A STUDY OF THE COLLABORATIVE TEAM APPROACH IN EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE WESTERN CAPE
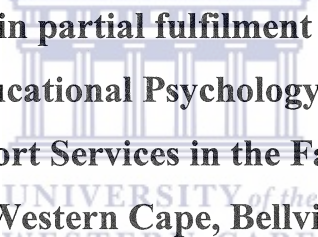
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A mini-thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Masters Degree in Educational Psychology in Inclusive Education and Education Support Services in the Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape, Bellville, South Africa.

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KEY WORDS

Inclusion

Collaboration

Inclusive school

School Based Support Team

District Based Support Team

Parental support

Learners with Special Educational Needs

Diversity

Barriers to learning, development and participation

Education Support Services

ABSTRACT

In South Africa, some of the problems experienced in moving towards an Inclusive Education system are a lack of resources, a lack of commitment and a poor understanding of how to aid successful inclusion. The implementation of inclusion is a process that has been initiated by Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) and is still in the process of developing the necessary education support.

The 'three-tier' system of support at school, district and provincial level is recommended in EWP6 (DoE, 2001). This study aimed to investigate the collaboration between the District Based Support Team (DBST), the School Based Support Team (SBST) and the School Governing Body (SGB) which represents the parents. The main objective was to investigate how the above bodies support and assist learners who experience barriers to learning, development and participation through a collaborative and consultative problem solving approach.

The investigation was conducted at a school in the Western Cape. The SBST (members / teachers) and the parents on the SGB at the same school were the participants in this research as well as the members of the DBST from the Education Management Development Centre (EMDC) in that region.

A qualitative research method was employed in this study. It was based on a purposive sampling which consisted of five members of the SBST, three members of the DBST and five members of the SGB (parents). The data gathering process included questionnaires, oral interviews and non-participant observation. The data collected from the above sources has been analysed according to the patterns and themes that emerged. It was then clustered and organised under different headings. The findings of the study show that there was some collaboration and cooperation between the above bodies but possibly this was not enough. There were some challenges that were experienced by these bodies that could hinder collaboration to be successful. There were also other challenges in regard to support provision to school.

The positive aspects of the collaboration, cooperation and coordination within and between each team at the school and at district level is explained and discussed. Challenges experienced at each level are also discussed. Based on these findings in the study, recommendations are made as how to improve the collaboration in Education Support Services.

DECLARATION

I declare that this mini-thesis: <u>A study of the collaborative team approach in Education Support Services in the Western Cape</u> is my own original work. It is submitted towards partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M. Ed in Educational Psychology at the University of the Western Cape, Bellville, South Africa. It has not previously been submitted for any other examination or degree at any other university.

Signed:..........................

    M. I. Tau

March 2006

DEDICATION

This mini-thesis is dedicated
to the loving memory of:

my brother

Hlabana Qhojeng,
who financially supported me
from high school up until college level

my parents

Erastus Qhojeng,
Makhethisa and *Jonathan Tau*

and my uncle

Iddo Qhojeng

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- Dr Cornellison, the Director of Research at the Western Cape Education Department, for permission to conduct the research.

ACRONYMS

DANIDA:	The Danish International Development Assistance
DBST:	District Based Support Team
DST:	District Support Team
DMT:	District Management Team
DoE:	Department of Education
EENET:	Enabling Education Network
EFA:	Education For All
EMDC:	Education Management Development Centre
ESS:	Education Support Services
EWP6:	Education White Paper 6
HIV/AIDS:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IEDP:	Individualised Educational Development Programme
IMG:	Institutional Management Governance
IQMS:	Integrated Quality Management Service
LSA:	Learning Support Advisor
LSE:	Learning Support Educator
LSEN:	Learners with Special Educational Needs
MFT:	Multi-Functional Team
NCESS:	The National Committee for Education Support Services
NCSNET:	The National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisations
OBE:	Outcome Based Education
RNCS:	Revised National Curriculum Statement
RTF:	Remedial Teaching Foundation
SAIA:	Systemic Assessment Intervention Approach
SBST:	School Based Support Team
SCOPE:	The South African-Finnish Co-operation Programme in the Education Sector
SLES:	Specialised Learner and Educator Support
SGB:	School Governing Body
SMT:	School Management Team

TST:	Teacher Support Team
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organisation
WCED:	Western Cape Education Department
WHO:	World Health Organisation
WPET:	White Paper on Education and Training

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UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

1. 1. Introduction

This research study on Inclusive Education aims to investigate Education Support Services (ESS) and the collaboration between the District Based Support Team (DBST), School Based Support Team (SBST) and the parents at a school in the Western Cape. The focus is on how they work collaboratively to support and assist learners who experience barriers to learning, development and participation in an Inclusive Education setting. A major component is to research the coordination between the above bodies and how they communicate in order to support and assist learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation.

1. 2. Motivation / Rationale for the study

In South Africa, the lack of provision of Education Support Services (ESS) is addressed in new legislation, Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education; Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, Department of Education (EWP6 DoE, 2001). This document makes recommendations that impact on educational practices and support to schools. The main principle is that all learners, irrespective of differences in language, culture, ethnicity, economic status, gender and ability, can be educated with their peers in a regular classroom and in their neighbourhood school.

The government of the apartheid era directly and indirectly impacted negatively on the entire education system in South Africa (DoE, 2001). In South Africa, prior to 1994, there was much deprivation and lack of provision for special needs education. The limited educational opportunities were due to inequalities in the provision of education for different racial groups. Education provided for black learners was marginalised and ESS, as a highly specialised service, was limited to the advantaged sector, which comprised mainly white learners. Special education, which was separate from mainstream education, was provided mainly for the white learners (National Commission of Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services NCSNET/NCESS, 1997). The Commission outlines the role of ESS as:

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> ...to minimize, remove and prevent barriers to learning and development to ensure effective learning and development of all learners...and can play a fundamental role in ensuring that all learners have equal access to the education system and are able to participate optimally in the learning process (NCSNET/NCESS 1997: 3).

Since 1994, the new democratic South Africa has one unitary and non-racial department of education (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001). The education policy is now committed to equity and the redress of past injustices. International principles on education have been adopted from Education For All (EFA) (1990) and The World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994). There are many proposed policy changes regarding support provision to Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN) (EWP6, 2001).

According to Eleweke and Rodda (2002), recent research indicates that in the developing countries of Africa the implementation of inclusion has not received strong support from most of the government departments in terms of proper planning and resource provision. Consequently, the necessary support and resources for meaningful inclusion is scarce. The lack of support services, relevant materials and support personnel is a major problem which hinders effective implementation in African countries. Muthukrishna, (in Eleweke and Rodda, 2002) indicates that in South Africa there is evidence of inadequate facilities, absence of support services, large classes and poor infrastructure which are all obstacles to achieving meaningful inclusion. There is also evidence from recent research done in the Western Cape of lack of commitment, lack of human and other resources, and poor coordination in collaboration (Robinson, Langhan, Lazarus and Moolla, 2002).

The main aim of this research therefore is to investigate the collaboration between the DBST, SBST and parents on the SGB in a particular school. Based on the findings and results of the study, recommendations on how to improve ESS for LSEN will be reported.

1. 3. Development of Policy on Education Support Services

1. 3. 1. International policies on inclusion

In this section international trends in policy development and recommendations are discussed. This will be followed by a description of policy development in South Africa.

Many earlier international policy documents incorporate the basic idea of inclusion. These are: The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), The Jomtien World Declaration on Education For All (EFA) (1990), The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), and The Salamanca Statement and framework for action adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) sees education as a basic right for all persons. It outlines the rights of all children, including the right of a disabled child to have special care and the right to education and training. The basic principles of The Jomtien Declaration, in promoting 'Education For All' (1990), emphasises the inherent right of a child to a full cycle of primary education, which is child-centred, considers individual differences and recognises a wide diversity of needs. The Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993) states that general education authorities should be responsible for the education of persons with disabilities in integrated settings. It is further stated that education for persons with disabilities should form an integral part of national planning, curriculum development and school organisation. The number and quality of support services are listed as critical to the creation of equal opportunities in education for persons with disabilities. The Salamanca Statement (1994) reinforced the principles expressed in The Jomtien Declaration (1990) and Standard Rules (1993) which state that schools should accommodate all children regardless of the social, physical, intellectual, emotional, linguistic or other conditions that will lead to society becoming more inclusive. These will be explained in greater detail in Chapter Two.

