

THE CHOICE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT
MATERIALS IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTINGS:
“EDUCATORS’ EXPERIENCES”

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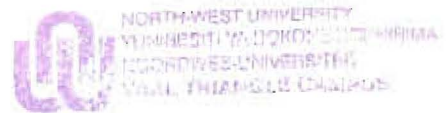
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SUMMARY

This study investigates educators' experiences in choosing material for learners in the inclusive classroom setting as clearly stated in chapter one.

Chapter two explored the literature on the learning and teaching support materials and the processes involved. The definition of learning and teaching support materials was explored. The kinds, importance and role of learning and teaching support, were discussed and the role is seen as a vehicle which enhances the awareness for expression and opportunities to capture evidence of learners knowledge. Guidelines to consider in the process of selecting learning and teaching support materials and the utilization thereof, as well as the funding of learning and teaching support materials received attention. This chapter further explored the inclusive classroom where inclusion is defined; the nature of inclusive classroom was discussed. The benefits and the criticism of inclusive classroom settings were also explored.

In chapter three, the empirical research design used in the study is discussed. Focus group interviews in qualitative study were used to explore educators' experiences in choosing learning and teaching support material in inclusive classroom settings.

Chapter four highlighted the research methods used to investigate the problems of this study. The application of the focus interview was explained in detail because the focus group was used for the collection of data which was analysed and interpreted. The data revealed that educators experience a number of difficulties in choosing learning and teaching support materials for learners in inclusive classroom settings.

The last chapter concludes the study with recommendations on the way to assist educators in choosing materials for learners in the inclusive classroom setting.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie ondersoek die onderwysers se ondervinding met die keuse van inklusiewe materiaal vir leerders soos verduidelik in hoofstuk een.

In hoofstuk twee is dieper navorsing gedoen oor inklusiwiteit en die onderrig daarvan. Die term inklusiwiteit is gedefinieer. Die grondbeginsels van die Onderzoekverslag van die Nasionale Onderwys Beleid oor inklusiwiteit was benadruk. Belangrike hindernisse, eienskappe en die implikasie daarvan is uitgelig. In die inklusiewe onderwys en opleiding sisteem soos beskou deur die kommissie. Verder in dieselfde hoofstuk is gekyk na Sosiale Konstruktivisme as die filosofie van die raamwerk van opvoedkundige sielkunde.

Die empiriese navorsingsontwerp wat in die studie gebruik is, is bespreek in hoofstuk drie. Fokusgroepe, onderhonde in kwalitatiewe studies is gebruik om opvoeders (onderwysers) se ondervinding ten opsigte van die keuse van onderrig-en leerondersteunings materiaal te kies vir die inklusiewe klaskamer situasies.

Hoofstuk vier lig die navorsingsmetodes uit wat gebruik is in die ondersoek van die probleme. Die fokus is breedvoerig verduidelik.

Die fokus groep wat gebruik is tydens die insameling van die inligting is geanaliseer en geïnterpreteer. Hierdie data het aan die lig gebring dat onderwysers probleme ondervind in die keuse van leer en onderrig ondersteuningsmateriaal vir leerlinge vir inklusiewe klaskamer omgewings.

Die laaste hoofstuk sluit af met aanbevelings hoe om onderwysers by te staan in die keuse van materiaal vir leerlinge in inklusiewe klaskamers.

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Learning and teaching support materials play an important role in the teaching, learning and assessment processes of the school curriculum because in the early stages of development, learners learn a great deal from physically manipulating things and trying them out (Kunene, 2005:29). A learner remembers better what he/she manipulatively touched, smelled or saw than what was told or dictated to him/her.

This highlights the value of manipulatively perceiving and sensing in effective learning. Knowledge gained when different senses were involved when learning and being taught can be demonstrated and applied in different life situations with much more competence and success on the other hand minimal, or lack of use of learning and teaching support materials at schools could be detrimental to the effective learning of learners (Gunter, Thomas & Schwab 1999:113).

Perceiving and sensing during learning make the use of learning and teaching support materials even more important because resources such as these afford learners the opportunity to see, smell and touch in cases where the real learning objects, equipment or photos are brought to class. According to Kunene (2005:15) if words and actions from educators are the only source, then only fourteen per cent of perception and sensing take place and the problem with that could be difficulty in the learners constructing meaning of the words; less interest, curiosity and inquisitiveness in inquiring further knowledge; and difficulty in linking up with the prior gained knowledge already possessed by learners.

From the foregoing paragraphs it is clear that learning is not merely the passive absorption and regurgitation of information from educators, but is rooted in perceived and sensed experience which leads to experiential learning. Understanding of the perceived and sensed information is based on

the interpretative ability of learners to conceptualize and theorize available data through the senses and this leads to an immediate and sub-conscious attempt to reconcile new information with previously gained and learnt information (Gunter *et.al*, 1999:113). This statement means that the educator should always make learning and teaching support material available for learners to see, touch, hear, smell and taste, in order to make learning easier for all learners, irrespective of their learning abilities. Outcomes Based Education and Training advocates for demonstrable knowledge in the learning processes of learners. Learners should in this respect, attain the outcomes and they should be able to display demonstrable competencies of the attained learning outcomes as well.

Inclusion is an educational model in which learners with disabilities receive their education in a general educational setting with collaboration between general and special education (Cole, 1999:10).

Inclusive Education in this respect becomes a strategy for contributing towards the ultimate goal of promoting an inclusive society, one which enables all learners, whatever their gender, age, ability, ethnicity, impairment or HIV status, to participate in and contribute to that society. Difference is respected and valued. Discrimination and prejudice is actively combated in teaching and learning policies, classroom settings and behavior (Wrinkler, Modise, & Dawber 2004:8).

Since education is the right of all learners, inclusive education aims to ensure that all learners have access to an appropriate, relevant, affordable and effective education within their community. This education starts in the home with the family, and includes formal, non-formal and all types of community-based education initiatives (Wrinkler *et al* 2004:8).

When above is considered, certain problems arose which led to this research being undertaken by this researcher.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

From the above literature review it should be clear that it is important that the organization of the classroom's teaching and learning settings should be such that it is conducive for teaching and learning to take place for all learners irrespective of their latent learning potentialities. However, what makes things more difficult for educators are that the learners present diverse physical, mental and emotional differences. Their level of development and their backgrounds are different. It is an accepted fact that, most of the teaching is geared towards the average learner and this has implications on ways in which the educators' choice of learning and teaching support materials should be made relevant to effective teaching and learning in the diverse classroom. From the planning stage, through to the evaluation and choosing stages of the learning and teaching support materials in their classrooms, educators have to contend with questions such as:

- Which learning and teaching support materials would be best to make use of in the teaching and the learning of their learners?
- In which ways can the learning and teaching support materials be utilized effectively and prove to be in the best interest of all learners and able to achieve the necessary teaching and learning outcomes of all learning areas in their classrooms?

Kunene (2005:27) explains that it is clear that the importance of usefulness learning and teaching support materials need to be kept in mind from the planning stages up to the evaluation stage of curriculum delivery in all classroom settings. Learning and teaching support materials are so important in the teaching and learning process, because of their potential to determine the level of participation of the learners, the attitude of the learners towards the subjects, and the ability of the learners to conduct their own independent research and to acquire more knowledge in effective learning ways.

Subsequently, it indicates the importance for educators to investigate, not only the learning and teaching support materials available at schools, but also those available in their immediate communities. This would help educators to

plan ways in which they can incorporate the learning and teaching support materials into the classroom settings which encourage independent and self-regulated research by learners themselves in their immediate communities and thus motivationally, behaviourally and metacognitively involve learners in their own learning processes (Kunene, 2005:27).

According to North West University (2004a:139) the mere fact that learning and teaching support materials are present in a learning activity does not automatically mean that it is an effective learning tool. It is critical that educators need to carefully select and choose of learning and teaching support materials to fit the nature of the theme or lesson. Educators, therefore, need to take many factors into consideration when they start selecting, choosing and even developing the learning and teaching support materials they want to use to support teaching, learning and assessing in their classrooms. These factors include the ability of the learning and teaching support materials to support and enrich classroom-based learning and teaching. It should also be able to:

- address the individual needs of learners.
- reinforce learner- centredness in the classroom,
- provide expanded opportunities for enrichment as well as remediation; assist educators and learners in accessing the Revised National Curriculum Statement; clearly indicate the educational paradigm and how this has influenced the selection of topics,
- encourage the educator to be an innovative thinker and practitioner; be applicable to a range of learning contexts (that is rural, urban and peri-urban areas),
- capture and maintain the interest of learners and motivate them,
- take account of learners varying levels of abilities within a single grade.
- provide for differentiation so that each individual learner can be supported to experience success and develop to his or her full potential,

- be appropriate to the age, interests and diverse needs of learners, and
- encourage respect for diversity by reflecting all aspects of diversity in appropriate, sensitive and positive ways (Gauteng Department of Education, 1999: 10)

The above mentioned factors include diversity regarding gender, level of ability and beliefs; stimulate active participation in and enjoyment of learning, teaching and assessment. It should also support educators in the systematic development of appropriate lesson plans, ensure that assessment is systematic, inclusive and on-going; be flexible or adaptable to a range of contexts and needs, provide a range of suggestions for educators for educators to be innovative, as well as creative in developing their own resources (North West University, 2004a:139).

Based on the assertions of the foregoing paragraphs, this study attempt to answer the following questions:

- What is the understanding of educators of the concept learning and teaching support material?
- Which criteria do educators use in choosing learning and teaching support material for their learners?
- Why do educators perceive the criteria stated in the latter question as important?
- What are the criteria on which educators base their choice of learning support material?
- What types of cultures do learners represent?
- Are educators satisfied with the learning support materials used by learners?
- Is the teaching support material used by educators non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist and unbiased in all ways?

- Do learners conceptually understand the language and values incorporated in the learning support materials used in their classrooms?
- What is the racial, cultural and gender make-up of the authors of the preferred learning materials in educators' classrooms?

1.3 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The overall aim of this study is to investigate educators' experiences of the choice of learning and teaching support materials in inclusive classroom settings. The following sub-aims were used to find out the experiences of the educator participants who formed the population sample of this research which is to:

- Determine whether the educators understanding of learning and teaching support material;
- determine what criteria educator use in choosing learning and teaching support material for their learners;
- verify why educator perceive the criteria stated in the latter objective as important;
- determine what type of values educators base their choice of learning support material for learners;
- identify what types of cultures learners represent,
- determine whether educators are satisfied with the learning support materials used by learners;
- determine whether the teaching support material educator use is non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist and unbiased in all ways;
- determine whether learners conceptually understand the language and values incorporated in the learning support materials used in their classrooms; and

- determine the racial, cultural and gender make-up of the authors of the preferred learning materials in educators' classrooms.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The two main important research methodologies for gathering and analyzing data in educational research are qualitative and quantitative methods. Both these methods have advantages and disadvantages. According to Hoberg, (1999:22) quantitative research relies on numerical data while qualitative research consists of words in the form verbal descriptions rather than numbers.

The research methodology of this study consists of both literature review as well as an empirical research.

1.4.1 Literature review

The literature review assisted the researcher to determine:

- what is already known about the problem;
- general trends and the most important models or theories;
- related problems, which have to be solved; and
- unanswered questions (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:119)

Morgan (2004:15) posits that the review of related literature involves the system of identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:120) state that literature helps researchers to understand the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified.

In this study, the relevant national and international literature has been reviewed to extract both primary and secondary data on educators' choice of learning and teaching materials, including their experiences in such an endeavour in inclusive classrooms.

The secondary data relevant to this research was gleaned from the following source:

- scientific books,
- articles in professional journals, and
- research reports such as Masters' and Doctoral degrees dissertations and theses.

The main purpose of using the books, journals, dissertations and theses was to read and understand what other scholars contend about the problem under investigation so that the researcher is be able to approach on the problem with a view of extending knowledge and add a fresh perspective on the problem of educators' experiences when selecting and choosing teaching and learning materials for their learners (Hoberg 1999:48).

Uys & Basson (2005:17) declare that a thorough review of the existing literature is essential for all kinds of research. The researcher benefits from the specialized and expert knowledge she/he acquires from researchers and authors who have established themselves in the field that is investigated. While reviewing the literature, the researcher also gains an insight of accommodating his or her voice on the national and international debate on the problem.

The literature study helped the researcher to develop the ability to isolate the significant relevant facts and to adopt a particular theoretical framework, as the basis of the recommendations for the solution to the problem under investigation.

From the foregoing paragraphs it is clear that a necessity of reviewing relevant information from related literature exists in order to be able to form a strong basis of her study (Hoberg, 1999:40).

The following key words were utilized to conduct a NEXUS search, as well as an EBSCOHOST SEARCH: Inclusion, inclusion in education, inclusive

education, the learning and teaching support materials, as well as inclusive classroom settings.

1.4.2 Empirical research

Primary data for this study was collected by making use of empirical research. In this study the qualitative method of empirical research was utilised. The qualitative method of empirical research was used in an interpretivist, descriptive and explorative manner. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:372), the qualitative method analyses and interprets the research participants' individual and collective social action, belief, thoughts, and perceptions.

As part of qualitative research, educator participants were interviewed to collect necessary and relevant information concerning their experiences when choosing the learning and teaching support materials for inclusive classroom settings.

1.4.2.1 Interview

In this study, the researcher used interviews, which allowed the participants to express their reaction by choosing various given answers. Interviews are essentially vocal questionnaires. Interviews involve direct interaction between individuals. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:159) regard interviews as a data collection technique based on a series of questions relating to the research topic which are to be answered by participants.

The researcher developed an interview schedule instrument which she used to obtain self-reports from educator participants on their experiences when choosing the learning and teaching support materials for inclusive classroom settings. According to Uys and Basson (2005:33), interviews should be well placed and should attempt to establish a personal rapport between the researcher and participants who form the research population of the study so that a mutual and meaningful relationship can be created to elicit the information required for the study in question from the research participants and for the researcher to gain the trust of the participants.

1.4.2.2 During interviews

The interviewer welcomed participants in a friendly manner. She explained the purpose of the interview and that the answers were going to be recorded with the tape-recorder. She further asked whether the respondents had any question or concern they would like to discuss initially.

Interviews also enable the researcher to:

- interact with the participants face to face; and
- pick up body language information from the participants (Hoberg, 1999:80).

1.4.2.3 Interview questions

As part of the interview, the researcher asked educator participants questions on:

- their understanding of the concept learning and teaching support material;
- the criteria they use in choosing learning and teaching support material for their learners;
- their reasons for seeing the criteria they stated in the latter objective as important;
- values on which they base their choice of learning support material for learners;
- cultures their learners subscribe to;
- whether they are satisfied with the learning support materials used by their learners;
- whether the learning support material they use is non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist and unbiased in all ways;

- their learners conceptually understand the language and values encapsulated in the learning support materials used in their classrooms, and
- the racial, cultural and gender make up of the authors of the preferred learning support materials in their classrooms.

The interview questions were first piloted at two primary schools to check whether the language used in constructing the schedule of interview questions was clear and had no confusing statements and ambiguities. The results of the pilot study revealed the necessity for slight modifications for the final draft which the researcher worked on with her study supervisor.

Personal briefings and guidelines were made during the interviewing of the participants in order to ensure as far as possible standardised administration of the interview schedule's question items and to secure the participants' beliefs that all the information they would provide during the interviews would be kept confidential and would only be used for the research purposes which this researcher is engaged. Unstructured questions were asked from which responses were elicited from interviewees. Uys and Basson (2005:35) state that an interview schedule is an ideal technique for the researcher who is conducting qualitative empirical research.

1.4.2.4 Sampling

The research used a purposeful sampling design. There are different types of purposeful sampling designs (Merriam, 1998:83). The researcher decided to utilise network sampling, which is one of the types used in purposeful sampling. Hoberg (1999:168) argues that this strategy involves identifying cases of interest from people who know what cases are rich in information, that is, good examples for the study and good interview participants. The researcher used her network of friends who are learning facilitators, remedial educators, and principals to conduct network sampling to identify educators who could voluntarily participate in this research.

In this study the target population comprises both primary and secondary school educators in the Sedibeng-West District. Six primary schools and two secondary schools were purposefully selected from one hundred and one primary and forty five secondary schools. For the purpose of the interviews, the educator participants of the primary and secondary schools were clustered into focus groups of seven participants. The total population sample of fifty-six (N=56) educator participants took part in the focus group interviews. Blaikie (2000:198) defines population as an aggregate of all participant cases in a research that can form a designated set of criteria. Population elements are single members or units of a population. This means that they can be people, social actions, places or social events. Hoberg (1999:62) describes sampling as the quality of a piece of research which not only stands or falls by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted by the population on which the researcher focuses.

1.4.2.5 Data analyses and interpretation strategies

The purpose of analysing and interpreting the data was to find meaning in the empirical research data that were elicited from the educator participants, and this was done by systematically arranging and presenting data in a way that would enable the researcher to develop themes from them.

Qualitative analysis is a process of interim discovery analysis, developing coding topics and categories that may initially come from the data, and pattern-seeking for plausible explanations (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:390). Themes were and the researcher used an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns among the categories. Qualitative data analysis can assist in organizing numerous data sets and in assembling coded data. Results are presented as a narration of participants' stories or events, a topology, theme analysis, or a grounded theory (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:390). The organization of the elicited empirical research data was done in such a way that comparisons, contrasts and insights can be made and demonstrated. But the empirical research data are also categorised

not only to count occurrences, instead they were categorised to permit analyses and comparisons of meaning within a category (Blaikie, 2000:200).

1.5 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING OF STUDY

This research followed the social constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2000:21) in the analysis and interpretation of data. According to Charmaz (2000:23), social constructivism recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the researcher and the participants, and aims at an interpretive understanding of participants' experiences. A social constructivist approach to grounded theory re-affirms studying people in their natural settings, and a focus on meaning while using grounded theory furthers interpretative understanding (Charmaz, 2000:34) of the collected empirical research data.

