ecological management challenges	5.1.1.2.1 Lack of managerial skills for addressing environmental issues of schools	Transferred learners Home alone learners Homeless learners Child-headed families
5.1.1.3 Systemic management challenges	5.1.1.3.1 Lack of managerial skills for educational and	Medium of instruction

	social systems within the school	
5.1.1.4 Methodological management challenges	**5.1.1.4.1** Lack of management skills for supporting teaching and learning	Lack of management skills for learners with high levels of energy Lack of management skills for learners with low levels of energy Lack of management skills for aggressive learners
5.1.1.5 Management challenges for curriculum transformation	**5.1.1.5.1** Lack of managerial skills for curriculum transformation	Non-adaptation and modification of the curriculum
5.1.1.6 Socio-economic management challenges	**5.1.1.6.1** Lack of planning skills for securing justice in social and economical issues	Poverty Divorced/Divorcing parents Single parents Learners living with a large number of extended family members
5.1.1.7 Management strategies for learners with physical challenges	**5.1.1.7.1** Lack of management skills for accommodating learners with physical challenges	Learners with physical challenges

The analysis under the above themes, categories and sub-categories unfolded as follows:

5.1.1.1 Management of the implementation of White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education challenges

5.1.1.1.1 Category: Lack of direction and scope regarding inclusivity

The responses from the participants regarding the challenges that they experience and the eco-systemic management strategies that they employ to effectively implement and manage inclusive schools, brought to light that they lack direction and scope regarding inclusivity. The schools do not have any indication of Inclusive Education in their vision and mission statements. These schools have heard of White Paper 6 but they do not have the policy and they are struggling with a wide diverse of learner needs. Unfortunately, there is no one in the participating schools with skills to help with diverse learning needs. Senior Management Teams, educators and parents are waiting on the Department of Education to help with this challenge, they cannot offer help too and this results in a helpless situation, with no hope for solutions to the challenges.

An educator indicated that:

> School Management Team members are also educators, they have classes, and they are teaching, they have the same problems, so they cannot help us with Inclusive Education in our classrooms.

The educators depend on Senior Management Teams' assistance but if they cannot help the educators, then they are helpless, they have no one to turn to.

A principal of a school indicated that:

> The district office has no specialist to help with the challenges of running schools with inclusive learners. They have a psychologist, but there are more than a hundred schools he must visit. There are too many learners needing help and that complicates the situation.

If there is no capacity to deal with Inclusive Education challenges, it becomes impossible to think of the implementation of the policy. For the policy to be implemented effectively staff must be trained for the task and the Department of Education must employ sufficient personnel to deal with the challenges.

In the above category, the sub-categories emerged as 'learners with academic problems' and 'learners with behavioural problems'. The analysis will be done in the following paragraphs.

Sub-category: Learners with academic problems

One hundred percent (100%) of the educators indicated that the majority of their learners require intensive learner support. They indicated that the majority of learners in their classes have learning challenges that educators in a 'normal' classroom cannot cope with as they lack the expertise to deal with the problems that these learners present.

Fifty-four (54%) of the learners who were classified as possible failures had repeated their grades previously. Learners are not supposed to repeat a grade twice or repeat twice in a phase. Therefore, a learner who fails a grade once will automatically move to the next grade the following year. It does not matter whether they have made any progress or not, they are condoned for various reasons, but mainly due to age, because if a learner repeats a grade twice, he/she might be over-age limit for him/her to repeat another grade. Educators complete the referral forms so that the psychologists can help but they are under-staffed and they do not attend to these cases. The GDE 450 'A' forms are filled-in for the educator in the following grade to follow-up and attend to the learners in terms of giving them support. However, finding an educator who is prepared to attend to these cases is very rear. There are too many learners with academic challenges. Therefore the GDE 450 'A' forms become a waste of time.

A Head of Department (SMT) indicated that:

> The learners fail because they do not make any effort to perform better. They are aware that they will be condoned due to age. It becomes very discouraging for the learners who work hard to be promoted because they find themselves in the same grade with learners who they know did not make it to that grade. It is very discouraging! It is also frustrating for the educators when we take the schedule to the District and the failed learners come back as condoned.

According to the researcher this scenario favours a lazy learner who knows the loopholes of the system. If a learner knows that he/she is too old to repeat, the learner is often not motivated to work hard. The Department of Education must have measures in place for learners who float through the system due to age and find themselves in the next grade without any foundation from the previous grade. This does not just frustrate learners; it frustrates the educators and the school system as a whole, as these are normally learners who also cause disturbances in the school.

Schools do not receive most of the profiles of new learners from the schools that the learners come from. If some schools sent the profiles, the educators have no time to read the information and the files are locked in the archives of the schools.

A deputy Principal explained that:

> It was a way of making space for our own documentation, if we include the previous schools documents, there will be no space in the filing cabinet.

Frustration due to academic failure breeds behavioural problems in the school. The following paragraphs focus on learners with behavioural problems.