1. 3. 2. Defining inclusion

The Salamanca Statement (1994) views inclusion as a moral issue of human rights and values. Inclusion is about morals, a goal, a value which society decides either to reject or to pursue, based on the face of that society. Many authors have different perspectives on inclusion. Booth and Ainscow (1998) view it as something unconditional where the programme fits the child rather than the child fitting the programme. The principle of inclusion denotes that no child is to be excluded from a mainstream school because of learning differences or language, cultural, racial, class, religious and behavioural differences. This study focuses on the investigation of the inclusion of LSEN and their disabilities. It is not only about deciding on learner placement, whether to be in a mainstream or a special school, but a wide spectrum of inclusive practices that may also include temporary placement in special education. The time spent there will be determined by the needs of learners for a more specialised individual programme of care and education, which may be temporary or permanent (O'haulon, 2003). According to Feuerstein (2005), Special Education is where preparation for mainstream takes place. Fisher, Sax, and Pumpian (1996) state that appropriate individual modifications and support services can facilitate meaningful inclusion of learners.
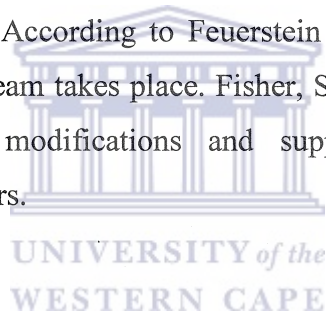
1. 3. 3. Inclusive Education

The idea of Inclusive Education is a system of education where the mainstream and special education should become integrated into one system to accommodate all learners. Learners may be provided with appropriate and challenging educational programmes which focus on their capabilities and needs including support and assistance to those in the regular classroom (Stainback and Stainback, 1990; Wade and Zone, 2000; Peters, 2002; O'haulon, 2003). The school staff should liaise with SBST members, whose function it is to assist schools to develop effective teaching and learning. The role and the functioning of the SBST will be explained in more detail in Chapter Two. The effectiveness of Inclusive Education will depend on good collaboration, a factor that is explained in the next section.

1. 3. 4. Defining collaboration

According to Welch (2000:73), collaboration is 'a dynamic process designed to achieve a shared goal'. Welch further states that collaboration in the context of

inclusion should provide opportunities for learners who are experiencing barriers to learning and development. Although authors may differ in their perspectives, there is a notion of working together. These are the common features of collaboration: mutual goals, parity, shared decision-making, shared responsibility for outcomes, sharing of resources including interdependence, problem-solving and communication skills which are highlighted by Snell and Janney (2000) and Welch (2000). Stanovich (1996: 39) in Engelbrecht, (2001) suggests that joint planning should be directed towards a common goal. This can be formal or informal. Collaboration in multidisciplinary teams allows multiple problems to be addressed through multiple level solutions. Intriligator (1994) suggests that a useful multidisciplinary framework should incorporate:

  i.   Collaboration, which emphasises working together and problem-solving.
  ii. Coordination, which focuses on management and organisation and
  iii. Cooperation, which draws on the relationship dynamics and is essential for people to talk to and understand each other.

Collaboration, coordination and cooperation do not necessarily have to include each other. For example, collaboration and coordination can exclude cooperation. These ideas will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

1. 3. 5. The policy development in South Africa

Policy development in South Africa has followed the international trends that were discussed in the previous section. This section will begin with the South African Constitution, and other documents that have influenced policy.

The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) on equality and discrimination states that: There should be no person who will be discriminated against irrespective of any differences and that everyone has the right to a basic education.

This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

According to the White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1995: 29) the rights have been outlined as follows:

> …it is essential to create awareness of the importance of Education Support Services in an Education and Training system which is committed to equal access, non-discrimination, and redress, and which needs to target those sections of the learning population which have been most neglected or are most vulnerable…more effective infusion of Education Support Services concerns within the mainstream, will by prevention reduce the risk of increasing the numbers of learners at risk.

The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy for South Africa (1997), states that people with disabilities were marginalised and also denied the right to education and employment. It emphasises the need for including persons with disabilities in the workplace, the social environment, the political sphere and in sports arenas. People with disabilities are seen as full members of society. The Ministry supports this direction and sees the establishment of Inclusive Education and training as a cornerstone of an integrated and caring society and an education and training system for the 21st century (DoE, 1997). This is necessary because the principles of non-discrimination and an equal right to education for all learners are enshrined in the South African School Act (1996).

The reality is that in South Africa, support is needed to help teachers as well as learners, who experience barriers to learning, development and participation. According to (EWP6, 2001), enabling mechanisms need to be developed to ensure that the education system, including the curriculum, is continuously transformed to address the needs of all learners. This requires the provision of additional support to learners and the system where needed.

ESS include all human and material resources that provide support to individual learners and to all aspects of the system. This is viewed as the key to reducing barriers to learning throughout the education system and is also an essential characteristic of Inclusive Education. In an integrated system, a range of services that work together to meet the needs of all learners and other aspects of the education system should be developed and form an integral part of the education system as a whole. As recommended by the EWP6, a 'three-tier' level of support services is envisaged that will collaboratively reduce barriers to learning. The 'three-tier' support comprises:

School Based Teacher Support – this consists of staff members who will identify and address barriers to learning through collective problem-solving.

District Support Teams – that incorporate all relevant support providers to School Based Support Teams and also assess and facilitate the utilisation of community resources in addressing local needs.

Provincial and National Departments – that should develop competencies to understand and act upon the challenges of addressing the barriers to learning and participation for the purpose of promoting effective teaching and learning. All the teams work hand in hand to reduce barriers to learning (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001).

1. 4. Methodology

1. 4. 1. Research aims

The main aim of the study is to investigate the collaboration between the District Based Support Team (DBST), a School Based Support Team (SBST) and SGB (parents) in providing support and assistance for learners experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation.

The following issues were investigated:

- The collaboration between DBST, the SBST and parents on the SGB at one school, focusing on how they work together to support and assist learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation in that school.

- The coordination between the above bodies and how they communicate with each other to support learners experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation.

1. 4. 2. Research approach

Since the concern of the study is to understand the phenomenon of interest from the participants' perspective, a qualitative approach will dominate the study. As the researcher, I was the primary instrument for the collection of data and analysis. As a non-participant observer, I observed the interaction in its natural setting. As a qualitative researcher, I am concerned with the process, the product, and to observe how these bodies interact and collaborate according to certain criteria. The qualitative study should be highly descriptive (Merriam, 1998).

A literature review on inclusion is explored; of both published and unpublished documents (reports, records and annual reports). The literature review illustrates what

has been done in the area of research and demonstrates how these bodies have performed in other countries.

1. 4. 3. Research design

1. 4. 3. 1. Subjects

Since the study involves members of DBST, SBST and the parents from SGB as part of the community, a selected sample was interviewed.

1. 4. 3. 2. Procedure

Permission from the WCED Director of Research, the Director of EMDC Metropole East and the principal of the school was requested by means of telephone calls, faxes and e-mails. Visits were arranged to view the locations of the targeted areas. During the data collection, I went to the above places to distribute and explain the questionnaires and to gather information from the above bodies in order to understand how they collaborate as well as to understand the processes and methods of identifying and addressing the barriers to learning, development and participation.

1. 4. 4. Data collection methods

Documentary analysis of archival and scholarly material relating to learning and educational support was explored. Standard and official sources, journal entries, annual reports, minutes of meetings and other documents and records were recorded. Documentary sources include letters, contemporary writing, computerised records and other papers. As a non-participant observer, I attended the workshop organised by the EMDC Metropole East. The topic dealt with the challenge of teaching reading to struggling learners. The workshop was attended by Learning Support Educators (LSEs) and some DBST members. I recorded the discussions on the procedures and the decision-making process.

1. 4. 4. 1. The instruments

Questionnaires that I compiled as a researcher were distributed to the DBST, SBST and SGB (refer to appendix VI, VIII, X & XI). The questionnaires contained closed and open-ended questions, which sought to gauge information on opinions, feelings, knowledge and skills application. Questions were both generic and specific. A follow-

up interview was held with members of the SBST. A telephone interview was conducted with members of DBST.

1.4.5. Data analysis methodology

The above sources rest on a series of human decisions that are taken during the meetings of the above bodies. Closed and open-ended questionnaires, that relate to several factors highlighted in the study, were designed by the researcher to ascertain how these bodies collaborate in order to assist LSEN. Therefore, this approach formed a crucial part of the study when analysing the actions of these bodies. The recurring patterns or repeated regularities in the participants' responses are noted and grouped into themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

1. 5. Chapter outline of the study

This study is organised into five chapters as follows:

Chapter One: This chapter provides an introduction, the rationale and an overview of the study.