In an interpretative study, there is no clear point when empirical research data collection stops and analyses begin. Collecting, analyzing and interpreting the empirical research data coincide as a process that unfolds as the research progresses. The researcher intended to interpret the empirical research data from a position of engaging and empathetic understanding, which is one of the key principles of interpretative analysis (Blaikie, 2000:203). Charmaz (2000:35) supports this view by stating that one of the strategies of social constructivist grounded theory is the simultaneous collection and analyses of the empirical research data.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this study, ethical principles refer to the ways in which the researcher created an engaging and trusting relationship between her and the educator participants. McMillan and Schumacher, (1997:410) state that the aim of ethics is to protect the participants involved in research. McMillan and Schumacher, (1997:410) also describe that confidentiality, means that no one or no institution is identified in a report unless, of course, there is good reason to reveal institutional origins and permission of the participants is secured. In the case of this dissertation, the researcher assured educator participants of absolute confidentiality of their names and names of their schools and that their responses both verbal and non-verbal were going to be used for

research in which in turn could assist and to help the Department of Education in South Africa to realize the nature and extent of challenges educators have in choosing learning and teaching support materials for their diverse learners in inclusive classrooms.

In order to facilitate the participants giving their fully informed consent, all the necessary information pertaining to the the nature, purpose and usefulness of this research, including the voluntary nature of participation in the research was given. This exercise was carried out with the participants rather than just what Blanche and Durrheim (1999:11) refer to as "gatekeepers".

The Gauteng Department of Education was approached and an application form was completed in for permission to conduct the empirical research of this dissertation in the identified schools of educators who formed the sample population within their jurisdiction. The permission was granted. The researcher also met with the school principals and school governing body members of identified schools of educators who formed the sample population in order to show and inform them of the letter from the Gauteng Department of Education granting the researcher permission to administer the interview schedule at their schools.

The researcher also used these meetings with the school principals and school governing body members to make arrangements for interviewing times with the educators who were selected to form the sample population of this research, as well as to provide them with the names of the selected educators at their schools. All schools permitted the researcher to interview the selected educators after school hours. The educators who were selected for the sample of this research were met and given the choice to voluntarily participate in the empirical research of this study. All selected educator participants agreed to participate in the study after school hours.

1.7 ECOSYSTEMIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AS THE FOUNDATION OF THIS RESEARCH

According to Engelbrecht (1999:3) the ecosystemic framework has its roots in general systems theory and human ecology. The former postulates that any

whole structurally comprises subsystems that are functionally interactive and interdependent. Malfunctioning in one subpart disturbs the effectiveness of the whole system. However, should the malfunctioning subsystem be replaced, the effectiveness of the whole system is restored. The human ecosystem on the other hand, involves two open systems namely, the individual and the environment.

Representing the environmental system are the physical environment, cultural, community and social subsystems. Boundaries between and within subsystems are permeable, thus fostering interaction at various levels of individual and environmental subsystems (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998:998)

The ecosystemic approach construes the human system as the central unit of analysis while the environment forms the context in which behaviour occurs. As such, the behavior of the individual cannot be examined without addressing the context in which it occurs. Bronfenbrenner and Morris, (1998:998) explain that in combination, individual and environmental systems function synergistically - meaning that the impact of the whole ecosystem is greater than the sum of its individual components. They refer to ecologically based factors as having the potential to either ameliorate or exacerbate the impact of negative experiences.

This study argues that unraveling ecological factors provide an understanding of the ways in which educators can consider socio-cultural factors such as language, religion, ways of life, philosophy of life and convictions in their choice of learning and teaching support materials for their inclusive classrooms. It is therefore possible to regard the ecosystemic framework as an integrated approach for choosing learning and teaching support materials that encapsulate such socio-cultural factors in supporting learners to learn effectively and to promote inclusive education in their schools.

It is clear, that inclusive education is an ecosystemic approach which aims to develop a learner-focus by acknowledging that all learners are individuals with different learning needs and speeds. Teaching and learning can become

more effective, relevant and fun for all. Therefore inclusive education will always be good for all schools, although all schools may not be good for all learners (Booth, Aiscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughan & Shaw, 2000:78).

Inclusive education is part of social development, and social development should be inclusive, that is responding to the needs of people who are all different. As with all learners, learners with learning difficulties have a range of basic social needs which need to be met in order for them to benefit from education. These include of course, among many others, basic infrastructure such as effective schools and effective learning and teaching support materials. It is clear that inclusive education is the responsibility of both government and community, requiring collaboration between social systems in communities and extensive participation. Supporting and involving learners in their own learning processes is central to inclusive education, as the learner has prime responsibility for his/her self-regulated learning (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:258).

In order to combat discrimination and to promote positive identity in learners with learning difficulties, role modeling in curriculum materials should reflect the existence of all languages, religions, philosophies of life, convictions and ways of life in society in positive ways. (Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, Smith & Leal, 2002:66).

As a result of human efforts to respond to the learning needs of learners with learning difficulties, schools become more flexible and learner-centered and therefore enable such learners to benefit and in this regard promote integrated education, which generally refers to an approach which focuses on helping learners with learning difficulties benefit from inclusive schooling. This means that the term inclusive education is a more accurate term which reflects societies' common goals. However, many educational programmes will continue to use the term integrated education where this is more meaningful and familiar in that context and culture (Friend & Cook, 2003:5).

It is clear that the guiding principles of inclusive education is different, and there is no fixed dividing line between learners with learning difficulties, and

those without. Whatever language is used in inclusive classroom settings, it is important that it is clearly understood, promotes positive attitudes and practice, and does not stigmatize. Therefore, in inclusive classroom settings, different terms will be appropriate in different social contexts and cultures (Green, 2001:6).

Language should not be used for labeling learners, but rather for highlighting social problems and improving social practice of inclusion in education. Whatever term is used, to the words 'learner' or 'learners' should be added, 'learners with learning difficulties'. Learning difficulties imply that learners do not have a 'fixed' ability to learn. All learners can learn, and any learner may experience difficulty. Their learning is affected by a wide range of factors including, among other things, learning and teaching support materials' choice of educators and cultural perceptions of what types of learning are valued and given status in the chosen learning and teaching support materials (Swart & Pettipher, 2001:36).

1.8 FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY

This study was practically possible to conduct because sufficient international and national literature sources were available on the topic. The empirical research was conducted in the Gauteng Department of Education, in the Sedibeng West District, where the researcher is employed as an education specialist responsible for learning and teaching support materials, thus allowing for easy access of the researcher to the identified schools with the selected sample of educator participants.

1.9 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This research is relevant to the field of learner support and the South African system of Education in general in that it exposes the experiences of educators on the choice of learning and teaching support material for their learners in inclusive classroom settings. The recommendations made has the potential to help educators, both in the Provincial and National Departments of Education in South Africa, district offices, schools, and communities to make informed

choices when selecting learning and teaching support materials for their learners in the inclusive classroom settings.

1.10 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter one is primarily an orientation chapter preparing the reader for the subsequent chapters.

Chapter two presents the literature review on choice of learning and teaching support materials, inclusion, inclusive education and inclusive classrooms.

Chapter three presents the empirical research design

Chapter four presents empirical research data analyses and interpretations

Chapter five presents summaries, findings, conclusions and recommendations

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on introductory literature review findings, statement of the problem, aims of the study, the nature of literature review and empirical research methods which was employed in this research, study, ethical considerations that were adhered to during the process of conducting the empirical research and an indication of chapter division.

The next chapter focuses on the literature review on learning and teaching support materials and inclusive education.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Learning and teaching support materials are resources which assist educators to teach and learners to learn. These resources are essential to a culture of teaching and learning (Gauteng Department of Education: 1999:1). Learning and teaching material are designed to support both educators and learners. They further enrich educators teaching and learners learning (Gauteng Department of Education: 1999:8).

2.2 THE NATURE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIALS

Learning and teaching support materials are any resources which enable educators to teach and learners to learn. According to the North West University (NWU) (2004a:37), learning and teaching support materials are essential to promote a culture of teaching and learning in classroom settings. The Department of Education (2003:36-37) advocates that learning and teaching support materials can be almost anything. In the past, a learning resource was usually seen as a teaching aid (a textbook, a wall chart, and so on), but today it is defined as anything that can assist with the learning process, even if it is not specifically designed for that purpose. It is therefore incumbent upon the school management teams to encourage educators to use many different kinds of learning resources, to share them among themselves, and to share ideas among themselves for the development, design and creation of the learning and teaching support materials. This also means that school management teams must ensure that educators who need training on the development, design and creation of the learning and teaching support materials receive training for example learn about ways to:

- find resources that can be useful in the classroom;

- work with equipment like overhead projectors, video machines and computers;
- use facilities like the library and the laboratory;
- make their own learning resources which is accommodative of the nature of learners they have in their classes. Such learning and teaching support materials should be more relevant to individual learners' needs than fancy learning and teaching resources which schools buy, and should be more exciting to create a positive motivating learning and teaching environment; and
- organize workshops for educators to practise innovative and resourceful means of making their own learning resources (Department of Education, 2000:20).

Nkombela (2002:3) states that learning and teaching support materials encompass materials such as teaching aids, audio-visual materials and teaching materials. Brainard (1996:11) indicates that learning and teaching support materials should be constructed so as to include both teaching and learning equipment and consumables such as:

- textbooks;
- print and non-print materials;
- educational technology and computer software;
- supplementary learning and teaching support materials; and
- curriculum guides and teaching equipment.

The Provincial Department of Education (2003:36-37) provide a guideline to recognise the following as learning and teaching support materials, for example all written, visual, audio, or other forms of replicable learning and teaching support materials directly influencing the effective learning of learners.

According to North West University (NWU) (2004b:137), learning and teaching support materials should meet the demands of the Outcomes Based Education and Training critical outcomes. In Outcomes Based Education and Training, the value of learning and teaching is placed on aspects of learning other than the acquisition of knowledge, for example Outcomes Based Education and Training learning and teaching support materials should assist educators to reach the following prescribed learning critical outcomes, which are to:

- identify and solve problems;
- work effectively with others in a group, team, community;
- collect, analyze, organize and critically evaluate;
- organize and manage themselves and activities responsibly;
- communicate effectively;
- use science and technology effectively and critically; and
- demonstrate an understanding of the world as a related systems by recognizing that problem-solving context does not exist in isolation.

According to NWU (2004b:137) the system of education insists that learning and teaching support materials can be almost anything used in the classroom to enhance effective visible and audible learning of learners, unlike the past learning education system of before the South African democratic dispensation in 1994 where teaching and learning resources were usually seen as teaching media, textbooks, wall charts and so on. Today educators can use anything that can assist learners with their effective learning processes, even if it were not specifically designed for that purpose.

According to Landsberg (2000:21-22), learning and teaching support materials should fit the needs of the diversity of learners. Modification may be needed to cater for different special learning needs. For example, many pictures in learning material may not be suitable for visually impaired learners.

Educational structures at national and provincial levels should therefore make sure that teaching and learning support materials are bias-free, reflect the diversity of the learner population and that specific learning and teaching support materials for learners who experience barriers to learning and development, are developed. The following recommendations are being highlighted by Landsberg (2000: 21-22) regarding teaching and learning support materials:

- learning materials, for example textbooks, study guides, and worksheets developed and used should be customized so as to address and reflect the diverse needs of the learner population across all levels of education;
- educational departments needs to develop mechanisms in order to ensure that learning and teaching support materials are bias-free and do not discriminate against any person; and
- educational departments which do not have the capacity to develop, customize and produce specific learning and teaching materials, such as Braille and large print should investigate outsourcing this function via normal tendering procedures of the government.

2.3 KINDS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIAL

This section provides kinds of learning and teaching support material that are available for schools to use.

2.3.1 Assistive devices and appropriate technology

Assistive devices and appropriate technology refer to equipment or adaptations that facilitate learning. Access to appropriate and affordable assistives is essential for people with disabilities to access their rights and responsibilities and participate as equal citizens in the classroom settings Landsberg (2000:21). Assistive devices should also be available, especially in essential learning activities such as reading, writing and numeracy (Landsberg, 2000:21). The following recommendations have been accepted by the National Department of Education, which are that the:

- Department of Health should be responsible for the provision and maintenance of assistive devices that contribute to independent living. (mobility devices, hearing aids);
- Department of Education should be responsible for the provision and maintenance of assistive devices which enable learners to access the curriculum; that is, those devices that have direct relevance for learning (Braille writers, computers with adaptive technology for access, magnifying glasses, appropriate seating)
- Department of Education should develop an essentials list of assistive devices which should be allocated to learners, taking into consideration the provision of access to lifelong learning and learners' rights to choice of learning contexts;
- information and other forms of technology, should be utilized as a means of overcoming barriers to access experienced by learners at all levels of education and training; and
- Department of Education should develop a basic items list for learning-related assistive devices.

2.3.2 People, reading and writing media, learning programmes and waste materials as kinds of learning and teaching support materials

There are different kinds of learning and teaching support materials such as people (parents, community), reading and writing media (chalkboard, books, crayons), learning programmes (curriculum plan), or even waste materials (bottle tops, tin cans, egg shells, boxes) (North West University . 2004b:37).

According to North West University (2004b:37), learning and teaching support materials in Outcomes Based Education and Training are as wide and open as life itself. The learning and teaching support materials can be grouped in a few major categories, such as, print-based, electronic; physical / kinesthetic; and human and organizational which will be discussed below which are:

- print-based materials may be reading books, textbooks, learners' workbooks, learner's textbooks, educators' manuals or guides, magazines and newspapers. (chalkboard, overhead projector) electronic sources, such as the computer and derivative kinds of information and communication technology, television, radio, the overhead projector and other electronic devices, may be used with great success as learning and teaching support materials;
- physical/ kinesthetic materials which have often been ignored in the past, can also be used, such as movement, games and playing as learning and teaching support materials; and
- human and organizational resources which are people from the community, a business-person, a parent, senior citizen, a celebrity, a professional motivational speaker, and a scientist, an excursion to a work-site are amongst the examples of human and organizational sources that can be used as learning and teaching support materials (North West University, 2004b:37).

However, educators are in fact the very most important learning and teaching support materials in that they have to role-model learning through motivational, behavioural and metacognitive involvement in the teaching and learning situation. The North West University (2004b:137) states that the educators' experiences, skills and creativity are more valuable than anything else in the classroom setting.

While educators make effective utilization of published learning and teaching support materials in teaching, learning and assessment, the value of educator-designed teaching must not be under-estimated. Both educators and publishers can make use of these learning programme guidelines to generate learning and teaching support materials for use in the classroom. Irrespective of whether such materials are obtained in a ready-to-use format (for example printed posters, textbooks, abacuses and others), or designed by educators, all such materials should be developed in accordance with an outcomes-based teaching, learning and assessment philosophy. It is also crucial, that

educators are able to select and use existing materials effectively (Department of Education: 2006: 49)

Different types of learning and teaching support materials is commercially available. What is important in the teaching, learning and assessment process is to allow learners to develop from the concrete to the abstract paradigm. Learning and teaching support materials should play a role in providing a concrete paradigm (Department of Education: 2003:38).

The absence of learning and teaching support materials are also barriers to learning. However, it is also important, that in those cases where workbooks do exist and are used, they be used coherently. Random selection of topics from different workbooks, and or haphazard selections of activities from one workbook can hamper conceptual development and as such, become a barrier to learning as well. In those cases where the exercise book of the learner becomes the "text" or record of learning, it is important that this is also organized in a coherent manner (Department of Education, 2003:38).

2.4 THE ROLE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIALS

Learning and teaching support materials play a crucial part in the learning and teaching situation. The National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) (1997:18) recommended that teaching and learning support materials developed and used must address diverse needs of the learner population. Further this should be pursued within the context of general material development centres or institutes, but should ensure that the appropriate 'special needs' and support expertise is provided within that context.

According to the Department of Education (1997:81) learning and teaching support materials should enhance the avenues for expression and opportunities to capture evidence of learner knowledge. Materials should, therefore, be evaluated and developed in order to ensure that they are appropriate to the needs of all learners.

Learning materials may have to be modified in order to cater for different disabilities, for example, the pictorial nature of learning materials may be unsuitable for use with visually impaired learners.

Consideration should be given to the establishment of structures at the national and possibly, provincial levels of the Department of Education in order to ensure that materials are bias-free, and reflect the diversity of the learner population and that specific materials for learners who experience barriers to learning and development, are developed (Department of Education, 1997:81).

2.5 GUIDELINES TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIALS

According to the Department of Education (2002:174), the following guidelines must be considered when selecting and purchasing these types of materials:

- when selecting learning and teaching support materials that are commercially produced, checks must be made to see that there are enough learning and teaching support materials available for all learners;
- learning and teaching support materials must reflect an understanding of the principles of Human Rights, example sensitivity toward gender, race, disability and race.
- learning and teaching support materials must also be accessible in terms of the language of the learner;
- learning and teaching support materials are varied, relevant, age-appropriate and made available in various media for diverse classrooms, that is Braille, large print, tape-aids.
- learning and teaching support materials must be purchased against criteria established for the selection of learning and teaching support materials to be put in place;

- the services produced in Braille need to be increased and made more accessible and affordable: and
- the service providers should be encouraged to set systems in place to provide learning and teaching support materials in the Braille, large print and tape.

According to Fourie, (2004:72), being able to select appropriate books of socio-cultural interest to learners and to motivate them to read often are of vital importance. Learners should be allowed to select their own reading books from a variety of books that the facilitator has carefully chosen. Books based on the learners' special interests, greatly improve the chances of successful reading. Using books in the learners' area of socio-cultural interest give him/her a strong motivation to read. However, Fourie, (2004:72) contends that it is frequently difficult to find such material written at an appropriate level of difficulty.