Sub-category: Learners with behavioural problems

The learners who are academically challenged pose serious behavioural problems as a way of hiding their learning challenges.

One educator was very open about these cases and said:

> Why should we worry about these learners, compulsory education is up to Grade 9, who has time for these learners? They are wasting our time, this is a hopeless situation and there is nothing we can do about it, we must just find a way of getting rid of them as quickly as possible, I am sick and tired of them, they get on my nerves all the time.

We cannot talk about Inclusive Education when the educators are looking for ways of getting rid of the learners who do not cope well with academic work. There must be strategies in place to accommodate such learners, instead of pushing them out of the system.

Forty percent (40%) of the learners on the possible failure list have serious behavioral problems and Senior Management Teams, educators and parents do not know how to deal with this situation. They do as they please. If they are corrected, they get very upset. They just want everybody to accept the problems they are causing. They disrupt the smooth running of the school. This percentage is too high to cope with in the classroom of teaching and learning because classroom management and discipline becomes a problem.

Much as managing the Inclusive Education Policy is a challenge, managing the ecology of the learner proved to be problematic too. The next section will present an analysis of ecological management challenges.

5.1.1.2 Ecological management challenges

5.1.1.2.1 Category: Lack of managerial skills for addressing environmental issues of schools

Hundred percent (100%) of the educators indicated that they have too many learners in their classes.

An educator indicated that:

> I have 92 learners in my class. I do not know their names; I do not mark their books. We do not have enough desks and chairs in class. The learners sit anywhere they like: on window seals, on the floor, on desks and on chairs. The chairs are not enough and the classrooms are too small, that means that I do not even have space to stand and have no space to walk back and forth when I teach. I stand in one spot, because there is no space for any one to move.

The above statement from an educator shows how difficult it is to effectively implement Inclusive Education. If the schools do not have the basic resources, policies will remain on paper as the schools will have no ways and means of achieving the dream of Inclusive Education.

One hundred percent (100%) of the educators indicated that their School Management Teams could not offer any solutions to the challenges encountered by educators because the Department of Education cannot afford to provide more

educators, especially qualified educators for learners with special educational needs. Inclusive Education will be implemented fully when the promises of 'providing the specialist to schools' is fulfilled.

One hundred percent (100%) of the educators, School Management Team and parents indicated that they are offered very little help or no help at all by the educational managers at Education District offices. According to the participants, they rarely get assistance from educational psychologists or any specialized assistance from the Education District offices. Parents can also not afford the services of private educational psychologists. It remains the challenge of schools to find ways of coping with learners who experience barriers to leaning.

Educators indicated that:

> We have a problem of not getting support from the Department of Education District offices, you know when you send learners to the District offices, at times, you are expected to state the correct terminology, if you do not know the terminology used in remedial teaching, you end-up being frustrated. Sometimes, you are not going to be helped because you did not complete the form correctly. It always takes a long time for those who are in the District office to attend to referred learners and in the meantime, you are having this learner in the class, not knowing how to help him/her.

If the Department of Education's officials expect the educators to fill-in forms using specialized terminology, before attending to the learner, it will be very unfair to the learners who must still be attended school despite the apparent incompetence of educators in this regard. The fact that a form is completed indicates that educators have observed and experienced difficulty or diversity of learning with a learner, a need they have failed to meet. It should warrant immediate attention and not a tug-of-war between the school and District office. They must attend to the learner.

In some schools in the township the educators and the principals said:

> 'Psychologist? What is that? We have never heard of people like that going to any school around this place, honestly, they do not come to us, *even if we have*

to fill in the forms. Besides that, we do not worry ourselves about psychologists, we have basic problems of:

- over crowded class rooms;

- no text books;

- no educators;

- no desks;

- no chairs;

- no support from the parents;

- no laboratories;

- no library in the school and the community; and

- no educational facilities in general.

These are real problems, tangible problems, problems we see. So, please, do not tell us about psychologists. We have too many problems with learners due to:

- failure rate;

- behavioural problems;

- absenteeism; and

- ill health'.

A situation like this, does not speak of Inclusive Education, but rather of exclusive education. Many learners are excluded from learning because they are not given the required support by the school. It also breeds frustration and makes the school system intolerant towards learners with diverse learning needs.

A principal of a school indicated that:

We have our processes that always work. When we are tired of a learner who does not cope academically, we call the parents, and talk nicely to them and say; you know your learner has this problem and that problem. We have been very patient with him but we have reached a point whereby we can no longer have him in our school. Please, we do not want him in our school any longer keep him at home. The parents always agree with us. That is how we solve our problems. Psychologists, Inclusive Education, whatever it is, that you are saying, we do not care. Our way is curling them out of the system. We make sure they do not reach grade 10.

Culling the learners out of the system represents exclusion. There must be strategies in place to support the learners until they reach their maximum potential and become productive citizens of our country. Reaching their maximum potential requires the support of parents too. Unfortunately, not all parents are literate.