Chapter Two: This chapter is a review of the literature on inclusion, particularly on inclusive schools and collaboration between the SBST, DBST and parents. Various research studies are cited.

Chapter Three: This chapter presents the research methodology that underpins the research. It includes the research design and methods for conducting the research, as well as ethical concerns.

Chapter Four: This chapter presents empirical data obtained from the participants and also deals with the analysis of the findings and the interpretation of the data from the study.

Chapter Five: This chapter provides a summary and discussion of the research results based on information gathered during the study. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations on how to improve collaboration are made based on the research findings.

1. 6. Summary

This chapter deals with the introduction to the area of Inclusive Education and provides an explanation of the motivation to do this study. The aim of the research is also explained and the research methodology used in this study and an overview of the study is provided. The next chapter presents a review of the literature on inclusion.

CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK / LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will give a definition of Inclusive Education, followed by a discussion of inclusive schools as well as the collaboration between the components of the system. I will then survey international policy development on Inclusive Education and trends, and the discussion of the current South African policy developments. I will also review other research studies conducted in similar contexts.

2. 2. Theoretical framework / Literature review on inclusion

2. 2 .1. Defining Inclusive Education

The basic principle of Inclusive Education is that no child is to be excluded from a mainstream school because of learning differences or language, cultural, racial, class, religious and behavioural differences. The aim of Inclusive Education is to restructure schools in response to the needs of all learners (UNESCO, 1994). According to UNESCO (1994) inclusion is a moral issue of human rights and values. UNESCO (2003: 12) further states that inclusion is seen as "a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education". Inclusion is about creating schools in which all learners, regardless of their characteristics, disadvantages or difficulties, can learn. Such schools celebrate differences between learners and do not see them as problems. Karagiannis, Stainback and Stainback (1996); Thomson *et al,* (2003) and Ainscow (2001) indicate that effective inclusive practices in education require a paradigm shift to accompany reform in policy and practice so that the rights of children are respected, regardless of the individual's characteristics. In addition, UNESCO (2003) indicates that Inclusive Education depends on how an education system can be transformed in order to respond to the diversity of learners. Inclusive Education is a part of the creation of an inclusive society (Swart and Pettipher, 2001; Karagiannis *et al*, 1996); and is in the process of increasing participation (Booth, 1996). O'haulon (2003) speaks about participation in all dynamic aspects of social and educational life and ending the segregation of learners with disabilities from their non-disabled peers (Karagiannis *et al*, 1996). Swart and Pettipher (2001: 30) state that inclusion "embraces the

democratic values of liberty, equality and human rights and recognises and accommodates diversity by respecting the rights of all members of the community".

Fisher, Sax and Pumpian (1996) emphasise that Inclusive Education enhances the objectives of Individualised Educational Development Programmes (IEDPs) which include interactive social skills development, skills generalisation, or the transfer of learning to new environments and post-school integration into real jobs and homes in the community.

Karagiannis *et al* (1996: 210) emphasise inclusion as "not, nor should it become, a convenient way to justify budgetary cuts that may jeopardise the provision of essential services". These authors further state that genuine inclusion does not mean dumping learners with disabilities into general education classes without support for teachers or students. Therefore the primary goal of inclusion in schools is not to save money, but to adequately serve all learners.

In Inclusive Education learners who have been excluded and segregated from the mainstream, enter into general education classrooms and are taught together. Organisational structures are required to change and meet the diversity of the needs of different groups of learners. Inclusion also focuses on changing the school environment to accommodate all children. According to Ferguson (2000) inclusion is viewed as more than a difference model for special education delivery, but a new paradigm for thinking and acting with regard to the education of LSEN. Moreover, inclusion implies the existence of only one unified educational system that encompasses all members equitably.

2. 2. 2. Defining an inclusive school

According to The Salamanca Statement (1994), an inclusive school is one which recognises and responds to the diverse needs of learners by accommodating different styles and rates of learning to ensure quality education for all. It is the school that has appropriate curricula, organisational arrangements, teaching strategies, and resources and partnerships with the communities. All learners are taught in the regular education classes and are provided with appropriate and challenging educational programmes which focus on the learner's capabilities and needs including support and assistance.

It is the school where everyone belongs and is accepted by other children of the same age and where the entire school community is able to meet their educational needs. The curriculum should be accessible in order to meet the needs of any learner (Stainback and Stainback, 1990; Wade & Zone, 2000; Swart and Pettipher, 2001; Frederickson and Cline, 2002; Peters, 2002; O'haulon, 2003). An inclusive school is where in practice, everyone is included irrespective of disability, talent, socio-economic background, or cultural origin as in supportive mainstream schools and classrooms where the needs of learners are met (Karagiannis et al, 1996). Ware (2000: 46, cited in O'haulon, 2003) defines the inclusive school as the school that has a culture that is "the hidden curriculum of a fundamental value system, rituals and routines, initiations and acceptance that forms the fabrics of daily life (in school)".

In an inclusive school, diversity is valued, respected and encouraged in the classrooms. Instructional practices based on strategies are effective for all learners: cooperative learning structures, active and experienced instruction, an integrated language and arts curriculum and a performance-based portfolio assessment. These are regarded as innovative and interactive formats (Fisher et al, 1996). The creation of a portfolio assessment is recommended, and is used to understand and allow for an individual measurement of the development of each learner's personal performance and growth.

Clark, Dyson, Millward & Robson (1999) view inclusive schools as not simply committed to inclusion, but also in terms of internal structures and practices which turn the inclusive schools from a principled ideal into an attainable reality.

Stainback and Stainback (1990) state that inclusive schools do not just focus on assisting any particular category of learners; for example, how a child with a physical disability fits into the mainstream, but focus on how to operate supportive classrooms and schools that include and meet the needs of everyone. The success of an inclusive school is considered when all learners are provided with appropriate educational opportunities and support. Special educators are needed in full inclusion in order to work with regular educators in teaching and facilitating challenging, supportive and appropriate educational programmes. The general and special educators and resources

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should come together in a unified and consistent effort to ensure access to the curriculum (Karagiannis *et al*, 1996).

Karagiannis *et al* (1996) suggest three interdependent practical components in an inclusive school: they are:

(i)   Networking,

(ii)   The organisational component, which involves the coordination of different teams and individuals, and

(iii)   Formal and informal connections that support each other.

The 'three-tier' system of support and networking is seen to be successful: Firstly: SBSTs and DBSTs are in partnership with community agencies (Karagiannis *et al*, 1996). The three teams can function together to empower staff and learners in a mutually supportive way.

Secondly, they refer to collaborative consultation and teaming. This is the procedural component where individuals with various kinds of expertise collaborate together to plan and also implement programmes for a diverse range of learning needs in an inclusive setting.

Thirdly, they recommend cooperative learning, which is instructional in nature. It creates a classroom-learning atmosphere in which LSEN can achieve their potential. For example: heterogeneous grouping, peer tutoring in various forms, and learning groups for instructional and recreational activities, are also components of cooperative learning.

Sapon-Shevin (1992: 19) states that an inclusive school is "where all learners are acknowledged, valued and respected. It involves attending to what is taught as well as to how it is delivered".

2. 2. 2. 1. The benefits of the inclusive school

In this section the benefits of the inclusive school for LSEN, teachers and society will be discussed.

Benefits to the learners

Stainback & Stainback (1990); Karagiannis *et al* (1996) indicate that research shows that LSEN learn better in mainstream than in segregated settings when appropriate educational experiences and support are provided. When learners are segregated, they tend to have low self-confidence, lack of motivation and lack of positive expectations for achievement. A feeling of inferiority is generated by separateness. To include all learners in the regular classroom is considered to be "the fair, ethical and equitable thing to do" (Stainback & Stainback, 1990: 6). Inclusion works for all learners' needs in terms of "mutually held positive attitudes, a gain in academic and social skills and preparation for living in the community" (Karagiannis *et al*, 1996: 4), and children learn academic skills through sustained interaction with their peers. The more time LSEN spend in the inclusive setting, the better they do educationally, socially and occupationally. Inclusive schools provide LSEN the opportunity to acquire skills for the workplace and the community. LSEN can learn how to function and interact with their peers in real world situations. Conversely all the members of the school community can learn how to function and interact with them. The evidence indicates that the learners benefit academically.