According to Fourie (2004:72) books written on the individual learner's level will be simple in content and, therefore, not interesting. Interesting books, but written at a higher reading level than the learner can cope with, may be taped for the learner to follow or be used for guided or paired/collaborative reading activities. The right book for the learner can be a powerful tool to build interest, provide motivation and improve learning.

The facilitator of the classroom may also select materials with controlled vocabulary which allows her/him to control the level of difficulty that the learner encounters in the early stages of recovery from reading problems. Even though the vocabulary may be controlled, the books selected should have natural and flowing language and stories that socio-culturally relate to the learner. Materials designed for teaching specific skills, which the learner might be lacking, may be used. These may be commercially available programmes or materials manufactured by the facilitator him/herself (Department of Education 2003:37).

According to Fourie (2004:72-73) criteria for selecting appropriate books are as followed:

- books should look like real books found in the library with different shapes, sizes, authors' illustrations and texts;
- books should have a real story inside with a beginning, a suitable plot and an ending;
- books should be socio-culturally appropriate so that learners can identify with the characters and social context;
- illustrations should support the text by presenting similar information but in audio-visual form. Text should be the functional or teaching reading level of the reader and not at the frustration level;
- stories, texts and illustrations should be age-appropriate;
- texts as well as the topic should be relevant and meaningful for the learner's life circumstances. The topic should also be of interest to the learner;
- unlimited interpretations or inferences should be required of the learner;
- use predictable and repetitive texts, particularly for emergent readers. Although these books should have the minimum of text with repetitive words and phrases, and a genuine story should still be told; and
- learners generally enjoy humorous and fun stories or scary and frightening stories which maintain their socio-cultural interest levels (Fourie, 2004:72-73).

2.6 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CHOICE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT

According to North West University (2004a:117), there are a number of curriculum issues that should be taken into account during the planning process for learning and teaching support materials' choice. Educators need to become comfortable with their lack of knowledge about certain groups and seek ways to inform themselves, for example, through experiences, readings,

and/or conversations with colleagues, peers, and learners who are knowledgeable about the particular groups. Examples of the sorts of issues that educators might be considered in order to increase their awareness of curriculum issues during the planning process are:

2.6.1 Teaching Strategies

Learners bring an array of learning strategies to a class. If educators rely on a small repertoire of teaching strategies in choosing the learning and teaching support materials for their inclusive classroom settings, they may provide effective teaching for only a small sub-set of their class. Educators should become aware of their preferred teaching strategies. For example, are sessions with small groups of learners doing problem sets always conducted by asking questions? Are whole-group discussions preferred and the only method used? Once educators have a sense of their strategy preferences, they should consider alternative techniques that will help their learners learn more effectively. If educators typically give mini-lessons to learners, they might consider using the learning and teaching support materials that encapsulate visual materials (such as, charts, diagrams, video), demonstrations, hands-on activities, co-operative group work, (Department of Education, 2006:42-45).

2.6.2 Mediating learning using different strategies

Using a wide range of teaching strategies to mediate learning benefit learners by:

- Providing the learners with good quality, up-to-date information
- Encouraging learners to find information for themselves
- Using textbooks with learners
- Setting projects for learners
- Providing language support to learners
- Setting group-based learning tasks where appropriate

- Encouraging learners to co-define their learning and
- Allowing learners to debate issues among themselves (Department of Education, 2006:44).

Teaching strategies allow learners to participate in the lessons in the following ways:

- Asking relevant questions that were of interest to them
- Finding out about issues through reading, researching and asking other people questions
- Making presentations of their findings to others in their groups
- Planning activities with other learners
- Reading new information and working from textbooks

2.6.3 Different learning styles and different teaching methods

According to the Department of Education, (2006:50) learners have similarities and differences. They use different languages and have different life experiences which are influenced by the place where they live, their culture and family history, socio-economic circumstances and their social and physical characteristics. For example, one learner may be good at reading, while another may be good at mathematics. Yet another learner may be good at designing and making things, while another may be physically challenged and may not be able to design and make things. This rich diversity influence classroom practice.

Despite this rich array of differences, learners in schools are often expected to be the same in the way they learn. The Department of Education (2006:51) emphasizes that not all learners are the same, and different learners learn in different ways. Around the world educators are changing classroom practice to accommodate diversity in learning styles.

Using different teaching methods allows educators to accommodate different preferred learning styles (Department of Education, 2006:53). Further it is important to realize that learners can also learn when they are exposed to new learning styles that challenge them (which may not be their preferred learning style). Some learners may also have more than one preferred learning style (Department of Education, 2006:53).

2.6.4 Cultural Reference Points

Educators who use choose the learning and teaching support materials which use examples based only on their own socio-cultural experience may fail to reach all learners in the inclusive classroom setting. Given that examples are designed to clarify key points, educators should choose the learning and teaching support materials that use examples from a variety of cultural reference points (North West University, 2004:117). This concern can also be off-set by educators' asking about learners' familiarity with an example before discussing it or asking learners to produce examples of their own the learning and teaching support materials. Educators can also explain examples fully in order to reach a diverse classroom (North West University, 2004:118).

2.6.5 Inclusion

Educators are required by the National Curriculum Statements to focus on the inclusion of a diverse range of learning needs. it requires them to accommodate the learning needs and learning styles of all learners (Department of Education:2003:7).

White paper six asserts that all learners can learn, provided they receive the necessary support. The paper also states that many learners experience barriers to learning, or drop out of the South African education system because the system fails to recognize and accommodate the diverse range of learning needs and the experience of learners (Department of Education, 2001:6). Educators sometimes make the mistake of thinking that barriers to learning only exist within the learner. Barriers of learning do not only exist within the learner, they also exists within the social, educational and socio-

economic environment in which learning take place (Department of Education, 2006:54).

2.6.6 Material content

In order to help their learners meet curriculum goals, educators need a highly developed organizational sense. According to King-Sears (1996:60), "Learners see textbook chapters as 80 zillion pieces of information flying around in the air. An educator must decide what pieces are the most important in a particular lesson.

An educator's solid knowledge in a content area can make the selection process easier. The careful use of graphic organizers, she suggests, can then further smooth the road to understanding for learners with learning disabilities and strengthen the delivery of content for all learners. (King-Sears, 1996: 66)

To evaluate a curriculum for inclusive classrooms, King-Sears (1996:70) developed a three-step process that begins with curriculum analysis. Educators should look for "universal design features," such as the inclusion of big ideas or "strategic integration," which connects big ideas within a curriculum area or across subjects or learning areas. The educator might examine a particular curriculum by analyzing the textbook and asking the following questions: "How much in-depth information can be found there? Does the sequence of chapters and topics make sense"? "Does the educator's guide for the textbook give alternative ways to differentiate the information for learners of varying abilities"?

Secondly, the educator should enhance the curriculum. In this phase, the educator may supplement a curriculum that does not provide explicit strategies for learners with disabilities. To prepare a lesson plan and learning activities, the educator might need to construct a pre-test or inventory to help determine what learners know, what needs reviewing, and what is totally unfamiliar to them. After a selective review, an educator then introduces appropriate strategies to make new material more accessible. Analogies, for example, can help learners understand a new concept by linking it to something they already know. (King-Sears, 1996:73)

If learners need more help, further minor or major changes, often called accommodations or adaptations, can be made to the curriculum. Accommodations, which may be highly individualized, do not change the curriculum content. What changes is the way educators deliver that curriculum or the way learners express their understanding of it, according to King-Sears (1996:74). Use of audiotaped books for learners who are having difficulty reading is a common accommodation. "The big point is that if you have done the first two steps well, you will have less to do here," (King-Sears 1996:74).

2.7 CHOOSING LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIAL CURRICULUM CONTENT

The Department of Education regards adequate learning and teaching support materials as crucial to the running of an education system and states firmly that these materials are an integral part of the curriculum development and a means of promoting both quality teaching and learning; (Thamane & Mabaso, 2002:275).

Stein, Stuen, Carnine and Long (2001:18-19) add the following guidelines which will be discussed below:

Guideline 1: Is Content Organized Around Big Ideas?

Stein *et al.* (2001:18) observed that a relatively large number of topics received brief coverage in many printed and published materials. They urge that when analyzing the content organization or coverage in any of the given learning and teaching support material, the scope and sequence which illustrate the phenomenon must be examined carefully. Further educators should be cautioned to examine carefully the scope and sequence in the materials. Scope and sequence illustrate the phenomenon. Different topics included in any given level of a published program or material often appears extensive. However, a closer examination of the materials often reveals limited knowledge on any single topic. An alternative to limited exposure to many different topics is the organization of content around "big" ideas. These "big" ideas are critical concepts that are essential for content mastery in given subject. One of the first criteria in evaluating learning and teaching support

materials is to determine whether the instruction in a given textbook or program is focused and comprehensive.

Guideline 2: Do the Curriculum Materials Contain Explicit Strategies?

After determining whether the content is organized in a reasonable way, evaluators need to examine whether the materials provide educators with explicit strategies to use in teaching learners important content. These strategies should also be designed to promote generalization of concepts and skills. These strategies should also be designed to promote generalization of concepts and skills. The initial strategy of sounding out words to decode is an example of an explicit strategy in a beginning reading program. Given that learners have the prerequisite letter or sound knowledge, learners can use this strategy to decode new words. In the area of written expression, a strategy for self-editing is an explicit strategy, provided learners have the prerequisite knowledge required for editing (Stein *et al.*: 2001:19).

Guideline 3: Do the Curriculum Material Provide Opportunities for Educators to Scaffold Instruction?

An explicit strategy contains a set of overt steps that support learners as they move toward mastery of the skills and concepts. Once the strategy is identified, the process for teaching learners to apply that strategy must involve an instructional sequence that provides maximum support in the early stages of acquisition while gradually encouraging more independent application of the skill or concept (Stein *et al.*; 2001:19).

Stein *et al.* (2001:19) highlights that ideally, commercially developed materials should serve as a resource for educators that provide them with the means and strategies for support during initial teaching and a means for monitoring how much support learners continue to need. Most commercially developed materials contain an assessment component. Evaluating the degree to which the assessment recommendations provide enough information regarding learner's progress should also be an important part of any learning and teaching support material evaluation.

2.8 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIALS

The Gauteng Department of Education has adopted an Open System for the selection of learning and teaching support materials by schools (Gauteng Department of Education, 2000:4).

The South Africa Schools' Act makes provision for all schools to purchase the learning and teaching support materials relevant and needed for their school. The Gauteng Department of Education (Circular 40/2000) has published evaluation instruments to be used to evaluate learning and teaching support materials, to ensure material is of the highest quality. The instrument embodies criteria for evaluating, reviewing and selecting materials that have been developed.

Berhard, Lernhardt and Miranda-Decker (1999:176) mention the following criteria for evaluating learning and teaching support materials:

2.8.1 Criteria for evaluating content

The following are the criteria for evaluating the content:

- cover appropriate content. Do the materials appropriately cover and emphasize topics in the content? Are they at an appropriate level for the targeted age group? Do they contain accurate and current information?
- challenge all learners. Does the material content challenges and expand the knowledge of learners from diverse backgrounds and at different levels of understanding?
- integrates subjects or learning areas. Do the materials embed subject or learning are content in real-world contexts and integrates other subjects or learning areas? Are the learning outcomes integrated?
- develop concepts clearly. Are subjects or learning areas ideas clearly introduced and reinforced with examples and multiple representations,

such as diagrams, graphs, and tables? Is vocabulary clearly developed; explained; and reinforced with examples, a glossary, and an index?

- allow flexibility. Can educators tailor the material to their particular classroom environment?

2.8.2 Criteria for evaluating learner materials

The question can be asked whether learner materials

- develop reasoning skills. Do ample opportunities exist for learners to develop their reasoning skills, for example, deductive, inductive and spatial?
- develop communication skills. Do the materials promote classroom discourse in which learners can listen to, respond to, and question the educator and one another? Are learners encouraged to communicate both orally and in writing, and to use a variety tools, such as diagrams, concrete materials within the context of classroom discourse?
- develop problem-solving skills. Do a variety of robust problem situations encourage learners to explore subjects or learning areas?
- ground activity in meaningful situations. Is learner work situated in contexts that are meaningful and interesting to learners from all backgrounds?
- promote equity. Do the materials accurately and positively portray learners of diverse backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, gender, health, age, religion and social class? The evaluator should consider such issues as familiarity of content to all learners, language used, inclusion of multicultural origins of subjects or learning areas and multiple ways of knowing and doing subjects; and
- promote positive values. Are learners encouraged to respect and value one another's ideas, ways of thinking and subject dispositions? Do the materials promote humanitarian issues, such as respect for the

environment and the rights and property of other? (Bernhard, Lernhardt and Miranda-Decker, 1999:176).

2.8.3 Criteria for evaluating educator materials

The question can be asked whether educator support materials

- empower educators to improve classroom discourse. Do the materials encourage teachers to make decisions about classroom discourse, such as when to provide information to learners; when to clarify an issue; when to let learners struggle with a problem; and when to have learners justify their ideas, both orally and in writing? Do the material prompt educators to monitor learners' participation in classroom discussions and to encourage each learner to participate actively in class?
- empower educators to make curriculum decisions. Can educators make decisions about the content covered, the work learners do, and the types of assessment used? Do the material encourage teachers to make decisions about altering, adding, or deleting materials so that they can pursue issues raised by learners during discussions and so that the curriculum can reflect learners' subject interests?
- Provide adequate teaching materials. Are teaching materials clear and helpful enough so that educators can plan and prepare for lessons in a reasonable amount of time? Do they help educators acquire the knowledge needed to pose tasks that will engage learners in important and interesting subject reasoning, especially with regard to the effective use of technology or manipulatives? and
- supply adequate support materials. Do the materials include such support items as extra practice assignments, challenging assignments for advanced learners, assessments, extra examples, solutions, multicultural and multilingual material, warm-up exercises, software with documentation, pacing charts, lesson planners and a list of resource materials?

- make suggestions. Do the materials offer suggestions on how to engage learners in deep subject thinking through the use of group learning, technology, manipulatives and other important teaching strategies? (Berhard, Lemhardt and Miranda-Decker, 1999:178).

2.8.4 Criteria for evaluating assessment

Here questions can be posed to ascertain whether assessment

- involves appropriate activities. Do the assessments engage learners in realistic and worthwhile subject tasks? Do they promote the use of important and correct knowledge?
- yields a variety of information. Do the assessments allow for inferences about what learners understand their subject knowledge, their thinking processes and their dispositions?
- integrates with learning. Are the assessments an integral part of learning? Do they build on learners' understanding, interests and experiences?
- encourages learning. Do the assessments offer opportunities for learners to apply subject knowledge to new situations and to evaluate, reflect on and improve their own work and the work of others?
- promotes equity. Do the assessments encourage and acknowledge multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and abilities?
- allows flexibility. Do the rating guides flexible enough to accommodate learner responses that are reasonable but unanticipated?
- encourages openness. Are learners allowed to become familiar with the assessment process and its purposes? Do the assessments involve both educators and learners in choosing tasks, setting criteria and interpreting results? Are assessment tasks open to critique? and

- lends coherence. Do assessments fit together in a cohesive way that gives an overall representation of learners' understanding? Do assessments match the learning outcomes of the learning materials?
- engages learners. Do the assessments present opportunities for learners to interact with one another and be active decision-makers? Do they encourage self-assessment? (Berhard, Lernhardt and Miranda-Decker, 1999:177).

2.9 FUNDING OF LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIALS

Gauteng Department of Education (Circular 13/2001) emphasises that learning and teaching support materials that schools purchase should support the Learning Programmes of the school. Educators are should not limit their practice to any procured materials as this could potentiall reduce their creativity to design and develop their own Learning programmes relevant to the needs of the learners and the school.

This section provides ways in which the funding of learning and teaching support materials can be done.

2.9.1 Learning and teaching support materials budget considerations

Learning and teaching support materials budget considerations can take the following forms discussed in the next sentences:

2.9.1.1 Norms and standards for school funding

According to the Gauteng Department of Education (2005:2), norms apply to capital and recurrent cost allocations. Such allocations are defined by new classrooms and other buildings, and the latter by immovable capital renovations and repairs, recurrent costs easily separated from other costs, and other recurrent and minor capital equipment costs. The groups under which the allocations are reported to the National Department of Education, are as follows:

- new constructions of infrastrure and other land improvements;

- acquisitions of lands
- renovation and maintenance of the existing buildings;
- supplies and services;
- school textbooks;
- stationery;
- equipment; and
- multi-media collections.

The Provincial Department of Education's cost allocations are targeted on the basis of need, the physical conditions are the determinants, facilities and overcrowding at the school, and the level of poverty of the community around the school. The effective procurement of learning and teaching support materials is founded on the Outcomes based Education principles and measures. These serve as criteria for selecting materials that constitute the Gauteng Department of Education's approved catalogue for learning and teaching support materials. The learning and teaching support materials allocation should in this case accommodate packages that support curriculum priorities as well as utilize guidelines for learning and teaching support materials splits (Gauteng Department of Education, 2003:5)

Norms for learning and teaching support materials inform the nature and form of packages, as well as budget splits within the determination. The determination of learning and teaching support materials' norms remains the competency of the National Education Department. However, it is important to know that learning and teaching support materials may consist of leading, supporting and complementary materials. Hence the choice of packages and the split of the learning and teaching support materials' budget must be informed by these norms and the beneficiaries of educational materials (Gauteng Department of Education, 2005:2)

2.9.1.2 Special provincial budget

In addition to the school based budget allocations, which have been calculated on the basis of a resource targeting table (RTT), a special provincial budget has been made available for implementation of the new revised curriculum in implementing grades. This grant targets special curricular needs and is to be utilized to procure pre-packaged materials (Gauteng Department of Education, 2005:3)

Department of Education (2002:35) states that the amount budgeted for each of the various Provincial Education Departments make it essential to manage stock and equipment carefully and effectively at school level. The increasing demand for effective teaching and learning in schools means that the best equipment and stock should be used in each classroom.