One parent commented:

You do not know what it is to have illiterate parents. I cannot help my learner with school work, I have never been to school and my husband is just a fork-lift driver in a company, he dropped-out of school in grade four, just imagine , can you really expect us to help our learners with grade 9 mathematics or anything to do with school. I cannot even come to parents evening, I am scared of the environment of educated people. So, my learner's studies are a lonely road, no-one can help him at home.

Sixty nine percent (69%) of the parents said that their learners do not do homework. Their learners tell them that they do not know what to do. They cannot remember the explanations their educators gave them. The parents cannot help either. They are not familiar with the content being dealt with at schools these days or they are not sufficiently educated to provide academic support to their children. The lack of support from the parents towards their children's academic work is evident and contributes towards poor performance. The learners had no hope of their parents helping them with their schoolwork. If support for learners is solely dependent on the school, Inclusive Education will remain a dream that will never be achieved.

Forty-six percent (46%) of the parents said their children are very lazy. They do not study. They spend their time watching television, if they are told to go and study, they go to the bedroom and sleep with a book in their hands.

The participating schools have had many learners transferred to them from other schools. This brings in a deeper dimension of inclusion, as these learners were mainly transferred from township schools to Section 21 private schools, from rural schools to township schools, and from township schools to former model 'C' schools.

The following paragraphs will deal with the manner in which the process of transferring learners is managed, both at school level and classroom level.

Sub-category: Transferred learners

Forty-two percent (42%) of the learners who participated were new in the schools. They were being taught in English for the first time. An analyses of documents of learners who were new to the school, in a new environment, have new educators, have a new medium of instruction, are being labelled as possible failures, indicated numerous inequalities, for example these learners are not at the same level than learners who are first language speakers of English and learners who had the opportunity to learn English from the pre-school level, but they were subjected to writing the for the same assessments standards.

Sub-category: Home alone learners

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the parents said that their learners play a lot. Some had a minimum of about 20 friends. They forgot about homework everyday.

A parent in this category said:

> It is not because he really wants to play; he plays because he is very scared of being home alone. I come home after 19h00, so that is the time he comes home. Before then he goes up and down with his friends who dropped out of school. We both (mother and father) work from 7o'clock A.M. to 7o'clock P.M. He stays through the afternoon and part of the evening without parental supervision'.

Employment has become necessary for most parents in our communities. Both the mother and father have to be employed for them to be able to provide for their families. Most of the learners remain at home alone, without any adult to care of them. The learners know that they can do whatever they like, go wherever they want to go because their parents are not at home. As long as they can be there a few minutes before they arrive, it is fine. The parents will then not suspect that he/she was not at home. These parents are too tired to bother about the learner's homework. Tired parents are not the best people to help with homework, they are very impatient. All they want is to prepare food, eat and sleep, to regain strength for tomorrow's work. They will have no time to help their learners with schoolwork. In addition, these learners express fear of being home alone. They fear being attacked by criminals; they feel safer being on the street with many of their friends than sitting home alone.

Sub- category: Homeless learners

Thirty four percent (34%) of the learners have no grand parents and are orphans who have no permanent place to stay. They move from one place to another. No one among the extended family is prepared to accommodate them permanently. Due to socio-economic conditions, it seems as though nobody is prepared to take the responsibility of taking care of the orphans. They all confessed to having their own families they are struggling with, accommodating an orphaned niece or nephew is an unwanted addition to their already existing financial problems. A learner going to different family members' on different days of the week is considered fair on their part (economically) because then the burden is shared. If the learner does not turn-up on their doorstep, they take it for granted that he/she has gone to another uncle or aunt and no one follows-up to see where the learner is. A learner growing-up without a stable home and no real place to call home, is most likely to also experience academic challenges because instability does not favours academic success.

Sub-category: Child-headed families

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the learners have lost both their parents. In this category, learners were identified who stood in as parents for their younger brothers

and sisters. The learners heading families ranged in age from 14-17 years old. The ages of the orphans ranged between 15 and 6 years old. These learners were not yet registered for a social welfare grant; therefore they lived on the charity of their neighbours.

An educator indicated that:

> They go and sell tomatoes for the street vendors for them to have money to buy food for supper. These learners do not have time to play or take care of themselves. The people who usually hire these learners do not give them cash, they just give them food. They end up having little time to study, as they are tired after selling. These learners do not do homework and they are not able to learn effectively at school. They are not only affected by poverty but also HIV and AIDS as their parents died of AIDS.

There must be management strategies for accommodating learners who have no hope of achieving academic success. Educators cannot expect learners living under these conditions to do homework, to submit projects and assignments. The "normal educator expectation' in this case is unrealistic.