Benefits to society

The social value of equality is one of the most important reasons for inclusive schooling (Stainback and Stainback, 1990). Learners learn that despite differences, all people have equal rights. Inclusion reinforces the practice of the idea that differences are accepted and respected in schools that promote wider social acceptance, peace and cooperation. In inclusive schools, equality is respected and promoted as a value in society, with the visible results of social peace and cooperation.

Karagiannis *et al* (1996) point out that inclusion is one of the fundamental principles on which to base transformation because today's societies are becoming multicultural (LSEN). LSEN who learn at inclusive schools are able to socialise with other students who learn to be accepting of individuals who are different, in an increasingly diverse society. A fair and egalitarian society which affords its members equal worth and equal rights, can successfully be achieved at inclusive schools in order to give LSEN the opportunities and skills needed to participate in an emerging society.

Benefits to schools

Mackenzie (2003) suggests that to develop inclusive schools, there should be effective use of learning support. Schools should provide opportunities to learning support teachers to develop the necessary skills of collaboration and understanding to enable them to provide effective support to learners. It is best to equip teachers with the appropriate methods to deal with LSEN. Wade and Moore (1992) recommend having a whole school policy that accommodates the needs of a minority of pupils. This requires that classroom practices and teaching styles should be modified and the attitudes of some staff should be considered in the inclusion of LSEN in the regular classroom. Teachers should have some in-service training in order to enhance appropriate teaching skills. Idol (1997) indicates that to offer effective inclusive school programmes, teams of professionals and parents should collaborate in order to create programmes that can be supported by all those involved.

Wade and Moore (1992) indicate that if the learning programme can be established, it becomes crucial that assessment can come from a variety of sources, not only from class teachers but also from the learners, their parents and even from peers. School staff should modify and adapt teaching skills and make the curriculum accessible to meet the needs of individuals. The methodology used should stem from the expertise of the staff and be based on the needs of the individual.

The teacher support offered by the team, if properly organised, ensures that staff work from a position of knowledge and confidence and perhaps most importantly, from a positive attitude. Idol (1997) states that inclusivity and collaboration are necessary to offer education programmes that are available to all learners and that provide appropriate adjustments and modifications for LSEN.

2. 3. History of the development of Inclusive Education

2. 3. 1. International policies on inclusion

This section will discuss the international trends in inclusion by discussing the Influential Documents which are: The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), The Jomtien World Declaration on Education For All (1990), The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for persons with Disabilities (1993), and The

Salamanca Statement and Framework for action adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994).

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

The Convention on the Rights of the Child provide for education as a basic right for all persons. Article 2 outlines the rights of all children who should not be discriminated against and it reads thus:

> State Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status…ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members (UN, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989).

Article 9 outlines the right of the child to live within his/her family and the right of a disabled child to have special care. Article 23 also outlines the right of the child to education and training to help him achieve the greatest degree of self-reliance and social integration possible.

- The World Declaration on Education For All (1990)

The basic principles of The Jomtien Declaration in promoting 'Education For All' emphasizes the inherent right of a child to a full cycle of primary education, and commitment to a child-centred pedagogy where individual differences are accepted as a challenge and not as a problem. It calls for the recognition of the wide diversity of needs and patterns of development among primary school children's individual needs and commitment to an integrated inter-sectoral and holistic approach.

- The Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for persons with Disabilities (1993)

Through this document, it is recognised that children with disabilities have faced enormous barriers to educational provision in the past, and that general educational authorities are responsible for the education of persons with disabilities in integrated settings. Education for persons with disabilities should form an integral part of national education planning, curriculum development and school organisation.

Rule 6 states that:

> States should recognise the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the education system.

The rules are also very clear on the need for adequate and appropriate support services. In Rule 4, a number of support services are listed as critical to the creation of equal opportunities in education for persons with disabilities.

- The Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education (1994)

The Salamanca Statement reinforced the principles expressed in the Jomtien Declaration and Standard Rules. The fundamental principle of the Salamanca is that schools should:

> ...accommodate all children regardless of their social, physical, intellectual, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups (UNESCO, 1994: 6).

This promotes Inclusive Education in order to achieve education for all. The objective of Inclusive Education is to transform schools into institutions in which everyone is included, differences are celebrated, where learning is supported and individual needs are adequately addressed. These factors will lead to society becoming more inclusive.

2. 3. 2 The South African situation

Overall the policy development in South Africa has followed international trends:

- The South African Constitution

Learners who experience barriers to learning and development are protected from discrimination in the constitution. The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) in Article 9 (3), (4) and (5) on equality and discrimination states that:

> (3) The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic, or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.
> (4) No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of subsection (3).

(5) Discrimination on one or more of the grounds listed in subsection (3) is unfair unless it is established that the discrimination is fair.

Under the rule of education the new Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) in Article 29 (1) reads thus:

Everyone has the right-

(a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and

(b) to further education which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

(c) Section 9 (2) reads thus:

> Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categorises of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, may be taken.

Here the constitution makes provision for the right to equal education opportunities for all learners and the provision of basic education. This means that all learners, irrespective of their differences, have a right to the provision of equal education.

- White Paper on Education and Training 1995 (WPET)

According to the South African government WPET (1995), the rights have been outlined as follows:

> …it is essential to create awareness of the importance of Education Support Services in an Education and Training system which is committed to equal access, non-discrimination, and redress, and which needs to target those sections of the learning population which have been most neglected or are most vulnerable...more effective infusion of Education Support Services concerns within the mainstream, will by prevention reduce the risk of increasing the numbers of learners at risk (1995: 29).

This document also acknowledges that there were inequalities in the provision of support services, where some provinces had better resourced departments, and others had no support services for black schools. It is stated that:

> The Ministry of Education intends to explore a holistic and integrated approach to ESS in collaboration with Provincial Ministries of Education and in consultation with the Ministries of Health, Welfare and Population Development and Labour. The inclusive integrated approach recognises that issues of health, social, psychological, academic and vocational development and support services for LSEN in mainstream schools are all inter-related (DoE, 1995: 26).

- The South African Schools Act (1996)

The Act indicates that there will be no learner who will be denied admission to an ordinary school. This is an assertion of the right of equal access to basic and quality education for all learners without any discrimination. This is the first step towards a single Inclusive Education system. In section 5 (1), the Act reads thus: "A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way". Section 12 (4) reads: "The member of the executive council must, where reasonably practicable, provide education for learners with special education needs at ordinary schools and provide relevant educational support services for such learners". The principles of non-discrimination and equal right to education of all learners are endowed in this Act.

- The White Paper on Integrated National Disability Strategy for South Africa (1997)

The document states that people with disabilities were marginalised and also denied rights to education and employment. It emphasises the need for including persons with disabilities in the workplace, social environment, political sphere and sports arenas. People with disability are also seen as full members of society.

- The National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) (1997)

These two bodies were appointed by the Minister of Education to do a situation and needs analysis and to make recommendations on special needs and support services in South Africa so that the historically fragmented members of society and the issue of scarce special education and support could be addressed. The two committees combined to form one commission. This commission indicates that enabling mechanisms need to be developed to ensure that the system and other curriculum are continuously transformed to address the needs of all learners. Furthermore, it requires the provision of additional support to learners and the system where needed.

According to the NCSNET/NCESS (1997), ESS include all human and other resources that provide support to individual learners and to all aspects of the system,

and are viewed as the key to reducing barriers to learning across the entire education spectrum and are also the key characteristics of Inclusive Education. In an integrated system, a range of services that work together to meet the needs of all learners and other aspects of the education system should be developed. These services should form an integral part of the education system as a whole. NCSNET/NCESS (1997) indicate that support members of the learning community can provide support to LSEN. The support can also be from other community resources.

- The Education White Paper 6 on Special Education Needs: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (EWP6, 2001)

EWP6 recommends a 'three-tier' support system, where an Institutional Based Support Team, District Based Support Teams, Provincial and National Departments work collaboratively to reduce barriers to learning. The EWP6 recommends the establishment of School Based Teachers Support Teams which involve: the Principal, Deputy Principal, SGB representatives, learning support teachers, parents, class/ learning area teacher and the learner where appropriate. The DBST comprises specialists and other support personnel who can be expected to gain access to schools and indirectly support learners through training, support the educators within the SBST and support individual learners where necessary (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001).

Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001), identifies different learning needs that can arise due to barriers within the learner or within the education and training system. The barriers identified in EWP6 are as follows: Intrinsic, interactional and extrinsic.