The correct and careful management of stock and equipment is one of the important administrative duties of the principal as the executive head of the school. While the principal and /or deputy principal have a major role to play in this regard, all staff members have a key role to play in the management of schools learning and teaching resources (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:117). The learners' representative council of secondary schools should also be involved in the maintenance of learning and teaching equipment.

Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:117) suggest that the following activities are central to the successful management of resources in a school, which are to:

- identify the needs for teaching and learning resources;
- obtain the teaching and learning resources;
- create an effective stock-taking system teaching and learning resources;
- secure the teaching and learning resources;
- distribute teaching and learning resources effectively and fairly; and
- maintain teaching and learning resources.

Although current provincial expenditure patterns are intended to service the main functions of the teaching and learning system, including the whole school curriculum, the relationship between stated teaching and learning priorities and actual budgetary allocations are not always congruent. It is acknowledged that an increased budget does not automatically result in increasing inputs or outputs, for example sudden flood of books cannot be accommodated and will “stagnate” in schools’ storerooms. (Department of Education, 2000: 10).

2.10 LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIAL PROCUREMENT PROCESSES

The following are the processes to be followed when procuring learning and teaching support material.

2.10.1 Procurement of learning and teaching support materials

The Department of Education (2006:156) stipulates the following ideas on the schools’ procurement of learning and teaching support materials, which are that they should:

- ensure that ample storage space for learning and teaching support materials exists, taking into consideration issues of stacking, racking and weight;
- give due consideration to security, access procedures and insurance;
- conduct needs analysis in consultation with all stakeholders;
- conduct a situational analysis to check what the school already has, in order to meet learning and teaching requirements;
- identify and list teaching and learning gaps in order of priority;
- indicate cost needs according to teaching and learning priorities after consultation with all stakeholders, such as school governing bodies, learner representative councils in the case of secondary schools;

- ascertain whether the allocated learning and teaching support materials budget is sufficient;
- add additional funds generated by the school through fund-raising if the school budget is inadequate;
- draft a proposed school budget for consultation with parents, through school governing bodies;
- present the school budget to open parents' meetings as per the South African School Act (Act 84/96)
- re-prioritize their teaching and learning materials if necessary; and
- ensure that appropriate monitoring and reporting systems for the entire budget are in place.

2.10.2 Issues to consider when prioritizing

The following are the issues that must be considered when prioritizing:

- the first priority is for learner materials and not educator support or management material;
- the grades implementing national curriculum statements should always receive 100% of their learner materials – or as much as the budgets allow;
- curricular changes and set-works, must be given priority.;
- replacements of obsolete and offensive material, should be considered;
- topping-up of agreed titles for selected grades, must be considered;
- schools where there is a significant increase in enrolments should consider the impact of this increase on the allocation of learning and teaching support materials; and
- thereafter supplementary material and material for educators should be considered if the budget allows (Department of Education, 2000:14).

2.10.3 Ordering process

The following ordering process applies, according to general guidelines which are:

- attending book exhibitions to identify the most suitable learning and teaching support materials for learners and educators for every grade;
- filling in the requisition forms as per district directive and according to the latest catalogue;
- filing copies of applicable forms for future reference;
- ensuring that these requisitions are captured on whatever system the district / province prefers; and
- obtaining a requisition number for the district number from the district office for tracking purposes (Department of Education, 2000:17).

2.10.4 Delivery process

The following process has to be followed as far as possible, and is:

- decisions are to be taken about who should receive the materials.
- assuring of the availability of the school stamp.
- assuring of the availability of a delivery plan.
- keeping available a register for all necessary materials (Department of Education, 2000:17).

The following should be carried out during delivery:

- checking whether the items delivered, are correct;
- making sure by checking that the quantity received, is the quantity ordered;

- if items delivered could not be checked immediately upon delivery, the recipient should note "contents not checked", but should report discrepancies within 48 hours;
- It is important to check every book and not to assume that, because the top layer is correct, all books at the bottom are the same as those required;
- if correct, the recipient should stamp the POD (Proof of Delivery), acknowledge by signature and keep a copy;
- a copy must be kept in the school file and a copy is to be forwarded to the district office to effect payment; and
- all outstanding orders must be followed up with both suppliers and the district office (Gauteng Department of Education 2000:16).

2.10.5 The distribution process

The distribution process will comprise the following.

- the school must use an appropriate distribution model which may be, class educator, where educator receives the material from the school learning and teaching support material committee for learners in his or her class, learners receive all material from class educator and fill in the form that is signed by parents. Head of department (HOD) model, the committee provides learning and teaching support material to heads of Departments who intend give to subject educators. Educators then distribute to learners and keep the records. The other model is learner model and learners receive the material directly from the committee (Department of Education, 2000:19-20);
- ensuring that effective systems are in place for distribution, which are stamping of books (at least 20 pages throughout the book in order to prevent theft) with the school's name and the acquisition numbers, recording of book numbers against learners' names in order to prevent theft and for reconciliation purposes;

- arranging for the stamping of inside covers of books so as to record the names of the recipient, the condition of the books, and the year;
- ensuring that loan forms are issued to learners and that parents acknowledge and sign these forms; indicating to parents the responsibility that accompanies the issuing of learning and teaching support materials to their children and the consequences of loss or damage. Parents are to pay for or replace lost or damaged textbooks;
- keeping records of all learning and teaching support materials distributed per learning area / subject, per grade (Gauteng Department of Education, 2000:17-18).

2.10.5.1 Advantages of distribution

- resources are more readily available to educators,
- learner can access the resources more easily (important for supporting independent learning and enrichment),
- some resources can be used to support other subjects (for example. rulers and graphic equipment),
- learners become more familiar with the resources. particularly if they are displayed in the classroom,
- there is no need to book in advance, or share them with other classes, and
- encourage learners to keep the resources neat and tidy (Department of Education 2006:157).

2.10.6 Retrieval process

The following actions comprise the retrieval process:

- ensure that materials delivered during each financial year, are available for use by newcomers the following year,
- ensure that books retrieved are reconciled against books distributed,

- appropriate action must be taken for loss of books or damage to books,
- adopt proper procedures for reporting on losses,
- compile retrieval statistics and forward these to the district office,
- initiate a stock-taking process so as to ensure reconciliation, and
- take into consideration the ageing of books and write off those that are unusable. (Department of Education, 2006: 156 -157).

2.10.7 Storage and management of resources

The curriculum encourages educators to use a wide variety of resources. It is part of the School Management Team's teaching leadership role to budget for these resources. When they receive resources, it must be properly stored and carefully managed. Each item must be identified and educators should be able to obtain them easily when they need them. A resource room as a place to store files (for master-copies of handouts), and boxes, should be available, as well shelving or cupboards for pictures and posters, files worksheets, books and so on. Everything must be stored in an orderly way, even bottle tops. Keep these in separate boxes with labels, like 'Transport' or 'Environment'. Plastic containers with lids are excellent storage space for all small items such as counters and puzzles. Resources in constant use, like posters and books, must be especially well looked after so that they last longer. Posters and books can be laminated and / or covered with plastic (Department of Education, 2000:20-21)

2.10.7.1 Advantages of central storage

The following will point out the advantages of storing learning and teaching materials in the central storage room of the school:

- resources can be stored together – staff should be able to find things easily,
- coordinators should be able to monitor resources in an effective way,

- the resources should be kept tidy,
- security should be effective, particularly if the central store can be locked or secured in some way, and
- it will be possible to do with fewer common hand tools which can be shared between classes (Department of Education, 2006: 46).

2.11 THE UTILISATION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIALS

There are a number of possible reasons why educators do not use textbooks even when they are available. The Report of the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005 (2000:68) indicates that textbooks were not used because in most cases they are out-dated and too difficult for learners to read on their own. In some schools, educators do not use textbooks because educators have a limited knowledge of the learning area and this prevents them from understanding the text. The findings by Taylor and Vinjevold (1999:176), reveal that some educators also have poor reading competence which results in an inability to interpret the textbook they chose for their learners. Educators seem to support the intentions of the new curriculum, but are devoid of the knowledge and resources to give effect to these in the classroom. Taylor and Vinjevold (1999:177) indicate that no amount of exhortation by politicians or pedagogical guidance by curriculum planners, university and college academics, is likely to change this situation, unless the knowledge base of educators is simultaneously strengthened.

According to the Department of Education (2006:48), learning and teaching support materials and other learning and teaching resources should be viewed as an integral part of curriculum implementation. They are important in the learning process because they:

- help to structure the learning process;
- help learners to visualize and interpret information;
- provide an important reference resource for learners;

- introduce learners to new information,
- provide a common reference point for diverse groups of learners; and
- support language acquisition and use.

As a result, it stands to reason that it is important for educators to think of ways in which the learning and teaching support materials support learning. Finding and using learning and teaching support materials are important parts of mediating learning. According to Department of Education, (2006:49) textbooks provide a useful 'basic resource' for use in the classrooms, where possible, textbooks can be supplemented with other learning and teaching support materials.

In the New Curriculum Statement requirements, educators will need to make efforts to find or develop additional learning and teaching support materials that enable them to innovate and extend what is in textbooks. In South Africa, learners often require additional language support to use learning and teaching support materials that are not produced in their home language (Department of Education, 2006:50).

2.12 PRESENTATION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIALS

The presentation of learning and teaching support materials often have an effect on whether learning and teaching support materials are accessible to all learners. Educators need to carefully review the features of different learning and teaching support materials in order to ensure that learners are able to make sense of what appears in the texts. For example, they may need to review diagrams and graphs to make sure that they are not too difficult and that illustrations are of a high quality and that they clearly communicate what is intended. Educators need to be flexible to adapt diagrams, graphs, illustrations and texts for learners who experience barriers or difficulties to learning by, for example, replacing pictures or diagrams with written descriptions or reducing the amount of information. Summarising the main ideas in the text or replacing diagrams or pictures with real items are other

strategies that can be used is also a way of reducing information. Educators in this respect need to decide what the most appropriate strategies for adaptation of learning and teaching support materials are, of course, depending on the learners' special needs (Department of Education, 2006:49).

2.13 INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

The term 'inclusion' has become something of an international and national talk. On one hand, the making of 'inclusion' into a talk, is evident when one reads policy documents such as the South African White Paper Six 2001, newspaper articles or listens to media statements. On the other hand, readers can become easily confused when confronted with the multiple definitions of inclusion as offered in international and national literature (Landberg, Kruger and Nel (2005:3). This reveals that inclusion has come to mean different things to different persons, to such an extent that authors such as Dyson (2001:17); Florian (1998:13) and Meijer, Pijl and Hegarty (1997:1) indicate that varieties of inclusion is found in different international social contexts. However, despite many different interpretations of the concept and the deferent ways it is implemented in diverse social contexts, there are a few commonalities which include varieties of inclusion. These span broad principles such as a dedication to building a:

- more democratic society;
- more equal and quality education system; and
- belief that goes beyond the responsibility of regular schools to accommodate the diverse learning needs of all learners (Dyson, 2001: 17).

2.13.1 What inclusion means

In a broader sense, inclusion is about developing inclusive community and education systems. It is based on a value system that invites and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language, socio-economic background, cultural origin and level of educational achievement or disability

(Mittler, 2000:10). It is about including everyone, regardless of ability, gender, language or disability so that all learners can belong to the whole schools' settings and have access to the teaching and learning outcomes that schools offer. In this regard, inclusion is about more than 'special needs' or disabilities, and is concerned with comprehensive education, equality, and collective belonging of all learners in whole school settings (Thomas & Loxley, 2001:118). Mittler (2000:12) is of the opinion that inclusion can also be seen as an expression of the struggle to achieve universal human rights and that it has its own origins in the international human right movement. According to Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001:306), inclusive education is based on a value system that recognizes and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language of origin, social background, level of education achievement or disability (Mittler, 2000:13).

It is clear that inclusion means that all educators are responsible for the education of all learners and the curriculum must be adapted in order to cope with this diversity. Such explanation of 'inclusion ' indicates more than just 'mainstreaming', because it is regarded as a moral issue of human rights and values, as embodied in the Salamanca Statement UNESCO, which sees inclusion as part of the creation of an inclusive society. An inclusive education approach therefore reflects a move from a deficit model of adjustment towards a systematic change of educational settings such as teaching and learning situations in classrooms (UNESCO, 1998: 57)

Inclusion further means that all learners irrespective of their disabilities should be educated in the situation where they would have been educated even if they did not have a disability for example in age-appropriate general education classes in their neighbourhood school with necessary learner support provided to learners, educators, and families so that all of them can be successful (Shapiro-Barnard, 1998:4). Cole (1999:12) sees inclusion as an educational model in which learners with disabilities receive their education in general educational settings. with collaboration between general and special education. In other words, learners with special educational needs, instead of being educated in separate institutions (in special schools), are educated

along with others (in mainstream schools). From inclusive education, 'special needs' are perceived to derive from the difficulties or barriers encountered by the individual in interacting with his or her environment and it is the system which is required to adapt in order to accommodate the individual (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001:303).

Having introduced inclusion in this section, it now becomes imperative to, in the next section, to describe what an inclusive classroom setting resembles.

2.13.2 A description of inclusive classroom settings

The way inclusive classrooms are arranged, changes all the time because an environment is created by whatever interactions the educator and learners have as a group or as individuals in the group, explains Kliewer (1998:20).

According to Kliewer (1998:38) inclusive classroom settings are characterized by:

- a number of learners doing different things and have different people assisting them;
- learners moving from one learning environment to another;
- a classroom where everybody is smiling, the learners are actively engaged, and the educator is delighted to be there. It may sound like pandemonium and at times look messy;
- learners spend a lot of time in learning centers where they make a lot of choices about what they are working on;
- a classroom where learning often happens in small groups with peer helping and supporting each other;
- a classroom where learners know others will be doing different things and the issue of fairness does not come into play because that is just the way it is; and

- a classroom that reaches beyond the classroom and into the community as a resource for learning new skills.

It is clear that inclusion without resources, without support, without educator preparation time, without commitment, without a vision statement, without restructuring, and without staff development will not work (Bradley, King-Sears, & Tessier-Switlick, 1997: 371).

It is apparent that inclusion is about school change to improve the learning system for all learners. It means changes in the curriculum, changes in how educators teach and how learners learn, as well as changes in how with and without special needs interact with and relate to one another (Bradley *et al.*, 1997: 371)

Inclusive education practices reflect:

- the changing culture of contemporary schools with emphasis on active learning;
- authentic learning assessment practices;
- current curriculum;
- multi-level teaching approaches; and
- increased attention to diverse learner needs and individualization (Bradley *et al.*, 1997: 371).

According to Boyer and Bandy (1997:7) the claim is that schools, centres of learning and educational systems must change in such a manner that they become caring, nurturing, and supportive educational communities where the needs of all learners and educators are truly met. Inclusive schools no longer provide "regular education" and "special education". Instead, inclusive schools provide a comprehensive education and as a result all learners will be able to learn together. In other words, it is open to all learners, and that ensures that all learners learn and participate. For this to happen, educators, schools and systems may need to change so that they can better accommodate the

diversity of needs that learners have and that they are included in all aspects of school-life. It also means:

- identifying any barriers within and around the school that hinder learning and participation; and
- reducing or removing these barriers.

As a result, inclusive education is a process of enabling all learners, including previously excluded groups, to learn and participate effectively within mainstream school systems. Placing excluded learners within a mainstream setting does not of itself achieve inclusion (Boyer and Bandy, 1997:10)

According to Boyer and Bandy (1997:12) the following principles of inclusive classroom settings are that:

- every learner has an inherent right to education on basis of equality of opportunity;
- no learner is excluded from, or discriminated within education on grounds of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, birth, poverty or other status;
- all learners can learn and benefit from education;
- schools adapt to the needs of learners, rather than learners adapting to the needs of the school;
- the learner's views are listened to and taken seriously;
- individual differences between learners are a source of richness and diversity, and not seen as a problem; and
- the diversity of needs and pace of development of learners are addressed through a wide and flexible range of responses.

Subsequently the practice of developing inclusive schools involves:

- understanding inclusion as a continuing process, not as a one-time event;

- strengthening and sustaining the participation of all learners, educators, parents and community members in the work of the school;
- re-structuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools to respond to the diversity of learners within their locality. inclusive settings focus on identifying and then reducing the barriers to learning and participation, rather than on what is "special" about the individual learner or group of learners, and targeting services to address the "problem";
- providing an accessible curriculum, appropriate training programs for educators, and for all learners, the provision of fully accessible information, environments and support; and
- identifying and providing support for staff as well as learners (Barnes, Schoenfeld & Pierson, 1997:39).

It is general practice that learners in an inclusive classroom are with their chronological age-mates. Also, to encourage a sense of belonging. emphasis is placed on the value of friendships. Educators often nurture a relationship between a learner with special needs and peers without needs. Another common practice is the assignment of a buddy to accompany a learner with special needs at all times (for example in the cafeteria, on the playground, on the bus and so on (Barnes, Schoenfeld & Pierson, 1997:43).

In principle, according to Kliever and Biklen (2001:6) several factors can determine the success of inclusive classrooms, namely:

- family-school partnerships;
- collaboration between general and special educators;
- well-constructed individualized education program plans;
- team planning and communication;
- integrated service delivery; and
- on-going training and staff development.

Kliewer (1998:37) adds that educators with the capacity to implement inclusion in their classrooms use a number of methods to help build classroom communities, such as:

- games designed to build the community;
- involving learners in solving problems;
- songs and books that teach community values;
- openly dealing with individual differences;
- assigning classroom activities that build community;
- teaching learners to look for ways to help one another; and
- utilizing physical therapy equipment such as standing frames, so learners who typically use wheelchairs can stand when the other learners are standing and more actively participate in activities.