Another educator added to this saying:

> It is not easy for the learners if both parents are dead, relatives nowadays don't want to take care of the children, usually the eldest becomes the parent, and it becomes easy for them to drop out of school because of the problems they encounter. If we ask them questions about their home situation they become suspicious, so, it becomes very difficult to get information from these learners even if we could help, it takes time to gain their trust and this thing of learners who are orphaned is affecting the school. Most of the learners we teach especially in the lower grades are from single mothers, when the mother dies it becomes a problem. Most of them do not know their fathers. It is very difficult for all of us, that is both the educators and learners. How do you expect them to perform if he/she stays with a very sick parent who is bedridden? In class, they cannot participate in activities because their minds are at home. I know of two learners this year who are in this situation.

Learners who have bed-ridden parents dying of HIV related causes are rarely found in the classroom. They would rather be with their dying parents than be at school. When parents die there must be management strategies in place to help these learners to catch up on missed academic work and made to feel like they still belong in school. They cannot be expected to behave as if nothing happened after going through such a traumatic experience.

Educators added on to say that:

> These learners get thrown out of school for not having appropriate shoes or not having full uniform… about half the learners in these households who should be studying are not going to school due to lack of money for school fees, uniforms, shoes and food. Those who go to school are regularly punished -often beaten- for late coming, failing tests or being unable to complete homework due to their responsibilities at home.

Throwing learners out of school for any reason represents exclusion. Learners must all be in school even if they come from the poorest backgrounds. However, even where schools are informed about the state of the environment at home, these schools do nothing to support these learners. Despite the challenges highlighted above, there are also systemic management challenges that hinder the progress of learners. These challenges will be analysed in the following paragraphs.

5.1.1.3 Systemic management challenges

5.1.1.3.1 Lack of managerial skills for educational and social systems within the school

It is evident that school systems malfunctioned and family systems do not offer much in terms of support to schools. However, the school has a responsibility to create some balance through eco-systemic management strategies.

> If families do not…then school must provide roots for learners…So that they can stand firm and grow, provide wings for learners … so that they can fly. Broken roots and crippled wings destroy hope, and hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible' (*cf.* 1).

An educator indicated that:

> I noticed that a woman who is from Mozambique who was selling the vegetables in the street had two learners at school going age but they did not go to school. I approached her and asked why the learners did not attend school...I then facilitated all the procedures for her sons to be enrolled in our school...They are very happy.

Mobilizing all learners of all communities to go to school is very important in order that people may become empowered to become productive citizens of South Africa. Sometimes getting into a school means that learners will have to learn in a language that is not their mother tongue. There is evidence that most of the learners experienced challenges regarding the medium of instruction. Systemic challenges related to the medium of instruction are analysed in the next paragraph.

Sub-category: Medium of instruction

There is evidence of learners from an ethnic background that move from township schools to former model 'C' schools. In all the cases, the learners were being taught in English for the first time. This poses challenges of understanding what is being taught, following instructions given in the classroom and general participation in the classroom. The educators who are not speaking English but have to teach in English also face this challenge. Explanations of concepts in the language they do not possess become a challenge.

An educator indicated that:

> We communicate to the learners in their mother tongue in order to accommodate learners who cannot understand English.

One hundred percent (100%) of the educators in former model 'C' schools and private schools indicated that they use English as a medium of instruction. This is a major challenge for the educators and learners because they teach in a language that most of the learners do not understand. Learners from English speaking families are at a big advantage because they are taught in their mother tongue. For the rest of the learners in other language groups schooling in English might represent

exclusion from learning. Most of the learners from the township schools being taught in model 'C' schools are taught in English for the first time. The English language to these learners is a barrier to learning. Most of them cannot communicate in English competently but they are expected to read and answer questions in English. The fact that a language barrier exists becomes very frustrating for them. They feel lost and misunderstood. They resort to being unruly, causing problems for educators, for example, they 'bunk' classes, disrupt teaching and fight with other learners. It ultimately looks as if they do not care much about school, and yet they are simply frustrated as a result of being excluded from learning.

One hundred percent (100%) of the educators in the former Model 'C' schools and private schools indicated that they are faced with learners from diverse cultures and different languages on a daily basis.

An educator indicated that:

> I really want to explain the work in my mother tongue, but in Former model 'C' schools, we are faced with many learners who speak different languages to my own, even if I wanted to explain in my mother tongue, how many of the learners will understand? They do not know my mother tongue, I do not know theirs, that is a problem, and I can say that some topics, I do not explain them properly in English. Sometimes I wish that I could just explain in my language but that will frustrate the learners more.

It is really a challenge if the educators also have a problem with the medium of instruction. If they cannot explain the work competently the learners will find it even more challenging. Therefore, effective inclusion becomes a challenge.

An educator indicated that:

> The challenges that I am facing are first and foremost languages. There are learners in my class that are Shangaan speaking but they are expected to do Southern Sotho. They cannot remember work that has been taught to them. They behave like they have never seen or heard of the work you just taught them'.

It is normal not to remember things spoken in a language you do not know. Often when educators have presented a lesson, they think that they have 'taught' and whether learners understand the language or not, they are expected to remember. Schools must have management strategies to support learners who are taught in a language they do not understand. In the next section the analysis of the methodological management challenges in inclusive schools will be presented.