Intrinsic-	physical /sensory and developmental impairments, Mental /neurological impairments
Interactional-	differences in intellectual ability Socio-economic deprivation Psychosocial disturbances
Extrinsic-	Inflexible curriculum Inaccessible and unsafe environments Inadequate support services Non-recognition and non-involvement of parents Inadequately trained educators and education managers Different life experiences Negative attitudes to differences Language of learning and teaching Inadequate policies and legislation Adapted from (Amod, 2003: 34).

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School Based Support Team: As outlined in EWP6 (2001), The SBST will coordinate ESS with the learners. The services support the process of learning and teaching by identifying and addressing learner, educator and school needs. Where appropriate, local community, DBST and higher education institutions can strengthen these teams.

According to Creese, Norwich & Daniels (2000: 308), The School Based Support Team is "an organised system of peer support that consists of a small group of teachers who take referrals from individual teachers on a voluntary basis". In addition, SBST are designed to give support and assistance to individual teachers. Chalfant and Pysh (1989: 50) cited in Amod (2003) define SBST as "a school-based problem solving unit used to assist teachers in generating intervention strategies to help them with children whom they find difficult to teach or manage".

SBST supports learners indirectly by supporting teachers (Creese *et al*, 2000; Amod, 2003). Amod (2003: 145) indicates that teachers engage in a "positive, productive, collaborative problem-solving process to help learners indirectly". Amod further states that the focus is on teacher development and supporting and empowering teachers by increasing their instructional skills in order to enable them to better serve their learners. The author indicates that the concept of SBST is based on the belief that regular classroom teachers can assist LSEN. She indicates that there is a belief that teachers have talents and considerable knowledge among themselves and many problems can be resolved when they are working together rather than alone. The SBST also provide teachers with a chance to discuss and reflect on their work and also obtain support from other members.

Jordan (1994) says that the purpose of SBST is to provide a pool of ideas and resources to any member of the teaching staff. Forlin (2001) also indicates that the main reason for supporting teachers is to ensure the provision of effective support for LSEN. According to her, there will always be a need for specialist support staff trained in educating LSEN; she therefore believes that the role of the support teacher is to assist LSEN who are included in the regular classroom.

Wade and Moore (1992) consider the following as the most important principles of educational development for SBSTs, which are intended to result in positive outcomes for all learners including LSEN. They are:

> a recognition of individuality, with areas of skills as well as learning difficulties taken into consideration; the recognition of the value of parental contribution to children's learning; the commitment of the school staff to advance children's learning by working systematically as a team, giving appropriate support within classrooms through the implementation of consistent teaching programmes (Wade and Moore, 1992: 100).

District Based Support Teams: As the name implies, DBST is the team which comprises different disciplines at district level and which work together within the team and with the neighbouring schools. As outlined in Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education, DoE (2003: 4), DBST is "an integrated professional support service provided at district level by support providers employed by the Department of Education who draw on the expertise from education institutions and various community resources in their area". The Education White Paper 6 (2001: 29) declares that the primary function of the DBST is to:

> Evaluate programmes, diagnose their effectiveness and suggest modification. Through supporting teaching, learning and management, they will build the capacity of schools to recognise and address severe learning difficulties and to accommodate a range of learning needs...the team will also provide support in professional development in curriculum and assessment to SBST.

Furthermore, DBST should assist educational institutions at various levels in identifying and addressing barriers to learning and also to promote effective teaching and learning in local institutions (DoE, 2003).

- *DBSTs in the Western Cape Province*

Western Cape Education Department consists of seven Districts: Four Metropole Education Management Development Centres and three rural centres. The aim of each EMDC is to bring management and development support closer to WCED schools. EMDCs were established in 2001 after several years of policy research and development by WCED task teams, NGOs and donor agencies. Each EMDC consists of Multi Functional Teams of specialists and offers the following services to schools:

- curriculum development and support
- Specialise Learner and Educator Support
- Institutional Management and governance support and

- Administrative services

Provincial and National Departments: The kind of support that schools receive from the departments at provincial and national level, is to develop competencies to understand and act upon the challenges of addressing the barriers to learning and participation for the purpose of promoting effective teaching and learning. All the departments work together to reduce barriers to learning (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001). Furthermore, Lomofsky (2004) states that this will strengthen district education support services.

2. 4. Defining collaboration

The authors that follow have different views about the definition of collaboration, and they all reflect the notion of working together. Welch (2000) indicates that the term collaboration is derived from Latin 'collabre', meaning colabor / work together. Graden and Bauer (1992: 88) describe collaboration as "...a fundamental way of working together in a true relationship". Collaboration is a process designed to achieve a shared goal (Welch, 2000; Ericedrs, 2000). According to Welch (2000), within an inclusion context, collaboration is aimed at providing opportunities for LSEN to become meaningful members of the community. Welch views collaboration as basically a key to the inclusion of LSEN. Inclusion will be effective when educators, specialists, parents, administrators and learners bring together their resources and efforts. This shows that inclusion of LSEN can be successful if all role players work together. Everyone involved in collaboration has to understand the dynamic features and processes of collaboration. For collaboration to be successful, other professionals and parents should be informed about the education system. In addition, Ericedrs (2000) further states that the process of collaboration includes a mutual benefit, or a desired outcome. This author highlights: trust, respect, openness, active listening, clear communication and risk taking as fundamental requirements for collaboration. Collaborators should share a common vision and agree on a common mission in order for collaboration to happen.

Graden and Bauer (1992) indicate that there can be true collaboration if there is indirect service delivery. That is, all collaborators should develop strategies to help learners succeed and work together towards a goal of improving outcomes for the

learners. It is the class teacher who then provides the direct support. There should also be a meaningful relationship between individuals. The authors highlight the fact that collaboration is not a function of one's role or title but a function of one's interpersonal behaviours.

There should also be a voluntary relationship and a right to reject. This means that collaboration should be voluntary and members engaging in collaboration have the right to reject and accept the general rules.

Teacher involvement is essential. True collaboration involves the active participation of every member. The class teachers are the ones who describe the classroom environment and who are also able to select adaptations that can fit into the natural environment of the classroom. Graden and Bauer (1992) suggest that educators can be actively involved if they are trained in problem-solving.

Graden and Bauer (1992: 90) identify the two goals of collaboration as: "to remediate the current concern related to the student's performance of functioning"…and "to prevent future problems for that student and others, and not only to help the student who is the target of the current concern". The emphasis is that accommodations and alterations lead to prevention so that the future functioning of a learner may be improved. The second goal leads to the improvement of educational outcomes for all learners. There should also be confidentiality and trust. A trusting, positive relationship underlies successful collaboration. There should be a high level of trust during discussions and when sharing ideas. The participants should not be judgemental or blame others.

According to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002), collaboration within the ESS refers to how different government departments, disciplines, professions and sectors work together. The sectors will work at district and local school level. The collaboration focuses on professional areas such as psychology, counselling, school heath, social work as well as the educational sector: parents and teachers, learners/youth and community resources. These are all regarded as necessary partners in intersectoral collaboration. In addition, Lazarus, Moola and Reddy (2004: 21) use the term 'professional bio-psychosocial support providers', which refers to the group

of "psychologists, social workers, orthodox health workers such as doctors and nurses, traditional or indigenous healers, and various therapists such as physio-, occupational-, and speech therapists who are employed inside and outside of the formal district education system". For the purpose of the study, the focus is mainly on district and local school level.

True collaboration is demonstrated if all members of the team feel that their contributions are valued and the goal is clear, where they share decision-making and where they sense and feel respected. Lee (2000) states that collaboration is the method used by the professionals to accomplish shared goals.

Jordan (1994) views collaboration as a means for all the members involved to learn from each other through consultation. These in-school, in-service procedures have been prominent in teacher training.

Collaborative consultancy

The two primary goals of a consultation model in education were adopted and cited from (Gutkin & Curtyhs, 1982 in West & Idol, 1990). They are:

> "a- to improve remedial problem-solving services for presenting problems with or without consultees and
> b- Increase consultees' skills so that they can prevent or respond more effectively to similar problems in future".

In collaborative consultancy, there are roles and responsibilities for the consultant and the consultee, which focus on parity and equality as well as cooperative problem-solving. A collaboration model has different role responsibilities when compared to other models of consultation such as 'expert, advocacy, mental health or medical models'.

Idol *et al* (1990) and Amod (2003), indicate that the theory of consultation suggests the following expertise that members of the group should possess for effective use of the collaborative consultation process:

(a) An appropriate underlying knowledge base considered to be the scientific base of consultation. This includes technical aspects, techniques for assessment, instructional

intervention, curricular and materials modifications, and classroom student management skills.