It is thus clear that in an age of inclusive classrooms and higher academic demands on all learners, educators need teaching strategies that can assist all learners irrespective of their learning abilities in their classrooms as well. Educators who use a variety of organizational, graphic, and mnemonic aids help all learners make better sense of the curriculum King-Sears (1997:16).

Led by “special education” educators, more “general” educators are teaching learners learning strategies that help by-pass difficulties in processing and retaining information. Such strategies transform learners with or without learning difficulties into active, rather than passive learners.

Taken on their own, common accommodation for learners with difficulties, such as reducing written work or trimming the number of test questions, do not necessarily help these learners reach their latent learning potential in reaching the curriculum objectives, King-Sears (1997:20), special education professor at Johns Hopkins University in Maryland. Educators need to look at

the curriculum itself, not just for learners with learning difficulties, but for all learners, she adds.

2.14 EQUIPPED INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

According to North West University (2004b:114) the Inclusive classroom needs to be well equipped to provide in the needs of the learners with educational needs.

2.14.1 Providing for visual impaired learners

The following should be provided in the class of learners with visual impairment:

- visually impaired learners must be seated in front of the class;
- educators must ensure that enough that sufficient light falls on their table;
- to ensure proper lighting, reading lamps must be attached to the table;
- the texts of written material must be enlarged with 16 font;
- copies must be done on yellow copier paper;
- yellow chalk must be used on the chalkboard;
- reading material, comprehension tests, assessment tasks should be recorded onto audiocassettes – prepare tape aid;
- learners must be provided with magnifying rulers or cubes;
- large print books must be purchased;
- dictaphone must be available;
- tasks must be read to the learners, they listen to a tape recorder and read answered and records answers on a dictaphone; and
- Braille tasks must be available. Learners can respond in Braille or typing (North West University, 2004: 114)

2.14.2 Providing for learners who are hard of hearing or deaf

The following should be provided for learners with learning disabilities:

- Learners should be seated close to the front;
- “easy listeners” must be provided to enhance sound;
- educators must speak loud and clear;
- background noises must be eliminated;
- all instructions must be written;
- additional time must be provided for completion of tasks;
- video recording tasks must be recorded on video by means of Sign Language or spoken word (lip reading); and
- computer tasks must be read and answered on computers (North West University, 2004b: 114).

2.14.3 Providing for learners with learning disabilities

The following should be provided for the learners with learning disabilities:

- Learners with reading disabilities should be assisted with tape aid and audio equipment, personal computers with voice synthesizer, special equipment (example spell master);
- Written texts should be accompanied by illustrations;
- Learners must be allowed to use calculators if necessary; and
- Amanuensis should be provided where applicable additional time or scribe must be provided (North West University, 2004b: 115).

2.14.4 Conceptual barriers

The following should be considered when assisting learners with conceptual barriers:

- Teaching and learning resources must be provided to allow multiple opportunities of working with friends who can explain;
- Questions must be expressed in such a way that all learners can understand ;
- Concrete support must given to activities, example counters in multiples
- Illustrated text be chosen;
- Smaller section of the work must be assessed; and
- Learners must be assessed by focusing on their compensatory skills and attitudes (North West University, 2004b: 115).

2.15 THE BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTINGS

Inclusive education is claimed by its advocates to have many benefits for the learners (Kluth, Straut & Biklen, 2003:87). Teaching time with peers without need helps the learners to learn strategies taught by the educator. Educators bring in different ways to teach a lesson for special needs learners and peers without need. All of the learners in the classroom benefit from this. The learners can now learn from the lesson how to help each other.

Socialization in the school allows learners to:

- learn communication skills and interaction skills from each other;
- build friendships from these interactions;
- also learn about hobbies from each other. A friendship in school is important for the development of learning. When a learner has a friend the learner can relate to a member of the classroom; and

- be able to relate to each other which action gives them a better learning environment. Involving peers without need with special needs peers gives the learners a positive attitude towards each other. The learners are the next generation to be in the workforce; the time in the classroom with the special needs and peers without need will allow them to communicate in the real world someday (Kluth, Straut & Biklen, 2003:87).

Special needs learners are included in all aspects of school-life. For example, homeroom, specials places such as art and gym, lunch, recess, assemblies, and electives. Special needs learners involved in these classrooms will give them the time they need to participate in activities with their peers without need. Awareness should be taught to learners that will be in the classroom with the special needs peers. The educator can do a puppet show, show a movie, or have the learner talk to the class. The educator could also read a book to help the learner describe his or her special need. The class can ask questions about what they learned and what they want to know. This will help when the learners are together in the classroom. Positive modeling is important for the learners in the classroom. Positive modeling is the educator showing a good example towards both special needs and peers without need and this will help the learners to get along more (Kluth, Straut & Biklen, 2003:88).

2.15.1 Inclusive classrooms encourage educators and learners to work together

Inclusive classrooms are classrooms in which educators and learners work together to create and sustain learning and teaching environment in which everyone feels safe, supported, and encouraged to express her or his views and concerns. In these classrooms, the content of the learning and teaching materials is explicitly viewed from the multiple perspectives and varied experiences of a range of groups. Learning content is presented in a manner that reduces all learners' experiences of marginalization and, wherever possible, helps learners understand that individuals' experiences, values, and perspectives influence ways in which they construct knowledge in any field or discipline (North West University, 2004b:113).

Educators in inclusive classrooms use a variety of teaching methods in order to facilitate the academic and scholastic achievement of all learners. Inclusive classrooms are places in which thoughtfulness, mutual respect, and academic excellence are valued and promoted. When educators are successful in creating inclusive classrooms, this makes great strides towards realizing schools' commitment to teaching and learning and to diversity and excellence in teaching and learning practices (Department of Education, 2006:54).

In an inclusive classroom, educators attempt to be responsive to learners on both an individual and a socio-cultural level. Broadly speaking, the inclusiveness of a classroom will depend upon the kinds of interactions that occur between and among educators and the learners in the classroom. These interactions are influenced by certain issues and are individually discussed in the next section. They are:

- the learning and teaching support material content;
- educators' prior assumptions and awareness of potential multicultural issues in classroom situations;
- educators' planning of class sessions, including the ways learners are grouped for learning;
- educators' knowledge about the diverse backgrounds of learners; and
- educators' decisions, comments, and behaviours during the process of teaching (NWU, 2004b:16).

2.16 CRITIQUE OF INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTINGS

Opponents of inclusive schools believe that individual differences will slow the progress of learners without special needs. Therefore, this will create problems for educators. Some argue that inclusive schools are not a cost-effective response when compared to cheaper or more effective interventions, such as special education. They argue that special education helps "fix" the special needs learners by providing individualized and personalized teaching

to meet their unique needs. This is to help learners with special needs adjust as quickly as possible to the mainstream of the school and community.

Proponents counter that learners with special needs are not fully into the mainstream of learner life because they are secluded to special education. Some argue that isolating learners with special needs may lower their self-esteem and may reduce their ability to deal with other people. In addition, learners without special needs can learn much about personal courage and perseverance from special needs learners (Kluth, Straut & Biklen, 2003:86).

2.17 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed, what learning and teaching support materials are, the processes that are involved procuring material and inclusive education. The following chapter discusses the empirical design in detail.

CHAPTER THREE

EMPIRICAL DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research methods used to investigate the problems of the study are clarified. The focus is on the aims of the study design procedures, data collection and analysis, as well as interpretation.

3.2 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The overall aim of this study is to investigate educators' experiences of the choice of learning and teaching support materials in inclusive classroom settings. The following sub-aims were used to find out the experiences of the educator participants who formed the population sample of this research, which was to:

- determine the educators understanding of learning and teaching support material;
- determine what criteria educator use in choosing learning and teaching support material for their learners;
- verify why educator perceive the criteria stated in the latter objective as important;
- determine what type of values educators base their choice of learning support material for learners;
- identify what types of cultures learners represent,
- determine whether educators are satisfied with the learning support materials used by learners;
- determine if the teaching support material educator use is non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist and unbiased in all ways;

- determine if learners conceptually understand the language and values incorporated in the learning support materials used in their classrooms; and
- determine the racial, cultural and gender make-up of the authors of the preferred learning materials in educators' classrooms.

3.3 NATURE OF RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Blanche and Durrheim (1999:29), a research design is a strategic and proactive framework for empirical research action that serves as a bridge between empirical research questions and aims and the execution or implementation of the practical or field research. Blanche and Durrheim (1999:31) further explain that research design is a proactive plan that guides the arrangement of conditions for collection and analyses of empirical research data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.

Research design, as explained by McMillan and Shumacher (1997:33-34), describes the procedures for conducting a study, including when, from whom, and under what conditions the empirical research data will be obtained. In other words, empirical research design indicates ways in which the empirical research is set up, that is what happens to the participants and what methods of empirical research data collection are used.

3.3.1 The purpose of the research design

The purpose of the research design is to provide the most valid and accurate answers to research questions, and to assist the study achieve its aims. Since there are many types of research questions and many types of empirical research designs, it is important to match the empirical research design with the questions which are posed by the researcher in order to arrive at reliable and valid answers for the research problem under investigation. From the latter statements it is clear that the empirical research design is a very important part of an investigation since certain limitations and cautions in the interpretation of the results related to each design are present, and also

because the research design determines ways in which the empirical research data should be analyzed and interpreted (Morgan, 2006: 45).

3.3.2 Design type for the empirical research of this study

A qualitative empirical research design type was selected for this study. The term "qualitative research" encompasses several approaches to research that are, in some respects, quite different from one another. Yet, all qualitative approaches have two things in common (Edmunds, 1999:37), which are:

- firstly, they focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings; that is, in the "real world";
- secondly, they involve studying social and cultural phenomena in all their complexities (Leedy & Ormrod, 1999:75). McMillan and Schumacher (1997:140) agree that qualitative research is based on naturalistic inquiry where researchers use multi-methods strategies to gather empirical data. It focuses on the individual participant's social and cultural actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. Empirical research data are collected by interacting with sampled research participants in their natural ecological settings. This is often referred to as field research. During the field research, qualitative researchers become "immersed" in the socio-cultural situation of the sampled participants and often fulfil the role of ethnographer participant observers;
- it is apparent that qualitative empirical research is mainly concerned with understanding the research problem from the participant's socio-cultural perspective, that is as he/she experiences the problem as it is related to their reality and as he/she views the problem and ascribes meaning to their lived experiences. Moreover, qualitative empirical research views the reality as multi-layered and interactive;
- problems and interpretations are described in the report by means of words and not expressed as a numerical percentage. The scientific report analyzes the problems in a descriptive manner and interprets objectively. Often researchers use the participants' own words in the report as the

participants' narration can best explain the meaning that they ascribe to their world, feelings, beliefs, thoughts, actions and ideals. Multi-method strategies can be interactive (observations, interviews) or non-interactive strategies (the use of documents); and

- researchers conduct the field research and collect the empirical research data over a prolonged period of time, usually at the side or directly from the research participants (Hoberg, 1999: 75). Qualitative empirical research was selected for this study as it would enable the researcher to gain insight into reality of the experiences that educators experience when choosing learning and teaching support materials.

3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

According to Hoberg (1999:168) population is a group of potential participants to whom a researcher to generate the research results of a study.

3.4.1 Purposeful Sampling

The researcher used purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is the "umbrella" term that McMillan and Schumacher (1997:376) refer to as a process of "selecting information rich cases for study in-depth". The researcher identifies information-rich participants, because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating (McMillan & Shumacher 1997:378). Fick (1998:39) agrees that this type of sampling is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher because a sample consists of elements which contain the most common characteristics of the population. Merriam (1998:61) also refers to purposeful sampling as a method in which information-rich cases are selected in order to gain insight and understanding from which a great deal can be learned.

Merriam (1998: 61) further advises that in purposeful sampling it is important for the researcher to first determine the selection criteria to be used in choosing the participants. These criteria must reflect the purpose of the study and guide the process to be followed. Fifty six (N=56) educators participated in the study. These educators were selected from eight public schools in the

Sedibeng-West District in the Gauteng Education area. The selection of the sample was based on one educator per grade, both in primary and secondary schools. The decision to use the purposeful sample was motivated by the fact that the researcher wanted a simpler and easier way of selecting a population which was to comprise the research population.

3.5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION TOOL

The focus group interview as empirical research data collection tool was used in eliciting data from the participants who formed the sample population of this study is subsequently discussed below.

3.5.1 The focus group interview

Focus group interviewing can be defined as a group discussion in which a small number of participants, typically six to twelve Hoberg, (1999:136), topics of special relevance to a study, under the guidance of a moderator. The informal group situation and the largely unstructured nature of the questions encourage participants to disclose behaviour and attitudes they might not disclose during individual interviews. This happens, since participants tend to feel more comfortable and secure in the company of people who share similar opinions, views and behaviour than in the company of an individual interviewer (Edmunds, 1999:35). The focus group discussion is conducted as an open conversation in which each participant may comment or ask questions from others, including the interviewer (Litosseliti, 2003: 56).

3.5.2 Reasons for using focus group interviews

The researcher used focus group interviews for the following reasons as indicated by (Patton, 2001:67), which were to:

- appear to be gain insight into a relatively unknown research area;
- stimulate new ideas and create concepts in order to learn more about peoples' ranges of opinion and experience;

- diagnose the potential contributions and problems of new social programmes and services or products to be introduced;
- understand the success or failure of a particular social programme in a specific social setting; and
- learn ways in which people discuss the phenomenon of interest.

Greeff (2002:306) further adds the following; which is that:

- empirical research data can be collected within a a short space of time;
- ideas, views and perceptions of participants can be verified and analyzed through discussions;
- moderator's role is to confine to that of initiating discussion, rather than playing the directive role. In this way, participants take the major responsibility for stating their views and drawing out the views of others in the group;
- the interaction that takes place in focus group interviews, stimulate participants to state feelings, perceptions and beliefs that they would probably not express if interviewed individually.

3.5.3 Strength and weaknesses of the focus groups' interview

According to (Lifosseliti, 2003:60) as with any research, focus group interviewing has strengths and limitations. The advantages of focus groups are the following:

- they can be conducted at a relatively modest cost and in a relatively brief span of time;
- they expose the researcher to the participants' world views;
- the discussion sheds light on phenomena and social processes that very little is known about;

- it provides a socially orientated research procedure. Focus groups facilitate interaction between subjects and uniquely capture the dynamics of group interaction;
- the discussions provide a format that allows moderators to probe. This makes flexibility possible, which is so important for exploring unanticipated issues;
- they have high face validity. Not only are they easily understood, but their methods are "comfortable", since they seem credible to those using the information; and
- they can provide speedy results. In fact, they have a considerable advantage over other empirical research data-gathering methods in that they can be conducted and their results analyzed and a report written in a very short time.

The shortcomings of focus group interviews are as follows:

- the moderator has less control than the interviewer who conducts individual interviews. The focus group interview allows the participants to influence and interact with each other, and as a result, group members are able to influence the course of the discussion (Krueger, 1998:36).
- empirical research data generated by focus groups are relatively difficult to analyse since participants' comments must be interpreted within the constructed social setting,
- material acquired by using focus groups is not generalisable. Greeff (2002:306) states that since groups contain only a small sample of people, the empirical research data are not capable of producing typical or projectable information for the whole universe under study; and
- focus group discussions require carefully trained interviewers. The tactics and techniques necessary for conducting such interviews are not readily available.

3.6 PLANNING THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Focus group interviews need careful planning with respect to participants, the environment and questions to be asked (Greeff, 2002:309). Using a multi-faceted approach and well thought-out questions which are primarily open-ended, allows the participants freedom to respond from a variety of socio-cultural perspectives. According to Morgan and Krueger (1998:12), there are four basic steps for conducting focus group interviews – planning, recruiting and conducting the group, as well as analyzing and reporting. If possible, and if permission is obtained from the participants, the researcher should record interviews on tape or video (McMillian & Schumacher, 1997:453).

Before conducting the interviews, researcher obtained permission from the Department of Education and school principals. Schools selected were given a schedule with the dates and times the interviews would take place, together with the covering letter defining the purpose of the empirical research undertaken.

3.6.1 Participants

It is crucial for the researcher to create conducive conditions for easy participative and productive discussions and to ensure that participants are comfortable talking to one another and that they also serve the researcher's goal (Litosseliti, 2003:75). Therefore, it was necessary for the researcher arrange a suitable group composition for each focus group. This would then generate free-flowing discussions that contain useful data. In this case, participants were selected on the basis of their voluntary permission and willingness to take part in the study.

3.6.2 Number and size of focus group

The size of a focus group traditionally ranges from six to twelve participants (Hoberg, 1999:139). Groups with more than twelve members limit each participant's opportunity to share experiences, while groups with four to six participants are popular, since smaller groups are easier to recruit and host. However, their small size limits the range and variety of experiences

(Hoberg,1999:139). In this study, eight groups were identified, with five to seven participants each to make a total of 56 participant and only 3 participants did not participate.

3.6.3 Group facilitation

According to McMillan and Schumacher, (1997:149) in focus groups, the moderator can either be an experienced or an inexperienced person. The moderator should be comfortable and familiar with group processes and also possess a curiosity about the topic and the participants. The group facilitator should be skilled in group processes. The expression of different opinions should also be encouraged and group members should be helped to be more specific in their responses to the question items of the interview schedule (Litosseliti, 2003:59). The focus group should concentrate on the information the researcher wishes to obtain rather than be directed by the needs of group members (Cohen & Garrett, 1999:361).

The researcher acted as moderator during the interview. The first interview was challenging to the researcher, because of her being a novice in conducting interviews. Interviews that followed were handled very well and were very informative and interesting.