5.1.1.4 Methodological management challenges

5.1.1.4.1 Category: lack of management skills for supporting teaching and learning

Lack of management skills for supporting teaching and learning in the classroom has negative effects on the academic progress of the learners. It does not matter how well prepared the educator is, if the classroom of inclusion is not managed properly, it renders the preparation futile. The methods used must be suitable for an inclusive classroom.

An educator indicated that:

> With inclusive teaching one does not know what one is supposed to do when one encounters diverse learning challenges. We need to be trained and empowered to deal with these problems, we do not know what to do with learners who manifest intellectual disabilities in the mainstream.

Appropriate teaching skills for accommodating a diversity of learners is important in inclusive schools. Educators need to have these skills so that accommodation of learners with academic challenges can be done professionally.

One hundred percent (100%) of the educators indicated that their schools have no specialist remedial educators. According to the respondents, educators who help learners with remedial work have normal classes to teach and they only have time to attend to learners with special educational needs after regular school hours. This practice does not portray effective teaching in inclusive schools. If learners who need more attention are taught after school when they are already tired, the system is

failing the learners. Their work must be part of the curriculum and should not be extra work that they need to do when all the other learners have gone home.

If the educators are not trained and empowered to deal with learners who need diverse methods of teaching in inclusive classrooms, it poses a big challenge for the school. The methodology used for learners with diverse learning needs differs from the methodology used for learners in the mainstream. Therefore, for a school to have effective Inclusive Education, educators must be trained and equipped for the task of teaching according to the diverse needs of learners.

The next paragraphs will analyze the sub-categories of 'lack of management skills for supporting teaching and learning'.

Sub-category: Lack of management skills for learners with high levels of energy

Forty percent (40%) of the parents said their learners could not sit still. They are always doing something that they are not supposed to be doing. They cannot concentrate on one thing and do it properly. The educators confirmed that these learners walk up and down in the classroom without permission and because they cannot sit and concentrate on their work, the work is not done at all. They frustrate the whole class and cause many disturbances in the school.

A parent stated that:

> When I ask her to make me a cup of tea, she quickly goes to the bedroom and brings me a scarf.

The above statement is clear indication of learners who fail to follow instructions. There are also learners who are the exact opposite of the above description. These learners have low energy levels. This is discussed in the following paragraph.

Sub-category: Lack of management skills for learners with low levels of energy

Fifteen percent (15%) of learners have low energy levels. They sleep in class or at home or in front of the television. Sleeping is the major activity that they do during the day. One of the learners sleeps from one class to another, or educators just let

her sleep for the next three periods. Other learners will come in, they will learn and go and she will still be sleeping. Therefore, much as she is always at school she learns very little. She sleeps more at school in comparison to the time she spends learning.

There are also learners with aggressive behaviour. The next paragraph will analyze 'lack of management skills for learners with aggressive behaviour'.

Sub-category: Lack of management skills for learners with aggressive behaviour

Forty-five percent (45%) of the learners labelled 'possible failures' are aggressive. Both the educators and parents testified to that. They go to an extent of hitting other learners without a reason.

An educator provided the following example:

> Girl: Miss, he is hitting me!
>
> Miss: Hey! Johnny, why are you hitting her?
>
> Johnny: Nothing, I just hit her.

Mothers confirmed that there was fighting between husband and wife at home and that the father sometimes beat their children for no apparent reason. In one case, the father had been fired from work and he took out his frustration on his wife and children. The child suffered because the father had lost his job. These learners throw tantrums about trivial matters and cause disturbances in the classrooms. Strategic management of the classroom is required for effective teaching and learning to take place.

However, experience has taught the researcher that it does not really matter how good the methods of teaching that are employed, if the curriculum does not meet the needs of the learners, it becomes very difficulty for them to engage in it. The curriculum must speak to the needs of the learners. If they regard what they need to learn as meaningful, they become excited to learn. The next paragraphs will deal with the management challenges for curriculum transformation.

5.1.1.5 Management challenges for curriculum transformation

The curriculum is the core of education. Through the curriculum, educators are able to shape the future of learners and are able to develop their values, knowledge and skills. Thus the curriculum must be accessible to every learner and must be suitable to the learning needs of the learners. The curriculum is a tool that will enhance social justice, democratic values and human rights for all citizens and ultimately for an inclusive society.

5.1.1.5.1 Category: Lack of managerial skills for curriculum transformation

If the curriculum is not compatible to the learning needs of the learners, it must be adapted and modified to suit the diverse learning needs of all the learners. The paragraphs that follow analyze the non-adaptation and modification of the curriculum.

Sub-category: non-adaptation and modification of the curriculum

If the curriculum that is presented to learners is not suitable for them, they cannot engage in it, thus they cannot learn from it. Adapting and modifying the curriculum is often misunderstood: it does not mean watering down the curriculum. The researcher is of the opinion that educators are responsible for making the curriculum understandable to the learners; for breaking it down in smaller pieces; for ensuring the learning of one section at a time, and eventually for putting everything together again.