(b) Interpersonal, communicative, interactive and problem-solving skills. Collaborators can use these behaviours to enhance and facilitate the group problem-solving process. This also consists of group process skills, which is 'the artful base of consultation' (Idol *et al,* 1990: 24).

(d) Interpersonal attitudes which reflect each collaborator's personal values, attitudes, beliefs, experiences and related behaviours. These are all unique to every individual as they greatly impact on the group.

Amod (2003) suggests the development of these areas of expertise. Self-assessment needs analysis can be used to help to facilitate the group collaborative process.

Collaborative consultancy relies on the shared expertise of different members, who work together and acquire skills from each other.

2. 4. 1. Characteristics of collaboration

Welch (2000) adapted Philips and McCullough characteristics of collaboration. They are: common goals, interdependence and parity, interactive exchange of resources, decision-making and problem-solving skills.

The common features of collaboration mentioned by different authors are: common goals, parity, shared decision-making, shared responsibility for outcomes, sharing of resources including interdependence, problem-solving and communication skills which are highlighted by Friend and Cook (1996); Snell and Janney (2000) and Welch (2000).

- *Common goals*

If this feature is followed, professionals will work together to provide support and resources. In sharing common goals, all the members involved in collaboration work together to achieve a common objective. For example, LSEN are seen to become

meaningful members of their community. LSEN should not be included for the sake of inclusion only.

- *Interdependence and parity of members involved*

This means that all members involved in collaboration should share the weight and responsibility equally in order to meet a mutually defined goal. They should all work hard during the collaboration process and contribute fully and meaningfully. Parity does not mean that individuals' knowledge, skills and experience are regarded as equal. Welch (2000) indicates that on the contrary, the diversity of a group can generate different options, perspectives and resources that can be used to meet a goal.

- *Sharing of Resources*

Collaboration may be a process of sharing and 'extending the circle of ideas and contacts' (Fullen, 1993: 87 in Welch, 2000). Materials, personnel and funding can be shared, as well as risk, control, and ideas, to meet a common goal. Resources include: information resources, human resources, financial resources, physical resources and technological resources. Therefore, in inclusion, educators are required to share the different resources available.
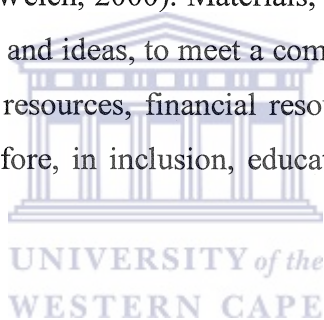
- *Decision-making skills*

Collaboration is also thought of as making decisions to reach a mutually defined goal. More often the goal is to solve a problem. Collaborative decision-making involves problem-solving and communication skills.

- *Problem-solving skills*

More often in collaborative decision-making, the goal is to resolve a problem. Graden and Bauer (1992: 91) describe problem-solving as the ..."systematic tool used to guide the process". Seven stages in problem-solving are identified, namely:

- *Problem identification* - factors that contribute to situations are reviewed. This is considered as the critical step in problem-solving (Graden and Bauer, 1992; Hobbs & Westling, 1998). It establishes a shared recognition that the problem exists. Graden and Bauer (1992) suggest that for problem-solving to be effective, its specific definition should be modifiable.

- *Identifying causes* - academically, this step can be taken in the form of identifying academic, social, or behavioural factors that can be used to develop a plausible hypothesis in regard to the problem.

- *Generating possible solutions* - strategies to achieve a goal are brainstormed in order to generate a variety of ideas from different areas of expertise.

- *Deciding on a plan of action* - the idea is selected from the list of possible solutions in order to develop an action plan for the implementation of the strategy.

- *Clarification of the strategy* - the basic aspect of the procedure with regard to who, what, when, and how should be understood in order for strategies to be effective (Graden & Bauer, 1992).

- *Implementing the solution* - the strategic plan will be followed.

- *Evaluating the outcomes* - there will be assessment of the outcomes from the actions taken.

Hobbs & Westling (1998) indicate that effective problem-solving requires commitment and hard work by all participants involved. Furthermore, the ability to identify and solve problems is very important in successful collaboration and consultative relationships (Hobbs & Westling, 1998). Amod (2003) indicates that collaborative problem-solving can be applied to multidisciplinary teams, teaching teams and staff development and curriculum teams.

- *Communication skills*

Snell & Janney (2000) and Welch (2000) state that all participants should have effective interpersonal communication skills. This ensures that a message is sent and received clearly and that one's communication can be monitored.

Stanovich (1996: 39, in Engelbrecht and Green, 2001) suggests joint planning in collaboration because collaboration in multidisciplinary teams allows multiple problems to be addressed through multiple level solutions.

Intriligator (1994) highlights three aspects of working together, which are crucial to working on boundaries. Those aspects are: *collaboration, coordination and cooperation*. The author differentiates the aspects as follows: *Collaboration* emphasises working together and problem-solving with a common goal. *Coordination*

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focuses on management and organisation of activities including the systematic pulling together of different individuals and aspects of an activity. Finally, *cooperation* looks at the important relationship dynamics that are essentially about people talking to and understanding each other. Collaboration does not necessarily have to include both the other two aspects. Collaboration can work together with cooperation but excludes coordination, since coordination is focused on management and organisation. For example, collaboration and cooperation can work together for a short-term activity such as sponsoring a joint workshop or a conference. Working together across disciplines, professions and sectors addresses the current fragmentation of services and facilitates the implementation of coordinated, system-wide change.

2. 4. 2. Benefits of collaboration

According to Ericedrs (2000) and Robinson *et al* (2002) collaboration reduces the competition for diminishing resources, eliminates the duplication of services and provides a diversified approach to solving and providing the services needed by learners. In addition, multiple problems are addressed through different solutions; collaboration also recognises the different connections of the person and environment in which people interact (Robinson *et al*, 2002). Moreover, collaborators can share ideas and mentor each other which results in problem-solving capabilities beyond one's own discipline. Hobbs & Westling (1998) state that when professionals address problems together, they identify more problems, causes and objectives as well as intervention plans than when they work alone. A comprehensive understanding of these issues leads to steps for prevention and promotion.

Collaborators gain increased visibility and viability by involvement in collaborative programmes. In addition, "Collaboration allows teachers to consult with each other and to provide psychological support…and when there is supportive school collaboration, teachers improve their skills with visible effects on student learning" (Karagiannis *et al*, 1996: 7). Lee (2000) indicates that through collaboration, learners' progress is better monitored, and their outcomes are evaluated.

Mostert (1996) and Robinson *et al* (2002) highlight that collaboration between the different sectors can enhance development since the development of the child is

understood fully when home, school and socio–cultural environments are linked together.

Collaboration strengthens relationships, decreases chances of misunderstanding among its members and improves trust. Contributors are valued and respected and also professional self-esteem is enhanced. Resources are pooled together in school and beyond to meet personal and social needs. The integration of diverse systems will be well coordinated and eliminates fragmentation (Robinson *et al*, 2002).

According to Amod (2003), in collaborative consultation, new ideas are generated which may sometimes not emerge if members work as individuals. Participants in collaborative consultation are able to accomplish more with insufficient resources through a progress of problem-solving and teamwork. The author states that the psychologist can best help a child indirectly as she works with the child's teacher and parents. She suggests that the psychologist, as a DBST member, has an important role to play in translating policy into practice.

2. 4. 3. Barriers to collaboration

Although collaboration can be effective, there might be some barriers opposing it. Barriers can be classified in terms of: resources, organisational issues, group dynamics and differing perspectives (Robinson *et al,* 2002).

Resources

Welch (2000) states that in collaboration, practical situations are encountered when trying to make inclusion possible. For example, lack of time for implementing collaboration, large caseloads for specialists, scheduling problems, the competition between policies and increased responsibilities and bureaucratic structures within the school. Robinson *et al* (2002) also highlight time, finances and human resources as crucial aspects, especially when the school is working alone, but these should be dealt with through a multidisciplinary approach. This is regarded as labour intensive and relies on more human resources. Planning and reflections need to be allocated enough time, which in most cases, is not managed effectively (Robinson *et al*, 2002). In addition to time, Creese *et al* (2000) mention availability of management as problematic.

Mostert (1996) also highlights the issue of finding time for meetings as a problem; and that coordinating schedules also hinder collaboration. The author states that meetings are scheduled at awkward times, often conducted in a hurried manner and that not all members are present.