3.6.4 Designing the interview schedule

The design of the interview schedule is a critical task since it establishes the agenda for the group discussion and provides the structure within which the group members may interact (Morgan, 2002:145).

The first step is to list all possible questions about the research problem to be investigated. In this regard, brainstorming with colleagues could be helpful. Once the list is complete and no further suggestions are forthcoming, the critical questions that are those that capture the intent of the study are identified (Morgan, 2002:145).

Questions are the heart of the focus group interview. They must be carefully selected and phrased prior to the focus group discussion in order to elicit the maximum amount of information from the participants (Krueger, 1998:36).

The researcher formulated the questions carefully. The order of questions was from the more general to the more specific, placing the questions of greatest significance at the beginning and those of lesser significance near the end. The interview guide was pilot tested by using a group of six educators who were not involved in the study. Educators found the questions understandable and easy to answer. Only the proper arrangements of questions were done through the assistance of educators.

3.7 CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The focus group interviews were conducted, making use of certain strategies, which receive attention in the next section.

3.7.1 Purposeful “small” talk and precession strategies

The moderator should attempt to create an atmosphere of trust, friendliness and openness from the moment the participants arrive for a focus group session. Purposeful small talk facilitates a warm and friendly environment and puts the participants at ease (Krueger, 1998:36-37).

3.7.2 Physical arrangement of the group

Since the object of a focus group is discussion, the researcher grouped the participants around the table in order to ensure maximum opportunity for eye contact with both the moderator and other participants (Hoberg, 1999:141)

3.7.3 Recording the focus group discussion

The researcher used the tape-recorder to capture the interview processes. Field notes were also taken. The group members were informed before the tape-recorder was used and their permission was asked to record their responses (Hoberg, 1999:141).

3.7.4 Field notes

Field notes were taken by the researcher during focus group sessions. Specific attention was paid to non-verbal behaviour such as eye-contact, posture and gestures. This could provide very supportive information regarding the dispositions and attitudes of the participants regarding the topic (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:444).

3.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity according to Moeketsi (2004:125) is used to guarantee that information includes everything it should and nothing it should not. Salkind (2003:115) adds that validity is the quality of a test doing what it is designed to do.

The validity of the interview schedules is based on the literature review. Educators who participated in the study have experience in choosing learning and teaching support material and the conclusions were discussed with them to find out if they agree and whether the the conclusions make sense based on their experiences confirm the validity of the interview questions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:100).

Bogdan and Bicklen, (1998:26) mention that to ensure validity of the interview data, the triangulation method must be used. The researcher used other three experienced researchers to verify whether data decoding and interpretation are accurate. It was discovered that some questions were ambiguous. Questions were rephrased without compromising the information needed.

According to Newman (1997:145), reliability refers to the consistency of measurement, the extent to which the results are the same over different forms of the same instrument or occasions of data collection. Salkind (2003:108) adds that reliability is when a test measures the same thing more than once and results in the same outcomes.

3.9 ANALYSING THE DATA

The analyses and interpretations of focus group empirical research data can be very complex (Greeff, 2002:318). The aim of analyses is to look for trends and patterns among various focus groups. In analysing the collected empirical research data, the researcher should consider the words, context, internal consistency, frequency of comments, extensiveness of comments, specificity of comments, what was not said, as well as finding the 'big idea' (Morgan & Krueger, 1998:31). The dynamics of the group as a whole also had to be taken into account. Drawing together and comparing discussions of similar themes and how these related to the variation between individuals and between groups is very important (Greeff, 2002:319). In this instance, the focus group interviews were held at the schools; the empirical research data were captured and presented *verbatim* in narrative form, according to the respective interviews. The empirical research data were arranged according to questions in their sequence on the interview schedule. For every question on the interview schedule, the responses of all participants were presented in a table for the purposes of analyses and interpretations. Themes were formulated from the interview responses.

3.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research design for the study was presented in details. The chapter that follows focuses on collected empirical research data analyses and interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR
EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DATA ANALYSES
AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the analyses and the interpretations of experiences of participants who were involved in the focus group interviews of this study's empirical research.

Biographic information is presented first, followed by participants' responses to interviews, and lastly the analyses and interpretations of empirical research data and field notes are conducted.

4.2 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants' responses regarding biographic information appear in the sections that follow and are represented.

4.2.1 Gender characteristics of participants

The gender characteristics of the participants of this research appear in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1: Gender characteristics

Focus groups	Males	Females	N
One	4	7	11
Two	3	13	16
Three	1	13	14
Four	4	9	13
Five	2	7	9
N	13	43	56

Analysis and interpretation

Table 4.1 indicates that the majority of women (n=43) took part in the empirical research proceedings of this study. This means that the majority of the sample population of this study consisted of women.

4.2.2 Age of participants

The ages of the participants who formed the sample population of this research were as follows

Table 4.2: Age of participants

Focus groups	25 – 35	36 -45	46 – 55	56 – above	N
One	4	3	4	3	14
Two	3	7	3	0	13
Three	2	5	6	1	14
Four	2	8	3	0	13
Five	3	3	2	1	9
N	13	23	12	4	56

Analysis and interpretation

Table 4.2 indicates that the majority of educator participants who took part in the research are between 36 and 45 (n=23) years of age. This means that the majority of the participants consisted of adult educators.

4.2.3 Teaching experience of participants

The teaching experiences of the participants who formed the sample population of this research were as follows:

Table 4.3: Teaching experience of participants

Focus group	1 -5	6 -10	11 – 15	16 – 20	21-above	Total
One	0	4	3	4	3	14
Two	0	3	3	7	0	13
Three	0	1	5	7	1	14
Four	0	2	7	4	0	13
Five	0	1	3	4	1	9
Total	0	12	18	22	5	56

Analysis and interpretation

Table 4.3 indicates that the majority of educator participants who took part in the research have between 16– 20 years of experience in the teaching field. This means that the sample population of this research consisted of educators who have many years of teaching service.

4.2.4 Phases in which educator participants teach

The phases in which educator participants who formed the sample population of this research teach were as follows:

Table 4.4: Phases in which educator participants teach

Focus group	Foundation phase	Intermediate phase	Senior phase	Secondary phase	N
One	3	4	3	4	14
Two	5	5	3	0	13
Three	6	6	2	0	14
Four	3	3	4	3	13
Five	3	3	3	0	9
N	17	18	14	7	56

Analysis and interpretation

Table 4.4 indicates that the majority of educator participants who took part in this research teach at intermediate phase level. This means that the sample population of this research consisted of educators who teach at the intermediate phase level.

4.2.5 Grades in which participants teach

The grades in which educator participants who formed the sample population of this research teach were as follows:

Table 4.5: Grades in which participants teach

Focus groups	1 – 3	4 - 6	7 – 9	10 - 12	N
One	3	4	3	4	14
Two	5	5	3	0	13
Three	6	6	2	0	14
Four	3	3	4	3	13
Five	3	3	3	0	9
N	17	18	14	7	56

Analysis and interpretation

Table 4.5 indicates that the majority of educator participants who took part in this research teach at grades 4-6 levels. This means that the sample population of this research consisted of educators who teach at 4-6 levels.

4.3 PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION ITEMS OF THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

This section presents the *verbatim* responses of the educator participants on the items of the interview schedule.

4.3.1 Educator participants' understanding of the concept 'learning and teaching support material'

Question one enquired on educator participants' understanding of the concept 'learning and teaching support material'. The responses of the educator participants appear in table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Participants' response to Question one

<p>Focus group 1</p>	<p>Is it not the material that is used to help learners and educators in teaching?</p> <p>Is the material or any form of teaching and learning resource that will enhance learning and teaching.</p> <p>Anything that supports teaching and learning.</p>
<p>Focus group 2</p>	<p>It is all the tools, that we as the educators have previously known as teaching aids such as books, exercises, pens, and everything that could be used for a learner to receive education the way it has been expected, it can be a play-ground, or in the classroom; everything that the learner may use and that is learning and teaching support materials.</p> <p>Not only educators, also learners, one must have the equipment as a educator that the learner has. As a educator when I am holding the aid I must know, that even the learners can use it, for example when you have a book, the learner must also have it.</p> <p>It also includes radios, TV, video. vidual aids, as well as discussions that come out among the kids in the classroom, and they must be participative.</p> <p>In addition, material is intended to support the processes of learning and teaching, the material can be in the hands of educators and learners, but basically it for the processes of learning.</p>

	<p>It is the material that helps the educator to be understood by learners and learners by educators.</p>
Focus group 3	<p>All the aids that are used outside and inside the classroom to promote learning and teaching.</p> <p>It is the material that helps the educator and the learner to achieve the set goal or outcomes of teaching.</p>
Focus group 4	<p>Anything that helps learners to learn in the classroom. Especially textbooks.</p> <p>News papers and magazines also give learners a broad vision and are materials too.</p> <p>In teaching they help educators to work easily.</p>
Focus group 5	<p>It is material used by both educators and learners to reach the outcomes.</p> <p>They also help learners to extend their knowledge and to be researches.</p> <p>It also a guide to apply different assessment methods, it gives an overview of the curriculum.</p> <p>It allows effective learning by learners.</p>
Focus group 6	<p>It is a tool that we use to enhance effective learning, helping the learner on how to think independently, to listen and read with understanding.</p> <p>We are talking about both the educators and learners and the material that will help them. Every piece of material used by learners is learner material and those that are used by educators are educator material.</p>
Focus group 7	<p>It is any material that can be used as a teaching aid in the class. We have different types of materials.</p>

	<p>Learning and teaching support material enhances knowledge we need more and by using it our knowledge can be broaden even for them to understand the concept better learning and teaching support materials is used.</p> <p>It helps each educator to plan the lesson.</p> <p>The subject framework or work-schedule will guide in term of topics.</p> <p>All material can be used in all learning areas.</p> <p>The material must address continuous assessment outcomes and also what is required by a particular subject.</p>
Focus group 8	<p>This is the material to support learners in their learning and educators in their teaching. It makes it easy for both educators and learners to use material effectively for smooth running and this refers to textbooks, stationery and equipments.</p> <p>We are not trained about the inclusion and the policies, we only know that there is a white paper for inclusion but we cannot use it.</p>

Analysis: Participants understood that learning and teaching support materials are all the materials that support learning and teaching in and outside of the classroom.

4.3.2 Criteria used in choosing learning and teaching support materia

Question two enquired on criteria educator participants use in choosing learning and teaching support material for their learners. The responses of the educator participants appear in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Participants' response to Question two

Focus group 1	<p>The content, the level of difficulty, is it reasonable for the learners, and compliance with national curriculum statements, learning outcomes, assessment standards, issues like diversity, prejudices</p>
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	<p>against other races, gender sensitivity.</p> <p>We look at cultural and race sensitivity.</p> <p>The language and the content should be familiar to learners' age and mentality.</p> <p>We also look at the racial sensitivity and the culture.</p> <p>The content of the material must comply with the curriculum.</p> <p>The vocabulary of the material should be at the level of learners.</p>
Focus group 2	<p>The font, words that are clearly written, the colourfulness of pictures.</p> <p>The pictures must attract learners, and the book must be interesting.</p> <p>The book must be in line with the curriculum.</p> <p>The integration of learning areas and learning outcomes are looked at.</p> <p>The level of complexity and the progression, as well as from the known to the unknown.</p> <p>The large letters are suitable for younger learners at lower grades.</p> <p>The quality of the material as to whether the material will last longer.</p> <p>The material must not be bias but should cater for different cultures, race and gender.</p> <p>The cost of the material. The material must be reasonable.</p>
Focus group 3	<p>The friendliness of the material, the biasness, does it include HIV and AIDS and different assessment standards.</p> <p>Is the material strongly bound and how big is the book especially for small learners.</p>

	<p>Progression is also looked at.</p> <p>Reading books must be colourful and the font must be large enough to be read by all learners, the length of the sentences for small learners must be reasonable.</p>
Focus group 4	<p>The relevance of the content, level of language, clear pictures, race and biasness.</p> <p>Large font is important in the material; the activities should be simple and straightforward.</p> <p>The content must be relevant to the learners' environment.</p> <p>The cover and the title of the book must be attractive.</p>
Focus group 5	<p>The material must be in line with the curriculum, encourage active participation by learners.</p> <p>It must be relevant to the learners, environment.</p> <p>The language must be readable, pictures be clear and the binding be strong and has hard cover.</p> <p>The material must be user-friendly, to be easily used by even learners with different abilities.</p> <p>The material must be diverse and be multi-cultural and accommodate every learner.</p> <p>Pictures must depict different gender</p>
Focus group 6	<p>The material must suit the level of learners, motivate and be interesting.</p> <p>The content must be familiar to learners and must be attractive.</p> <p>Pictures must not discriminate against learners.</p>

	<p>The material must comply with the curriculum.</p> <p>The material must accommodate all learners from different races and abilities.</p>
Focus group 7	<p>The arrangement of topics in the material must be chronological.</p> <p>The material must form part of real life and real situation.</p> <p>The relevance of material to the learners' environment.</p> <p>The material must show skills, attitudes and values that are needed for learners.</p> <p>The material must address the problems of the country.</p>
Focus group 8	<p>The level of standard in the material.</p> <p>The content of the material comply with the curriculum.</p> <p>The material must contain the assessment standards.</p> <p>The texture of the material is important.</p> <p>The language must be simple and be at the level of learners.</p>

Analysis: Participants were able to identify criteria that they use in choosing in choosing learning and teaching support material.

4.3.3 Reasons for importance of criteria

Question three enquired on reasons that make them see the above mentioned criteria as important. The responses of the educator participants appear in table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Participants' response to Question three

<p>Focus group 1</p>	<p>Because they comply with curriculum needs which are needed in developing learners.</p> <p>These criteria will make learning and teaching to be easily facilitated.</p> <p>The material will be more suitable for learners and their level.</p> <p>These criteria assist the material to accommodate all learners irrespective of their abilities and disabilities.</p>
<p>Focus group 2</p>	<p>The criteria are policy based and address the needs of the curriculum.</p> <p>Because they make activities to be easy understood by learners at all levels.</p>
<p>Focus group 3</p>	<p>They are important because otherwise the material is useless without those criteria.</p> <p>Because they make sure that all curriculum issues are addressed.</p> <p>Because the material will accommodate all learners and not be bias.</p>
<p>Focus group 4</p>	<p>The material that is attractive to learners will encourage learners to read and use the material frequently.</p> <p>Learners will be able to use the material on their own easily.</p> <p>Simple language will assist learners to understand the material.</p> <p>Attractive material will make users to love and take of it.</p>
<p>Focus group 5</p>	<p>The criteria give guidance on how to select the material.</p> <p>Learners will be able to achieve the learning outcomes.</p>

	<p>Learners will gain skills attitudes and values.</p> <p>The strong binding and the hard cover will save lot of money because the material will not be purchased every year.</p>
Focus group 6	<p>Because they make teaching and learning easy.</p> <p>Learners are able to understand what they read about if the book met the criteria.</p> <p>Learners will not be discriminated against by the material.</p> <p>Because they will be giving us the fruitful substance at the end of the day.</p> <p>They encourage the material to help learners to adapt to different situations in their lives.</p> <p>Inclusivity will be well addressed.</p> <p>Knowledge and skills will be gained.</p> <p>They help to measure the achievements that are anticipated.</p>
Focus group 7	<p>They are important because learners are being prepared.</p> <p>The material must be able to groom the learners for the future.</p>
Focus group 8	<p>They make it easy for the material to be used.</p> <p>They support learning and teaching to be easy.</p> <p>Because the material that does not meet the criteria will waste money.</p> <p>The criteria meet the needs of learners.</p>

Analysis: Participants clearly stated that the criteria play an important for in helping them to bring correct and quality material in the classroom.

4.3.4 Nature of values

Question four enquired on the nature of values educator participants base their choice of learning and teaching support materials for their learners. The responses of the educator participants appear in table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Participants' response to Question four

Focus group 1	<p>The values will assist our learners to be responsible citizens of the country.</p> <p>On the Constitutional values because they are the laws of the country.</p> <p>The value of respect, the material must emphasis respect, the content express the human relations, like tolerance that will be clear in the activities.</p> <p>Sharing, learners are able to work together in groups.</p> <p>The value of accommodation, where all learners even the disable learners feel free to work with others.</p>
Focus group 2	<p>The values that are in the constitution, equity, humanity, democracy.</p> <p>The value of accommodation, learners must see different genders in the material to accept and accommodate each other.</p> <p>The values that are stipulated in the country's constitution.</p>
Focus group 3	<p>Respect, fairness, forgiveness and accommodating.</p> <p>Learners must be able to learn from the material to tolerate each other because the classes are homogenous.</p>
Focus group 4	<p>I value a book with simple language, activities should be simple and learning outcomes must be achievable.</p>

	<p>The material that is valuable is the one that is full of information, knowledge and quality.</p>
<p>Focus group 5</p>	<p>I value books that are relevant to the lives and level of learners.</p> <p>The books that I value must be interesting, and help learners to improve their attitudes, respect and skills.</p> <p>The material that value the active participation of learners like, debating issues like pollution where they live.</p>
<p>Focus group 6</p>	<p>The material that is valued are those that attracts learners' interest, extent learners skills expected from them like reading, writing and communicating</p> <p>Respect of other learners when they are on the wheel chairs and those that are HIV positive and treat them equally.</p> <p>The material must encourage learners to respect different cultures, genders, the food they eat and clothes they wear.</p>
<p>Focus group 7</p>	<p>The material must help learners to be marketable and get decent jobs and contribute to the economy.</p> <p>The values anticipated are those that are required by the curriculum.</p> <p>I value the material that will encourage learners to be responsible citizens and be entrepreneurs and start their business.</p>
<p>Focus group 8</p>	<p>The material emphasizes assessment in every activity is valued a lot.</p> <p>I value the material that will assist learners to solve-problems on their own and to meet the needs that may arise at any time.</p> <p>The valued material must help learners to be able to choose marketable subjects as South Africa is looking for mathematics</p>

	and science. The skills in the material are valued.
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Analysis: Participants were able to point out very important values that must be emphasised in the learning and teaching situation.