An educator stated that:

> We do not know how to adapt or modify the curriculum, how can we know what each learner's learning needs are in the classroom?

One hundred percent (100%) of the educators indicated that they do not know how to adapt and modify the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of the learners. They also indicated that they are required (by the Department of Education) to develop and adapt the curriculum to suit the diversity of learning needs in their classrooms without any formal training on how to develop such a curriculum. This situation breeds exclusion to learners with diverse learning needs.

A principal said that:

> The problem I have with Inclusive Education is that I am afraid that the standard and quality of education will go down, what do we do with the learners who cannot cope with the work they are given in the class?'

Statements such as the above hamper the implementation of White paper 6. If school managers think that Inclusive Education will impact negatively on the quality of education, chances are that these managers will not implement the policy and that the policy will simply remain a statement on paper.

An educator indicated:

> I have a problem with my HOD, I set an assessment and I included a few easy questions for the slow learners at least to get something out of the assessment, my HOD told me to remove those questions, he said that the quality of the paper was too low. Why should I accommodate them, when I will exclude them with assessment?

If the HODs (SMTs) consider including a small percentage of easier questions in the exam paper as a low standard paper, it leads to the school becoming antagonistic towards the Inclusive Education policy. Question papers must have at least a few questions that every learner will be able to answer without any problem. Educators' judgment on the level of performance of the learners should be respected by SMTs. It is only fair that the slowest of the learners also gets an opportunity to do something right in the examination.

An educator explained the tension during examinations in an inclusive school as follows:

> I try to be very understanding to the slow learners, but it brings tension between me and the examining educators invigilating during examinations. I understand that sometimes they just need to be given extra time to finish the question paper. But last time I invigilated I was told that if I gave them extra time I was going to mark the script and enter the mark, she was not going to accept it, because she knows that even if I gave them the whole day to write this paper

they still will not finish it. She cannot even think of them passing the examinations. She cannot waste her time on these learners.

This scenario is very discouraging for the educators who want to engage in and experience promoting inclusivity, and who wish to give all learners an opportunity to succeed in a class of mixed ability learners. According to the researcher, learners who experience barriers to learning might not finish the question paper in time but they should be given extra time to answer a few more questions as it might make a big difference to their overall performance.

An educator indicated that:

> We have a problem with the way things work in our department, we teach the same grade with my HOD and the same subject, Physical Science and we move at the same pace, yet when we set an assessment, the HOD tells me to set my own assessment, imagine what that looks like to the learners, but she does not see anything wrong with that.

If there is no co-operation between the educators and HODs (SMTs), it gives a very negative impression of the management system of the school. For a school to run effectively there must be some form of unity: respect between staff, their immediate supervisors and learners.

An HOD indicated that:

> I have no problem with Inclusive Education but we have a curriculum to complete within a set time, so I really don't see us having time for slow learners, if they cannot cope, they must just get out of here, because if we do not finish our work prescribed by the Department of Education our Grade 12s will fail. We always have a good Matric pass; we cannot start compromising that now because of the learners who are slow.

The status of a secondary school is strongly dependent on the Matric (Grade 12) pass rate. The learner's performance is an indicator of the quality of education being offered in a specific school. Learners who are regarded as 'slow learners' therefore often fail until they decide to drop out of school.

Many of the above challenges have their roots in socio-economic management challenges. The next section will deal with these challenges.

5.1.1.6 Socio-economic management challenges

5.1.1.6.1 Category: Lack of planning skills for securing justice in social and economic issues

Socio-economic challenges need to be addressed through thorough management planning and strategies.

Sub-category: Poverty

The Department of Education provides feeding schemes mainly in the townships primary schools. For the learners in the former model 'C' schools, Section 21schools and non-profit private schools, these feeding schemes are not provided. However, these schools comprise learners from poor backgrounds who also need to be provided with a feeding scheme. The Department of Education refuses to supply them with a feeding scheme because they think that every parent taking a learner to these schools can afford it, which, according to the researcher, is not true. As a result of this situation, these schools have to find donors for their feeding schemes from church organizations, business corporations, and so on.

An HOD indicated that:

> The learners come to school hungry. If we don't feed them before assembly in the morning we will have at least a dozen collapsing during assembly. When you ask they will tell you that they haven't eaten the whole week-end. There is no food at home. The parents have no work. The only food they get is at school, which is provided by the church organizations and business co-operations'.

A few learners who have shared their circumstances with educators get a lunch box from those respective educators everyday. The majority go to school hungry. Principals are running schools where the majority of learners cannot concentrate because they are hungry. Hungry learners do not really listen to what is *being taught* they simply sit and worry about food. Some learners stay together with their other

siblings, (Child-headed families) alone without parents. These learners are not able to cope with the academic pressure: they worry about food and ways and means of taking care of their siblings. They rely totally on the mercy of their neighbours who are equally poor in most cases. The parents died, the school is not informed and the extended families refuse to take care of them.