Organisational issues

Robinson *et al* (2002) highlight the issues of planning and reflections as necessary to intersectoral[1] collaboration to ensure that they are developed and incorporated to become part of the culture of the organisation. In addition, Welch (2000) indicates that in most cases, the fundamental organisation of the school prevents professionals from working together. School schedules and the physical layout of buildings often perpetuate isolation of individuals and resources. This minimises direct communication between professionals and limits opportunities for them to interact and solve problems. Amod (2003) states that to successfully implement indirect service delivery, ongoing support, training and monitoring are required. However, the existing education system has new processes and outcomes.

Group dynamics

Issues around power are problematic, such as who is considered to be in control and concerns about territory. To reach consensus and promise is also a problem as there is a fear of loss of professional identity. Tensions can be experienced in 'interdependency and professional autonomy', as these have to change to more collaborative approaches. There can also be a lack of understanding roles, poor communication, and a reluctance to express opinions. Fear of each other, disrespect, misunderstanding and mistrust in the provision of services, can also create barriers.

Differing perspectives

This is regarded as the major barrier to collaboration, because of the lack of or differences in training among various disciplines. Professional behaviours and beliefs may culturally isolate professionals. Philosophical differences and lack of knowledge and skills in problem-solving frequently limit the teachers' ability to participate fully

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[1] In South African literature, the term refers to the working together of or partnerships developed between professionals and other role players both in and outside of schools and other education institutions (Lazurus *et al*, 2004).

in collaborative partnerships. Competition among differing perspectives of professionals may emerge. There is also a lack of willingness to change and a lack of commitment to something new. In most cases the effectiveness of intersectoral collaboration is not immediately visible or a measurable success (Robinson *et al,* 2002). Mostert (1996) indicates that professionals are trained to make decisions from their professional point of view, which leads to a threat to the mutual purpose of the collaboration. Hence reaching consensus is difficult.

Although the concept of inclusion believes in educating all children in their local neighbourhood schools (O'hanlon, 2003), Welch (2000) states that some teachers still think that LSEN can learn better in segregated education, rather than be part of mainstream classes. Some teachers do not feel that it is their role to teach LSEN whereas there are special education teachers whose training prepared them for the special treatment of LSEN. Parents and some teachers still believe that they do not support inclusion. Additionally, teachers still have attitudinal barriers, which lead to educators experiencing negative feelings and attitudes about working together or having fear of the unknown (Welch, 2000).

2. 4. 4. Overcoming barriers to collaboration

For collaboration to be effective, Mostert (1996) suggests that there should be proper planning between the collaborators, a collaborative focus as well as creativity with positive results for learners, families and education professionals. Furthermore, Dettmer, Dych & Thurston (1996) state that the individual differences of adults who consult and collaborate are rich ingredients for successful collaboration. Elders (1994) indicates that collaboration is needed to provide excellent support. These issues are crucial for collaboration if the diverse range of learners' needs are to be met, and also if people want to produce an inclusive society. Manley-Casimir and Hall (1994) indicate that the effective provision of school-linked services implies collaboration between a variety of agencies and traditions. Intriligator (1994) states that learners have multiple needs that cannot be addressed by any single provider.

The DBST, SBST and parents can collaborate, support and assist LSEN. Creese *et al* (2000) indicate that the teachers' collaboration outside of class should be well researched.

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2. 5. Research Studies on Collaborative Support Team Approaches

2. 5. 1. International Research Studies

Wade and Moore (1992) indicate that the teacher's support team in schools is necessary because it can liaise with external professionals, and the school-based approach is required to meet the diverse range of learning needs. The support team supports both the learners and the staff, who, in turn, consult and collaborate with all those concerned with the education of children. These are class teachers, head teachers, parents and other professionals. Consultation and collaboration among the staff members who are responsible for LSEN will enable appropriate teaching methods and skills to be formulated, discussed and practised (Wade and Moore, 1992). Therefore teaching skills should be enhanced for the benefit of all learners in the classroom and should not only target those with special education needs. The support teacher is one who is highly valued and respected by staff members as a teacher and as an individual for successful collaboration between the support teacher and the team. This high level of expertise is needed not only in teaching but even in interpersonal relationships. SBST can also contribute to a drop in the number of inappropriate referrals to outside services and other benefits (Creese *et al*, 2000).

The ensuing discussion will review studies done from a systematic perspective in which collaboration is emphasised. Thus the collaboration at three levels of the system will be described, keeping in mind that collaboration, cooperation and coordination need to happen at each level of the 'three-tier' system of support. Firstly, some international studies are described, followed by the problems of research in other African countries and finally the pilot projects that are being conducted in some provinces in South Africa.

These studies describe the collaboration between:
  (i)   Government Departments
  (ii)   District Support Services
  (iii)   The school-based-support team.

(i) Intersectoral collaboration between Government Departments

At the government level the research was conducted by Lazarus & Reddy (1995) on intersectoral collaboration within education. The study highlights most of the problems experienced by WHO and UNESCO. In their study, intersectoral collaboration refers to collaboration between the government departments. The authors identified problems and the possibilities of intersectoral work within the education sector and also identified the development of possible structures and practices that could foster positive collaboration within the education support services in the education arena. The problems identified were: lack of resources, organisational issues, confusion as to who controls the sectors, different perspectives or goals, lack of understanding and difficulty in achieving high standards.

(ii) A study of a District Based Support Team

The research conducted by Stoble, Gemmell, Moran and Randall (2002) highlights the challenges which face educational psychologists as part of the DBST as well as their services. The challenges are to adopt the ecological or systemic orientation to educational psychology, which emphasises the naturalistic practitioner - research, which is a model of working practice, and is called applied psychology. This supports the manner in which psychologists in the District Teams should change their approach.

(iii) School Based Support Team

A case study conducted by Creese *et al* (2000) evaluated the SBST in secondary schools. It also focused on supporting teachers for special educational needs and other needs, with the use of observations, interviews, questionnaires and documents in four schools. The study highlights that time is problematic in issues around the SBST meetings. The support and protection of senior management are also crucial in order for the SBST to function successfully. The issue of different external pressures which prevail at school is also considered a significant challenge. Such pressures are: curriculum management, assessment, financial management, inspection and Special Educational Needs from the previous years. It becomes difficult for the school to respond to these difficulties in response to major external demands to translate a good support particularly needed for SBST. The authors found there was a need for governors and senior managers to ensure the presence of teacher collaboration and

teacher support in school life. This can be achieved if a common understanding between the governors and senior managers is developed.

Creese *et al* (2000) suggest the following approaches to overcome the above barriers. They are structured as follows:

- Each centre of learning would have structures composed of teachers, community resources and specialist services. The support would therefore be community-based.
- A District Support Centre should provide training and support for teachers, but not generally for individual learners.
- Parents, teachers, learners (the key stakeholders), would be involved in management, curriculum planning, the development of support systems and in the teaching and learning process.

The above research study, although it was conducted at secondary school level, is a good example of a research study that has been conducted internationally.

2. 5. 2. Research Studies on inclusion in African countries

Some of the African countries are aware of the support offered to LSEN and are still investigating inclusion in schools.

The case studies of various countries reported in an EENET (2002) report, looked at the opportunities and challenges to learning in Inclusive Education and which is linked to school improvement in South Africa. It is assumed that a barrier free learning approach supports inclusion. An analysis of barriers that prevent learning was made according to the study of various groups of learners. The recommendations were that the whole culture, ethos and the structure of education has to change in order to be responsive to learner population. Here the challenge is to recognise and address the diverse needs of an entire learner population.

As recommended in South Africa, in order to overcome the barriers to learning, development and participation is to develop the DBST as a vehicle within the 'three-tier' education support system and should provide training and support to teachers but not specifically to individual learners (EENET, 2002).

Ojile (2000) also highlights the problems associated with developing African countries. Those problems are: poverty, a high illiteracy rate, corruption within the government, manipulation and lack of a reliable disability status. The educational projects for pupils with special educational needs in Botswana, Kenya, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, are conducted in some of the developing countries that have similar problems to South Africa. It was found that the projects have poor or non-existent records, and are not even evaluated. The author further states that the lack of written and scientific processing, appears to be a specific African characteristic of projects catering for LSEN in Africa. Hence African projects hardly play a role in the debate on the education of pupils with special educational needs in Africa, while the African context is barely taken into consideration when discussing this type of education. Based upon meetings with African colleagues, African literature and his own experiences, the author takes the position that no debate on the education of pupils with special educational needs in Africa can be held without having African characteristics in mind.