4.3.5 Nature of cultures

Question five enquired about the nature of cultures educator participants' learners belong. The responses of the educator participants appear in the table 4.10 below:

Table 4.10: Participants' response to Question five

Focus group 1	Too many cultures. We have different cultures, like Basotho, Zulus, Xhosas and Tswana.
Focus group 2	Its various African cultures. We have here at school, Tswanas, Basotshos, Zulus and Xhosa.
Focus group 3	Most are Blacks and few Whites. Sothos, Xhosas, Vendas, BaPedi and Afrikaners.
Focus group 4	Blacks which are Zulus, Xhosas, Tswanas, BaSotho, Colored, but BaSothos are dominating.
Focus group 5	It is no one culture, we have all different cultures, Zulus, Xhosas, Tswanas, and BaPedi.
Focus group 6	Different cultures, they are multicultural like, Zulus, Xhosas, and BaSothos.
Focus group 7	It is a diverse culture because of the environment that we live in, just like our country that is diverse.

Focus group 8	<p>Different cultures.</p> <p>Most are Zulus, Xhosas, BaSotho.</p> <p>Our classes are multicultural.</p>
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Analysis: Participants 's learners are multiculral, they belong to different cultures.

4.3.6 Satisfaction with learning and teaching support materials

Question six enquired whether educator participants are satisfied with the learning and teaching support materials used by their learners. The responses of the educator participants appear in table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Participants' response to Question six

Focus group 1	<p>Yes, we managed to evaluate some books that we received from the publishers, and we are using them.</p> <p>Yes, when one compares with the material that was used in the past one is satisfied with the one we have, because it covers all the things learners relate to.</p> <p>Yes, because there is progression from one grade to the other in the material.</p>
Focus group 2	<p>No, we are not satisfied, because there are lots of changes in education. The material that we use today may not be relevant tomorrow.</p> <p>Yes, one is satisfied for now only.</p> <p>We are satisfied, but one will like to see the situation in the future where we have publishers coming to school to design the exact material that is fitting to the curriculum.</p> <p>We are partially satisfied, because the material we are having is</p>

	<p>still inadequate.</p> <p>No, the material is not enough.</p> <p>Yes, to certain extent, because one cannot use only one book as it does not cover everything.</p> <p>No, we still need material like TV set, big school hall to be used for learning.</p> <p>Art centres are also needed for learners' products.</p> <p>No, even the government funds are not enough to cater for all learners. I wish it can be increased and the business sector be involved in the education as partners.</p> <p>We also run short of laboratories to perform experiments as well as the Technology centers.</p> <p>Partly satisfied, especially when coming to reading, publishers did very bad in writing stories for low classes. stories are too short, some are about two or three lines.</p> <p>I feel partially satisfied, because some books are more like a novel and do not encourage learners to read. The story for young learners must have a start and the end. The books that we have now lack a lot in that unlike those that were used in the native curriculum.</p> <p>No, we are still running short of the material, not books only but equipments like, TV, laboratories, decoders.</p>
Focus group 3	<p>No, there are other things that need to be changed, if we can be allowed to, we can remove all things that are unnecessary and put only content that can help our learners, because now books that were were used previously are supplemented with many other things and material.</p>

	<p>Not in my class, the level of the material does not suit the level of my learners.</p> <p>We are satisfied with the material in the lower class, the reading books are easy to read than those we used years ago.</p> <p>Yes, we have the material that we use that caters for even slow learners. It is a set of different stages but same title.</p> <p>No, books are not enough; learners cannot take books home to read.</p> <p>We are never satisfied with the material we need addition</p>
Focus group 4	<p>No, I am not satisfied with the ones that I have because the language is difficult especially because the font is very small.</p> <p>Yes because there are educator guides to assist educators.</p> <p>We are satisfied with posters and newspapers.</p> <p>Electronic material like radios and televisions can be used profitably but are lacking.</p>
Focus group 5	<p>Yes we are, because we do follow the criteria that we have mentioned before buying the books.</p> <p>No because there is no perfect material, some materials lack important knowledge in the content.</p>
Focus group 6	<p>Partially satisfied some materials need to be supplemented.</p> <p>No, the home languages are not correctly written.</p> <p>Not satisfied because the language used in the material is too difficult and not at the level of the learners and as educators we constantly explain in their mother tongue and they can not read and understand on their own.</p>

<p>Focus group 7</p>	<p>No, at present we are not sure about the material we have due to the changes in the grade 10-12 that we are teaching.</p> <p>We do not know which material is relevant to the grades we are teaching.</p> <p>No, we are faced with a situation where we only use what we think can help at present.</p> <p>We are not, because we still short texture material for practical use.</p> <p>No, does not address the needs of question papers that are set for final examination.</p>
<p>Focus group 8</p>	<p>No, because there is no quality when reading the book, its like publishers are just making money with the material. One struggles to find good reading books especially for foundation phase.</p> <p>No, the language of the material is very difficult.</p> <p>I am not satisfied because some writers only concentrate on one theme or aspect only.</p> <p>No, because proper language is lacking in language books.</p> <p>No some textbooks have high standard of English that is not suitable for our learners. The pictures in the book are unfamiliar to the environment of learners.</p> <p>No, I prefer older books and I use them because they contain more information and knowledge.</p> <p>Not, the books we have now, does not address the needs of learners.</p>

Analysis: Most participants are not fully satisfied with the material they are using and have made recommendations that can improve the the quality of material.

4.3.7 Bias of learning and teaching support materials

Question seven enquired whether the learning and teaching support materials used by the educator participants non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist or unbiased in any way. The responses of the educator participants appear in table in table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Participants' response to Question seven

Focus group 1	Yes, they are non-racial, they are covering all races. Yes, they can be used by different learners from other races.
Focus group 2	The material we are using is non-racial, it is multicultural and non-sexist and unbiased, it caters for all learners.
Focus group 3	For us it is multicultural, non-racial and non-bias.
Focus group 4	Yes, it is non-racial and is multicultural. The material is right because all races and different cultures are included.
Focus group 5	It includes all cultures, that is multicultural. Both genders are equally portrayed.
Focus group 6	Multicultural, not bias and non-racial.
Focus group 7	It is multicultural, non-racial and unbiased. In Human and social sciences, learners are taught about post apartheid issues but not about what actually happened before

	<p>democracy.</p> <p>It is multicultural, it covers both Black and White.</p>
Focus group 8	<p>It is multicultural, gender sensitive, because in the material you find women who are working in the contractors and men sweeping.</p> <p>Different cultures and is unbiased.</p>

Analysis: The materials used by learners are unbiased.

4.3.8 Learners understanding of the language and values of learning support materials

Question eight enquired whether educator participants' learners conceptually understand the language and values encapsulated in the learning support materials. The responses of the educator participants appear in table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Participants' response to Question eight

Focus group 1	<p>Language they do, but values as an educator you need to have a way of putting them in a way that they can understand, because unless you simplify them in a way that they will understand, they struggle.</p> <p>The content is actually directed at teaching us particular values, learners are unable to easily identify them, but the language is quite reasonable and the difficult words are explained in the glossary.</p>
Focus group 2	<p>They do understand the language though there are difficulties encountered in terms of additional languages.</p> <p>Not on their own, but through our help.</p> <p>The scientific and mathematical terminologies in some instances it becomes difficult and in explaining them in our languages.</p>

	<p>With their first language they are able to read with understanding but coming to second language that is where we help the most.</p>
Focus group 3	<p>No, sometimes it is too difficult; one has to explain in other languages.</p> <p>Our learners have problems of teaching and teaching, they cannot understand English and what they are reading unless it is explained to them.</p> <p>In Life Orientation subject, they are able to understand and identify the values.</p>
Focus group 4	<p>Our learners were not exposed to English in the foundation phase, but we are helping them.</p> <p>The language is a problem especially in grade four. The department's policy stipulates language of instruction must be their mother tongue.</p> <p>They do understand their mother tongue.</p> <p>English is very difficult when they learn subjects like History, Geography one must explain to them.</p> <p>The language is still a barrier but we work hard to assist them to understand.</p>
Focus group 5	<p>They do understand, but other books do have long stories that are not suitable for the level of learners.</p> <p>They only understand and identify values easily when the poster is used.</p>
Focus group 6	<p>It varies according to the intellect of the learner. There are those who will understand and those who will need the help of the educator.</p>

	<p>Some do not understand, one must explain step by step.</p> <p>They understand at different levels.</p>
Focus group 7	<p>Most of the material is written in English and most learners in the townships schools can not comprehend the language, it will be easy for them if the material can be written in their mother tongue.</p> <p>English language is a barrier because learners cannot even read and understand their assignments.</p> <p>Learners also have problems in reading and writing which include spelling.</p> <p>Maybe TV makes them to listen a lot and not write and talk.</p> <p>Learners can perform better if the material can be written in their mother tongue. Learners only open up when using mother tongue but in English they cannot.</p>
Focus group 8	<p>Some books are really difficult, especially referring at the level of learners.</p> <p>Learners are different and have different IQ levels in one class.</p> <p>Others are really struggling one always must explain and interpret.</p>

Analysis: The material was found by some educators as very difficult for learners to use on their own.

4.3.9 The racial, cultural and gender make up of the authors of the preferred learning materials

Question nine enquired on the racial, cultural and gender make up of the authors of the preferred learning materials. The responses of the educator participants appear in table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Participants' response to Question nine

<p>Focus group 1</p>	<p>I found that most of them are written by Whites even though in the content they are very careful. Many aspects have been covered.</p> <p>With me I have discovered that Blacks are in the majority.</p> <p>Previously it was Whites but since the change of the curriculum more Blacks have come up.</p> <p>Literature books are written mostly by Black authors and the content and grammar by most Whites.</p> <p>The gender make-up is still a problem, women appear very little.</p> <p>There is no balance in as far as race and gender make-up of authors are concerned.</p>
<p>Focus group 2</p>	<p>It is a bit difficult because some materials they only write the surname and the initials one cannot say whether the author is a male or a female.</p> <p>Well Black authors are coming up quickly, but Whites are still in the majority.</p> <p>In some material they try to balance by putting equal number of races and gender.</p> <p>They are mixed races and genders.</p> <p>The balance is there, but one wonders if some races and gender have not being put there as authors just to window-dress and to sell the material because the content of those books deny the contribution of other authors.</p> <p>Sotho and Tswana books are purely written by Sotho and Tswana authors, the language in the material is an evidence for that.</p>
<p>Focus</p>	<p>It is a mixed gender there is a Black female in the team of</p>

group 3	<p>Afrikaans speaking authors.</p> <p>In the life orientation there are female authors more than males.</p> <p>In Economics and Management Sciences I have seen only White females.</p>
Focus group 4	<p>I think they balance White, Blacks, Coloreds and females are there.</p> <p>Authors have improved Black languages are clearly written and are not mixed unlike in the past.</p>
Focus group 5	<p>It does not discriminate race, in Afrikaans languages it is only Afrikaans authors.</p>
Focus group 6	<p>I think they are bringing all races and include everybody. All races are involved. It is a mixed gender.</p>
Focus group 7	<p>Not much Black African authors most is White. They are still male dominated .As far as culture is concerned whites are still dominating.</p>
Focus group 8	<p>We usually have a problem with authors who write books with languages they are not familiar with because they give wrong vocabulary. We get very confused when the language of a material is wrong, we are not sure about whether the author does know the language.</p> <p>Whites are still dominating.</p> <p>It's a balance of both black and white races.</p> <p>The gender make-up is also balanced.</p> <p>The problem is that they only write the surnames and the initials of authors.</p>

	<p>In most cases it is male photos at the back of the books.</p> <p>Most women are afraid of writing material.</p> <p>Women's materials are rejected by publishers.</p>
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Analysis: Participant found that most authors are from the white community.

4.4 THEMES EMANATING FROM PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION ITEMS OF THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The following themes emerged from the qualitative responses of the participants to the question items of the interview schedule.

4.4.1 Question 1: What do you understand by the concept Learning and Teaching Support Material?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- Resources reinforce teaching and learning in the classroom

Interviewees indicated that Learning and teaching support materials constitute the resources intended to support and effectively enhance learning and teaching in the classroom.

- Learning and teaching support materials guide the facilitation of teaching and learning activities in the classroom setting

It was revealed by interviewees that educators see learning and teaching support materials as guides that effectively facilitate teaching and learning processes in the classroom setting.

- Learning and teaching support material is teaching aids that support teaching and learning

Learning and teaching support materials as mentioned by participants are teaching aids that support learning and teaching in the classroom, for example textbooks and stationery.

- Learning and teaching support material are equipments used inside and outside of the classroom

Equipment as explained in the responses, are the manual materials used by both learners and educators inside and outside of the classroom in order to facilitate the active participation of learners in learning.

- Teaching and learning tools used to enhance effective skills acquisition

The responses revealed that learning and teaching support materials are tools that enhance the effective learning and assist in the acquiring of skills.

- Learning and teaching support consists of printed media that broaden knowledge and reading expertise or development

As printed media, learning and teaching support materials are the source of information that helps learners to broaden their knowledge, find information and to develop reading.

- Assessor guide to assess learners' pre and gained knowledge

The theme emerged from the responses which are the evaluation tool that reveals the extent of pre-knowledge and the level of learners in the particular topic or subject.

- Learning and teaching support material sets achievement standard of learning outcomes

It is understood by educators, that there is a required standard of learner performance in respect of learning and teaching support materials leading to learning outcomes set for them.

4.4.2 Question 2: What criteria do you use in choosing learning and teaching support material for your learners?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- Sequential arrangement of the material from simple to complex

It is mentioned by participants, that the topics must be arranged from simple to complex.

- Quality of the material

According to participants, quality is seen as the information which encapsulate knowledge and skills which have the potential to impart healthy social attitudes and values to the learners.

- Compliance with the curriculum

Educators mentioned that all learning and teaching support materials should comply with the national curriculum statements such as learning outcomes, assessment standards and human rights.

- The font size must be large and pictures in the materials should be clear

Educators considered the type and the size of the font in the material as important criteria. The font must be large enough to be read by all learners and the pictures must be clear and colourful. Unfortunately, some educators mentioned that some materials contain pictures that are not colourful clear enough for learners to understand.

- Learning and teaching support materials must encourage the active participation and involvement of learners in their learning

Interwees revealed that learning and teaching support materials must encourage learners to be actively involved and participate positively in their leaning.

- The learning support materials must be relevant to the learners' environment

The educators mentioned that the materials must relate to learners' life situations and their environment. Learners must relate to the content of the

material, so that they could be able to appreciate their environment and solve problems that they may encounter in their environment

- Eye-catching

It emerged from the interviewees that the materials must be attractive and interesting to learners so as to encourage them to use it in any situation, even at home on their own.

- Cost-effective

Educators also indicated that the cost involved in the purchasing of the material must be reasonable and affordable, so that each learner can have his or her material for all subjects or for the learning area on hand. The challenge is that these materials could be so expensive that the schools cannot afford to buy any for every learner.

- Learning and teaching support material must be able to develop learners to have positive attitudes and values in their lives

Participants revealed, that the material, when used by learners and educators, must be able to mould and groom learners in as far as values and attitudes are concerned.

- The printed learning and teaching support materials must have quality in terms of materials used

Educators mentioned that they prefer good texture for the material, for it to last longer when used: high quality paper must be used and strong binding of the materials is a prerequisite.

- Integration of the learning outcomes and the learning areas or subjects

The participants mentioned that the integration of learning outcomes and different learning areas is important.

4.4.3 Question 3: Why do you see above criteria as important?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- Rules and regulations of the curriculum

Educators pointed out that the above criterion is important in that it stipulates that the material should comply with the curriculum policy and to address the national curriculum statements, otherwise the resources will be useless.

- Accommodation of all learners with different learning difficulties

Educators pointed out, that this criterion is important, because it will stipulate that the materials should be suitable to be used by all learners across race, gender as well as by those with different learning abilities.

- Guidelines give clear directions to assist educators to choose the right materials

Interviewees revealed that through this criterion, educators will have clear directions on the way to choose ideal materials for their learners. This criterion serves as an evaluation instrument to simplify and provide clear principles on choosing the material.

- Growth strategy for the learners

This criterion is seen by participants as the strategy to assist in choosing materials that will provide maturity and development for learners to become responsible citizens of the country, ready to participate effectively in the economy.

- Learners' education investment

The participants point out that the materials must assist learners to gain knowledge, acquire adequate skills to unleash their potential in managing their future and should be able to adapt fully and easily to the ever changing technology of the world.

- Solutions to teaching and learning for educators and learners

Interviewees indicated that this criterion is important, in that learning and teaching requires from the resource to give solutions to the challenges that learners are faced with, as well as that with which they are dealing in their everyday lives, in the community and in their environment.

4.4.4 Question 4: On which values do you base your choice of learning and teaching support materials for your learners?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- Humanity, humanness and 'ubuntu'

Educators see these values in the material as those that will encourage learners to accept, respect, tolerate forgive as well as sympathize and work together with one another.

- Discrimination amongst all learners

The educators' choice of materials is based on the value of accommodating every learner, irrespective of race, gender, disability, ethnic, culture and or background.

- Multi-skills for learners to participate in the growth of the skilled labour of the country

The participants also revealed that educators based their values on the materials that provide different skills to learners; South Africa is in need of skilled people.

- Positive attitude for the career choice for learners

The material that is valued by educators is those that will develop learners' positive attitudes towards themselves and others as well as in choosing their future careers.

4.4.5 Question 5: To which culture do your learners belong?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- Multiculturalism

The responses showed that educators are teaching learners who belong to different cultures.