Dropping out of school to find a job so that there is food in the shack becomes an option. We need to ensure that these learners are accommodated within the inclusive school without injustice and unfairness of any form and we have to strive to provide to every need they have at school.

Educators responded as follows:

> These learners get thrown out of school for not having appropriate shoes or not having full uniform … about half the learners in these households who should be studying are not going to school due to lack of money for school fees, uniforms, shoes and food. Those who go to school are regularly punished, beaten for late coming, failing tests or being unable to complete homework due to their responsibilities at home.

One hundred percent (100%) of principals indicated that the majority of learners in their schools are from poor families and are always hungry. As a result, they have poor concentration in class.

One hundred percent (100%) of the mothers talked of hunger in their homes. There was no food to feed the learners. Therefore, the learners are absent from school because they cannot come to school and learn on an empty stomach.

An educator indicated that:

> The issue of poverty is very bad, we as educators have to bring bread from home for those who do not have food. This is a 'former model C school', we do not have feeding scheme, and the Department of Education thinks that our learners can afford a meal at school but some of these come from very poor families. They walk very long distances to come to school. Some travel by bus up to certain point and then walk the rest of the way. I ask them why they do

not bring food for themselves for lunch, they would tell me all sorts of stories: the father has left them and the mother is not working. Some of them say that their neighbours give them food in the evening as they know their situation.

A principal of a school said that:

Yes poverty is tough for everybody, when these learners get to high school they are traumatized, they cannot take it anymore, some drop out of school'.

Unemployment is a stressful situation. The following paragraphs will highlight the effects of unemployment. Forty-five percent (45%) of the parents who participated in this research are unemployed. There is no income apart from a social welfare grant of R 190 per month that the father gets.

An educator said that:

The rate of poverty is high, for instance, when we were fundraising very few learners could afford to pay 20 cents. I am applauding the government for the feeding scheme, because in the past, we used to teach hungry learners who would collapse at the assembly. When, we try to find out the cause, it would be because the learner had not eaten for the past two to three days. Educators would even share their lunch with those who they feel are hungry.

Another educator added that:

The feeding scheme has helped a lot, I cannot imagine what could have happened if we didn't have a feeding scheme, I mean, there are those learners who really depend on it, it is the only meal they get.

However, it seems that many educators are concerned about learners' living in poverty and about the effect that the situation has on their academic performance.

An educator stated what they are doing in their school as follows:

We go as far as visiting their homes to go and verify the learners' stories or the report we get about their home situations. We have to deal with each case on its merit, we need to make exemptions, whether it is full exemptions and whether it is conditional and so on, and we have to merit each case. With that,

learners see, and they take us in their confidence, such that indeed ,they view us as parents as well, because the parents are not always there, they are away from home, learners spend most of their time in the school. So, it is best that we make the school as adaptable as possible, particularly in this phase, where they need to feel good about social and economic statuses.

One educator indicated how educators are involving the parents in participating in school activities:

It is up to us educators (school) to adapt to certain approaches to encourage the learners to concentrate and not to think about his/her parents' status. This means that not having money to pay for the learners has a negative impact on their performance but we manage somehow to overcome that issue by talking to the parents. Parents are taking part in various activities to compensate for their inability to pay for school funds; they do various odd jobs here and there, so that they also have a feeling of belonging to the school community. This also changes the attitude of the learner to the principle of self-confidence.

Despite poverty there are also many learners that experience emotional trauma, such as divorced/divorcing parents, single parents that cannot cope and living with a large extended family. These issues are often not attended to as there are no management strategies in schools to deal with issues of this nature.

Sub-category: Divorced/ Divorcing parents

Twenty percent (20%) of the learners' parents are divorced. Learners live with one of the parents, or the grandmother or the extended family. The learners living with divorcing or already divorced parents go through emotional problems that the school must be aware of. It is the responsibility of the parents to make the school aware of the emotional trauma experienced by such a learner so that the learner can be supported by the relevant system/committee/team in the school.

Sub-category: Single parenting

Being a single parent is not an easy task for people living in poverty. Single parents do not have enough resources to support their learners. Forty percent (40%) of the

mothers who participated in this research are single parents. The school management must arrange mentors for learners living with single parents so that they can have somebody that they can regard as a father or a mother at school. This will bring more balance in the life of such a learner because despite the fact that the learner does not have a father or a mother at home, the mentor represents a father or a mother figure.

Sub-category: Learners living with a big number of extended family members

Most of the mothers who participated in this research still live with their parents. In these families, there are large numbers of people living in two or three room houses. This has serious implication for the academic achievement of learners involved in such circumstances. These learners have no space for writing, reading or learning. Twenty five percent (25%) of the learners who participated in this research live with more than 10 people in a two or three-room house. It is normally the home of the grandparents, with their children and grandchildren who also live with them. They all live on the grandparent's pension or on a social welfare grant. Studying in this environment is very difficult and often there is no space for homework or studying.

The following paragraphs will highlight management strategies for learners with physical challenges.

5.1.1.7 Management strategies for learners with physical challenges

Physical challenges may or may not be visible. It is easier to accommodate visible physical challenges than an invisible physical challenge that only becomes visible through academic results. However, schools must be prepared for all forms of physical challenges and should accommodate the learners that experience such challenges. The following paragraphs analyze the category 'lack of management skills for accommodating learners with physical challenges'.

5.1.1.7.1 Category: Lack of management skills for accommodating learners with physical challenges

Schools have problems admitting learners with physical disabilities in the mainstream but many schools that have ventured into Inclusive Education have

reported an enriching experience. Both these scenarios will be highlighted in the following paragraphs.

Sub-category: Learners with physical challenges

The researcher believes that we need to appreciate the differences between learners and that we should realize that they all have something that they can offer to the school community instead of discriminating against them because of their physical challenges. Often people see the disability before they see the person. It is wise to realize that behind the 'abnormality' there is a person hoping to see people's hearts open to let her/him in and be embraced.

An educator indicated that:

> What do you mean remedy the learners, these learners are what they are, the way God created them, there is nothing we can do to change them, we need to accept them the way they are, and do whatever is necessary to accommodate them in our schools.

When we see the learners instead of the disability (physical challenge), the journey to inclusivity begins. Nurturing learners who have physical challenges is rewarding because when we look beyond the physical barrier the learner feels accepted and works hard not to disappoint anyone. The following paragraph reinforces this idea.

An educator indicated that:

> I have got a learner in my class who has hearing and speech impairment but she performs better academically, such that the other so called 'normal learners' want to be like her, they think that she does so well because she has those disabilities. It was very hard to understand her when she came, I have got used to the way she pronounces. She is a fine leader and a role model for the other learners. I am glad to have her in my class.

However, many learners with chronic diseases (according to their parents and educators) 'hated' school. This is understandable because, for example whenever these learners came back from hospital, new work had been taught and the educators did not take time to cover that work with these learners. Some of the

learners in this category have full blown AIDS. This information was not disclosed to the educators.

This requires effective planning and management in order to accommodate such learners.

A parent indicated that:

> I am scared of disclosing this to the educators; they will chase my child from school. I lost my wife and a 10 months old son two years ago. My daughter has AIDS that is why she is always absent from school, please do not tell the educators, I am suffering from AIDS as well, but I cannot keep my daughter in the house when she feels a little bit fine, I feel that I must send her to school, until such a time that she cannot come any longer'.

This parent was very scared of completing forms because he thought that the school was going to expel the learner from school. The information was given informally. He told the educator that the child was suffering from appendicitis. The child and the father died 2 years later. The child died a month before her father. The whole family has perished due to HIV and AIDS.

A principal of a participating school stated that:

> A parent of a learner with multiple sclerosis was very happy to enroll her son in my school that has no facilities for his type of disability. He was transferred from a special school. I accepted him when the parents showed me the White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education and showed me the quotes were the policy talks of the Department of Education offering assistance to the schools. I thought it was a good gesture to the community. Nevertheless, I have had so many problems with this learner than I have ever had with all learners in the school in a very short time. This learner does not know the names of his educators. To him every one is uncle and aunty. He has a very poor eyesight and poor hearing. His parents said that he has a hearing aid but he hardly come with it to school. I advised the educators to enlarge the print of the notes for him and print on an A3 paper as a way of accommodating him. All educators now have to remember that after they have every printed all notes on an A4, there must be a

special one that must be done on an A3. He cannot read the classroom numbers or names of the educator, so he hardly knows where to go at the end of the register period. He cannot walk at the same pace with the class mates and when they help him by carrying him and his school bag, the mother sends us threatening letters from her lawyer saying that should anything happen to him, she will sue the school. He causes many disturbances. When he does not know which class his classmates have gone to, he bangs himself into every classroom on whichever corridor he finds himself in, looking for faces from class. I thought that we were going to benefit from this experience but it caused more harm than joy. I regret having accepted this learner in my school'.

Enrolling a learner with multiple disabilities in the mainstream without any resources to help with accommodating him/her is not inclusive practice. This learner would most probably be better accommodated in a special school than in the mainstream school. If the school was interested in accommodating the learner, they would have worked in conjunction with the special school were the learner was schooling before.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the analysis of the data collected through interviews, observations, GDE 450 'A' documents and the case history forms completed through the interviews with parents, SMTs and educators. This study has found that learners experience eco-systemic challenges that affect their academic performance. The interviews revealed that learners had physical and contextual challenges that played a major role in their academic performance at school. The challenges were discussed as stated by the participants and the following themes emerged:

- Management of the implementation of White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education challenges.

- Ecological management challenges.

- Systemic management challenges.

- Methodological management challenges.

- Management challenges for curriculum transformation.

- Socio-economic management challenges.

- Management strategies for learners with physical challenges.

Chapter Six will deal with the phenomenological interpretation of data.