- Rainbow nation

It is seen from responses that some educators are teaching in diverse and multiracial classes.

- Multilingualism

Educators are engaged with different learners who speak different official languages.

4.4.6 Question 6: Are you satisfied with the learning and teaching support materials used by your learners?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- English as a learning barrier

The responses revealed that learners do not understand the material written in English and on a continuous basis, the educators have to explain in the mother tongue, which also is a challenge to educators who have no knowledge of other languages. Participants found, that learners cannot read, understand or interpret the examination questions.

- Lack of physical resources to perform practical work for learners

The absence of physical facilities like science laboratories, art and culture and technology centers for learners to do practical experiments and display their products, is another matter of concern.

- The marketed materials do not meet the needs of learners

Educators are faced with the challenge of using material that does not meet the learners' needs. Interviewees found, that the material marketed, does not address the issues that relate to learners' situations. They mentioned that they have resorted to substituting recent material with old materials that had already been declared already obsolete and by creating their own activities. Quality in reading material is lacking and the material was written not to meet learners' needs, but to profit companies. They mentioned that material is very expensive; schools can not afford to buy adequate resources for each learner.

- Educators are not properly trained in inclusion and policies

Educators are faced with the situation whereby they must accommodate and teach all different learners in one class. Responses revealed that educators are not properly trained in inclusive education and the policies involved. This makes it difficult for them to choose ideal material for learners in the inclusive classroom setting. They are not sure that their learners are being fully developed by the resources they use.

- Shortage of printed media

Responses reveal that the material available is not adequate enough for all learners in their classrooms.

- Cost

The research furthermore reveals that educators are not satisfied about the costliness of material and that the funds from the Education Department, cannot meet the costs.

4.4.7 Question 7: Is the learning and teaching support material non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist or unbiased in any way?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- Constitutionally based

The material was found to be addressing multicultural, multiracial gender and bias in a positive way.

- Accommodative

The interviewees revealed, that the material displays the different cultures, races and gender.

4.4.8 Question 8: Do your learners conceptually understand the language and values encapsulated in the learning support material?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- Language in the material is a barrier in the learning of learners

Responses have revealed that learners do not understand the language used in resources on their own, because they are exposed only to English as the medium of instruction in the intermediate phase (Grade 4). Poor performance of learners because of language barriers has been mentioned. It was also revealed, that most learners cannot easily identify the values in the material without the help of the educators.

- Foreign context and language

Responses reveal that some materials have a foreign context, that is, not familiar to the context of their learners and this deprives learners of knowing and understanding their own country.

4.4.9 Question 9: What is the racial make-up of the authors of the preferred learning support material?

These themes were identified based on the basis of the frequency with which they were addressed by the research participants.

- Dominance

The participants revealed that the White community is very popular in writing the material in different learning areas, except in African languages. Males have been found still leading in the field of writing.

- Multiracial learners learn in the same classroom

The research shows that more and more races and cultures work together as teams for various written assignments and are bringing out the diversity in pen and ink.

- Window-dressing

Some educators pointed out that in some materials the name of some authors has been added to the list of authors, for the reasons publishing and marketing the material successfully.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the analyses and interpretations of the biographical empirical research data that this research collected from the interviews with the educator participants who formed the population sample of this research. Themes were also developed from the responses of the said participants.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study was undertaken to try to assist educators in choosing learning and teaching support materials for learners in inclusive classroom settings. This chapter will provide the following:

- Overview of the study
- Findings of the theoretical literature review
- Findings from the literature review
- Findings from the qualitative practical research undertaking
- Conclusions in relation to the aims of the study
- Recommendations.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The overview of the study intends to provide a brief overview of all the previous chapters of this study.

5.2.1 Chapter one

Chapter one orientated the reader in respect of the following.

- The problem statement, which is the experiences of educators in choosing learning and teaching support materials for learners in inclusive classroom settings (cf 1.2).
- The aim of the study, which is to assist educators in choosing learning and teaching support material for learners in the inclusive classroom settings (cf 1.3).

- The qualitative data were gathered from focus group interviews, was undertaken with educators from Sedibeng-West district in Gauteng. The purpose of the interviews was to glean educators' experiences in choosing learning and teaching support material for learners in inclusive classroom settings (cf 1.4.2.4)
- Social constructivism as the theory underpinning the study was used to interpret the empirical research data from a position of engaging and empathetic understanding, which is one of the key principles of interpretative analysis (cf 1.5).
- Ecosystemic theoretical framework as the foundation of this research was also discussed as it has its roots in general systems theory and human ecology (cf 1.7).

5.2.2 Chapter two

Chapter two explored the literature on the nature of learning and teaching support materials (cf 2.2), the kinds of materials (cf 2.3), the role of material in the learning and teaching situation (cf 2.4). Further this chapter explored the guidelines for selecting material (cf 2.5), planning considerations when choosing learning and teaching support material (cf 2.6). In (cf 2.8) criteria for evaluating material is pointed out as well as the funding of the material by the Department of education (cf 2.9), procurement processes (cf 2.10). The utilization (cf 2.11) and presentation of material (cf 2.12) were pointed out from the literature review in this chapter. Inclusion education (cf 2.13), description of inclusive classroom setting (cf 2.15), benefits (cf 2.17) and criticism of inclusive classroom (cf 2.18) were also explored in this chapter.

5.2.3 Chapter three

This chapter highlighted the research methods used to investigate the problems of this study. The application of the focus group interview was explained in details (cf 3.5).

5.2.4 Chapter four

The focus group was used for the collection of and these were analysed and interpreted. The data revealed that educators experience a number of difficulties in choosing learning and teaching support material for learners in inclusive classroom settings (cf 4.4.6).

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Findings which were obtained from the literature review will be related to the aims of the study and the various questions asked during research.

5.3.1 The following were findings from the literature review:

Findings from the question below will follow as responded by participant.

- What do you understand by the concept learning and teaching support material?

Learning and teaching support materials are resources which assist educators to teach and learners to learn (cf 2.1). These resources are essential to a culture of teaching and learning (Gauteng Department of Education: 1999:1). Learning and teaching material are designed to support both educators and learners. They further enrich educators teaching and learners learning (Gauteng Department of Education: 1999:8). Learning and teaching support materials are any resources which enable educators to teach and learners to learn. According to the North West University (2004; 37), learning and teaching support materials are essential to promote a culture of teaching and learning in classroom settings (cf 2.2). The Department of Education (2003:36-37) advocates that learning and teaching support materials can be almost anything. In the past, a learning resource was usually seen as a teaching aids (a textbook, a wall chart, and so on), but today it is defined as anything that can assist with the learning process, even if it is not specifically designed for that purpose. It is therefore incumbent upon the school management teams to encourage educators to use many different kinds of learning resources, to share them among themselves, and to share ideas

among themselves for the development, design and creation of the learning and teaching support materials (cf 2.2).

- What criteria do you use in choosing learning and teaching support material for your learners?

The material must cover appropriate content, challenge all learners, integrate subjects and learning areas, develop concept clearly and allow flexibility (cf 2.8.1). Learner material should develop reasoning, communication and problem-solving skills. Further the material should ground activities in meaningful situations, promote equity and positive values (cf 2.8.2). For educators the material must empower them to improve classroom discourse, make curriculum decisions about altering, adding and deleting materials so that they can issues raised by learners during discussions and so that the curriculum can reflect learners' subject interests (cf 2.8.3). For assessment the material should involve appropriate activities to engage learners in realistic and worthwhile subject tasks, yield variety of information, offer learners opportunities to apply subject knowledge to new situations. Assessment should also promote equity by encouraging and acknowledging multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge abilities (cf 2.8.4).

- Why do you see the above criteria as important?

The criteria are important to ensure that the material comply with curriculum policy and addresses the national curriculum statements, accommodate all learners across race, gender and disability (cf 4.4.3). Learners and educators should easily be supported by properly selected materials to promote and improve culture of learning and teaching in the classroom (cf 2.5).

- On which values do you base your choice of learning and teaching support material for your learners?

The material should promote and encourage learners to accept, respect, tolerate and work together with each other. The material should accommodate all learners irrespective of race, gender, disability, ethnic, culture and or background (cf 4.4.4)

- To which culture do your learners belong?

Multicultural learners are accommodated in the same classroom. The material should easily be used, and accommodate all different cultures of learners (cf 4.4.5).

- Are you satisfied with the learning and teaching support materials used by your learners?

Materials must be easy and simple to be used by all learners at different levels. Materials should address the needs of both educators and learners. The material should be of good quality and the cost be reasonable (cf 4.4.6).

- Is the learning and teaching support material non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist or unbiased in any way?

The material should be constitutionally based, accommodate all different learners, different cultures, gender and races (cf 4.4.7).

- Do your learners conceptually understand the language and values encapsulated in the material?

The context of the material should be familiar to learners to assist learners to learn and understand their environment easily (cf 4.4.8).

What is the racial make-up of the authors of the preferred learning and teaching support materials?

The materials should be written by different cultural authors to reveal the richness of each culture (cf 4.4.9).

5.4 FINDINGS FROM THE QUALITATIVE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH UNDERTAKING

The following themes emerged from the empirical research undertaking:

5.4.1 What do you understand by the concept Learning and Teaching Support Materials?

From the responses it is clear, that educators understand the concept learning and teaching support materials. Learning and teaching support material is understood as resources that reinforce teaching and learning and it supports and guides the facilitation of learning and teaching. They also reveal that these materials are equipment used both inside and outside of the classroom. It is also seen as tools used to enhance effective skills acquisition. As printed media, it broadens the knowledge and reading skills for learners. It is also seen as the assessor guide to assist in the assessing of learners' pre-gained knowledge in the classroom. It further sets the achievement standard for learning outcomes (cf 2.2, 4 4.1).

5.4.2 What criteria do you use in choosing learning and teaching support materials for your learners?

The responses from educators point out the criteria they use in choosing the materials for learners in the inclusive classroom, as follows: The sequential arrangement of the materials from simple to complex, the quality of materials in terms of the content, information encapsulated in, knowledge and skills are needed by learners in order to develop healthy attitudes and values. Other criteria that have been mentioned by educators include compliance with the curriculum needs, the font size and the clarity of pictures in the material. However, it is worrying to learn, that some materials contains faint writing, unclear pictures; and this hinders easy learning by learners, especially those in low classes and those with sight impairments. The learners' environment has been mentioned as being one of the criteria. Further, the responses pointed out, that the cost of material is very high and this makes it impossible to buy each learner his or her own materials for each subject or learning area. The quality in terms of the material used for making it. should be a high quality, while it must be securely bound. Integration of learning areas and learning outcomes, has also being mentioned as the criterion that used by educators to choose the materials for learners in the inclusive classroom. The language in the material causes great concern for educators, in that they

found that it is very difficult for learners to understand easily and they constantly use the mother tongue to explain, but this also poses the problem for educators who do not know learners' mother tongues (cf 4.4.2).

5.4.3 Why do you see these criteria as important?

It is pleasing that educators see the criteria they mentioned, as important when they point this out. It is mentioned by educators, that these criteria are rules and regulations of the curriculum, and that they clearly stipulate what should be in or excluded from the material be in the material. They further explain that if any materials do not meet these criteria, then it means that it is useless and should not be used in learning and teaching support material. Because materials assist educators, therefore these criteria give clear guidelines and direction in choosing these. For responsible citizens of the country, materials make out the role of being the growth strategy for learners to actively participate effectively in the economy. The other importance of the criteria is making sure that learners acquire skills and gain knowledge in order, to be able to unleash their potential. These criteria demand from the materials that it provides solutions to learners of the problems they face in their everyday lives (4.4.3).

5.4.4 On which values do you base your choice of learning and teaching support materials for your learners?

It is pleasing to learn from the responses, that educators value the material that reflects humanity," ubuntu" and the accommodating of all learners. They also value the material that is able to multi-skill and positively develop positive attitude for the career choice of learners (4.4.4).

5.4.5 To which culture do your learners belong?

It is appreciated to learn from the responses, that educators teach the multicultural, multiracial and multilingual classes in this country (4.4.5).

5.4.6 Are you satisfied with the learning and teaching support materials used by your learners?

It is worrying that educators are not satisfied about the current materials they use in the classes. The findings are that some material is written in difficult language for learners for them to understand. The mother tongue has to be used by educators to explain to learners. Educators suggest that the material should be written in their mother tongue. The lack of physical facilities for learners to perform practical experiments is a matter of concern to them, because it hinders the acquisition learners of knowledge and skills. Most importantly, what is disappointing is, that some educators mentioned, that they had not been trained in inclusive or in inclusive education and that they also do not understand the policies involved inclusion (4.4.6).

5.4.7 Is the learning and teaching support material non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist or sexist, or unbiased in any way?

The positive findings are that the material is multicultural, multiracial and contain different genders and it unbiased. It is pleasing that all cultures, races and genders can freely use the material (4.4.7).

5.4.8 Do your learners conceptually understand the language and values encapsulated in the learning support material?

The findings include, that language in the material is a barrier for learning, because some learners do not understand it and cannot easily use the material on their own without the assistance of educators. Educators mentioned that they constantly have to use the learners mother tongue to explain to learners, and this is the problem for educators that do not know the mother tongue of their learners. It is worrying to learn, that some material contains foreign context which is not familiar to learners. Values are not easily identified by learners unless they are helped by educators (4.4.8).

5.4.9 What is the racial make-up of authors of the preferred learning support material?

Findings are that White authors and male gender are dominating in the writing industry than their counter parties (4.4.9).

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to assist educators in dealing with the choice of learning and teaching support material in the inclusive classroom setting, the following recommendations are made:

5.5.1 How can educators be assisted to choose materials for learners in inclusive classroom settings?

- The Department of education and the school must make sure that every material that enters the classroom is evaluated and educators should be encourage to use different learning and teaching support materials for the inclusive classroom.
- The school management teams must make sure that all educators are familiar and use the criteria to choose the material for learners.
- Educators must be trained about the importance and the use of the material to assist all learners in the inclusive classroom.
- Educators must receive thorough training on the policies of inclusion as well as constant support from the department on the subject of inclusive education.
- Educators must make sure that they promote values in the classrooms
- New and upcoming authors and publishers should carry out proper consultation with educators for them to apply their teaching experiences to. Educators also suggested, that older authors and those that have retired, should be consulted, because they still possess the knowledge and writing skills that can help these new authors.

- The Department must develop and skill educators to start writing or developing and publish materials, since this is one of their roles of designing learning programmes and materials.
- Educators must ensure that all learners are comfortable to use material they have chosen to promote learning for each learner in the classroom.
- The level of learners must be considered when choosing the material to assist the learner to understand the content of the material so as to learn easily.
- Materials from different cultures should be chosen to enrich different cultures in the classroom.

5.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following constitute a suggestion for further research in this field.

Further research can be done in other provinces in order to widely understand different experiences of educators in choosing education materials for learners in inclusive classroom settings.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was done only with educators from eight schools from the same district in one province.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The Department of Education strives to ensure that learning and teaching support materials of a high quality are used in the schools by all learners, irrespective of their abilities. This chapter gives an overview of the study, findings from the theoretical literature review, as well as from practical qualitative research undertaken. Recommendations have been made in assisting educators to in choose material for learners in inclusive classroom settings.

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ANNEXURE A

LETTER OF PERMISSION



UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

ENQUIRIES: NM STRYDOM

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

FROM : MS NM STRYDOM
ACT,SAO: POLICY & PLANNING UNIT
SEDIBENG WEST DISTRICT (D8)

DATE : 15 FEBRUARY 2007

This serves to confirm that interim permission has thus been granted to:

MS PA MOTLOUNG

to conduct research in Primary, Secondary & LEEN Schools within the Sedibeng West District (D8) on the topic:

"The choice of Learning & Teaching Support Material in Inclusive Classroom Settings: Educators' Experiences"


for purposes of completing her MEd in Learner Support

It is understood by Ms PA Motloung that this approval is granted on condition that her research will not take place during contact time and will therefore not disrupt teaching and learning.

It would be greatly appreciated if she can be afforded the opportunity to continue with her research without any prejudice.

Trusting you will find this to be in order

Yours in Thixoano


MR SD THINANE
SENIOR MANAGER
SEDIBENG WEST DISTRICT (D8)

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ANNEXURE B

INCLUSIVE APPROACH IN CHOOSING LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT MATERIAL

Information to educator participants

On this interview schedule I have questions relating to your choice of learning and teaching support materials for your learners. I would be happy if you were to respond earnestly and honestly to them. Your responses will be highly appreciated. A high degree of respect will be accorded to your responses due to their invaluable nature to this research project

Please note that you are free to participate in this research as much as you feel like. And that you also pull out of it at any stage as you might desire without any explanation.

Also note that I am using a tape-recorder to record all your responses and such you are not required to give your name as well as that of your school.

I promise to keep your responses confidential and to use them only for the purposes of my MED degree dissertation which I am registered for at North West University (Vaal Triangle Campus).

Yours sincerely

Mrs PA Motloung

ANNEXURE C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by the concept Learning and Teaching Support Material?
2. Which criteria do you use in choosing learning support materials for your learners?
3. Why do you see these criteria as important?
4. On which values do you base your choice of learning support materials for your learners?
5. To which cultures do your learners belong?
6. Are you satisfied with the learning support materials used by your learners?
7. Is the learning support material non-racial, multicultural, non-sexist or unbiased in any way?
8. Do your learners conceptually understand the language and values of learning and support materials?
9. What is the racial, cultural and gender make-up of the authors of the preferred learning support materials?

ANNEXURE D

EDITING CERTIFICATE

L.S.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE WORK OF

~~Dr~~ / Mr / Ms P.A. Motloung has been professionally edited / proofread / translated.

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HIERMEE WORD DAAR GESERTIFISEER DAT DIE WERK VAN

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