In other places in Africa, such as Zambia, Kapila (2000) indicates that the implementation of Inclusive Education is slow due to government's lack of resources for the provision of Inclusive Education. Mphohle (2000) also indicates that in a country like Lesotho, partnership among all stakeholders should be seen as the key point towards making Inclusive Education a reality. She suggests that all stakeholders should participate in policy making and implementation. She indicates that it is only if parents understand their rights and their children's rights that they can also be involved, participate and collaborate with organisations with similar interests. Policy-makers and professionals need to listen to parents and consider them partners as well (Mphohle, 2000).

A survey was conducted in Nigeria by Okeke (2000) who focused on the 'barrier factors in effective participation of the family and community groups in the education of the disabled Nigerians'. The results found that poverty related factors were the most prominent barriers which inhibited families and /or community participation in the education of exceptional learners in Nigeria. Though the government has started with Poverty Alleviation Programmes, the impact is yet to be felt by Nigerians.

Religious, social, educational and government related factors are also highlighted as barriers to effective participation in the education of Nigerians who have disabilities.

The study conducted by Mushoriwa (2001), aimed at exploring the attitudes of primary school teachers in Harare, Zimbabwe towards including blind children in regular classes. Questionnaires were distributed to two hundred females and two hundred males and follow up interviews were conducted. The results indicated that a blind child might be included in a regular school physically, but would remain socially and academically excluded due to the teachers' attitudes.

2. 5. 3. South African Research Studies

The South African study by Ebersohn (2000) highlights the poor parental involvement within the ESS and which is non-existent in other areas. The non-existence of special facilities resulted in problematic referrals of LSEN. The author indicates that educational psychologists have to make a paradigm shift from working on a one-to-one basis and waiting for a client, to becoming a model and moving out to reach schools in the community, empowering teachers and parents and developing human resources. She further states that educational psychologists are expected to possess expertise in collaborative problem-solving, consultation and school organisational development. Ebersohn (2000), when considering Inclusive Education as the ultimate acceptance of diversity, considers the teachers in the classroom as the key to the success of inclusion. In this study she distributed the questionnaire and also held informal discussions with some teachers. The study found that there is a lack of knowledge about learning disabilities hence teachers are eager to know more in order to provide effective learning in the classroom.

In a similar manner, a study was conducted in the Western Cape Province with the EMDCs (Robinson *et al*, 2002). The sample of ten schools from each EMDC with representation of all professions and sectors from each EMDC, was interviewed in groups. The interviews focused on the structural developments and dynamic issues in relation to the challenges of intersectoral (refer to Lazurus & Reddy, 1995) collaboration and management of change. The purpose was to identify matters that work and those that do not work and then develop proposals for working together in the future. The study found a lack of coordination and collaboration in the different

forms of support offered to schools. Lack of resources, poor communication and social issues were also found to be barriers to effective support. The support seemed to be coordinated in projects and for specific needs that needed to be addressed (Robinson *et al*, 2002).

SCOPE[2] and DANIDA[3] Pilot Project

SCOPE and DANIDA pilot projects were conceptualised within the multi-level 'three-tier' framework of educational support services. These were conducted in five provinces and the Western Cape was not included.

(i)   Coordinators of each project were established at national government level within the Directorate of LSEN that was later renamed the Inclusive Education Directorate in 2001.

(ii)   At the level of the Provincial Education Department, each province had a senior advisor who served in a coordinating role. They were also supported by the international consultants, and were responsible for developing the capacity of the District Support Team and for the flow of information from the pilot projects in the provinces to the National Department of Education.

(iii)   In schools, staff development focused on teacher training and the development of IBST. The District Team was also involved in school-based training.

DANIDA Pilot Project for Inclusive Education

The Department of Education together with the DANIDA Project (2002) made provision for a national quality evaluation of the project. The two bodies tried to "…provide a means for verifying the effectiveness of the implementation of Inclusive Education as well as the nature and quality of the outcomes that have been reached in the project…" (DANIDA report, 2002: 1). The project was designed to ensure that there is ongoing internal monitoring and evaluation through various mechanisms in

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[2]   The South African - Finnish Co-operation Programme in the Education Sector.

[3]   The Department of Education/ The International Development Assistance (DANIDA) Pilot Project for Inclusive Education

three South African provinces, namely; Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and North West.

The national quality evaluation research team, using systemic evaluation located within an action approach to research, found the following challenges to be common in three provinces. The common challenges were encountered both at school and district level for the implementation of EWP6 (DoE, 2001).

The key challenges lay in the delivery of education services; for example, the restructuring of the education departments in the provinces in shifting areas of responsibilities within the departments. The concept of Inclusive Education had to be incorporated into the department. The provinces that were mostly affected by these changes were the Eastern Cape and North West Provinces. There was a lack of integrated strategic planning across divisions within the education department. This meant that Inclusive Education was not linked to any other areas such as OBE curriculum, HIV/AIDS and school management initiatives.

The other challenges arose due to poor functioning of the schools. This includes the issue of lack of resources; the lack of culture of teaching and learning in schools as well as the overload experienced by teachers in relation to their work as well as policy changes which also affect them. This implies that the implementation of the policy on inclusion will be difficult. Some of the challenges are specific to the implementation of Inclusive Education, in the implementation of new policy and managing change in schools.

The research indicated that there were also practical challenges in training teachers for inclusion. The issues included debate around when the training took place, how the workshops were organised, and feelings of work overload as expressed by the teachers. Further training of teachers was needed to sustain what had been learned previously. There was also a need for certain skilled teachers to accommodate all learners, especially those with disabilities. There appeared to be some fear as to how to cope with the inclusion of learners with severe disabilities.

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A number of role players felt there was inadequate leadership and guidance to assist with the policy implementation process at district level, and that the support from senior managers is crucial for implementation of Education White Paper 6 to be effective. There was also a lack of effective functioning of the DBST for the provision of ongoing support to the pilot schools. The ongoing support for and the capacity building of structures of the SBST are critical. There is also a fear about the lack of sustainability of benefits from the project.

With regard to management and organisation, it was indicated that the schools differed on whether the SGBs understood the implications of the new policy. Some SGBs were aware, while others were not.

Parental involvement was achieved through a number of initiatives. Some schools made changes to their admission criteria in order to accommodate learners with disabilities. Some schools are in the process of making the schools safer and more accessible for learners with physical disabilities.

The responses from principals recommended more training for teachers and more resources, which included infrastructure such as toilets, learning materials, classroom space and electricity and more teachers (human resources). However, the evaluators' opinions indicated that the challenges could be used as a tool to implement Inclusive Education.

In this pilot project, the SBSTs were established in most schools, but needed ongoing support and training. Many of the challenges are based on providing support to schools to sustain what has been started throughout the project.

Lessons learned from the project
The focus of the SBST was on teachers to solve problems collectively among themselves and only bring in other support providers from the DBST when they could not find the solution to their problems. The study found that some of the SBST did not know how to link with the service providers when necessary.

In relation to the role of the SGB in building inclusive schools, it was found that there was a need to support SGBs, and particularly include parents and care givers who have not always received the full attention they deserve and need. Practical strategies to involve parents and care givers more fully in schools have to be developed and also have to ensure that parents understand all forms of communication between the school and parents.

The research study of Amod (2003) was part of the DANIDA Project in North West Province. The study investigated the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing Systemic Assessment and Intervention Approach (SAIA) as a strategy for indirect service delivery. It also evaluated the use of the Systemic Assessment and Intervention Approach model of psychoeducational assessment by SBST in schools.

The study shows support for the feasibility of its implementation and the SAIA value within the education setting. DBST viewed the SBST as the strategy at school level support to address the problem of over-referral and incorrect referrals. The DBST also viewed SAIA model as an effective means to indirect service delivery.

It was found that the referring teachers as well as SBST reported a change in teachers' interpersonal relationship skills, approach and attitudes to learners. The problem-solving skills improved and the referral of learners to special schools decreased. The support from the school principals was also found to be a factor in contributing to effectiveness of the SBST since most of the teams met during school hours. However, Amod stated that the previous research found that the lack of time to release teachers to meet during school hours was a barrier to effective SBST.

After the implementation of the SAIA model of psychoeducational assessment, it was found that learners improved academically and behaviourally. Learners' progress was shown in their spoken and written language. Parents reported positive attitudes to children's schoolwork after participating in the SAIA model of psychoeducational assessment.

SBSTs became confident about their roles and responses from teachers and principals were more positive in relation to the role that the SBST played in schools. Teachers were aware of inside and outside support and the role played by SBSTs was

appreciated in the context of the national policy framework. SBST provided support and advice to teachers and linked with the external support.

Although the principals reported on sufficient support, the external evaluators identified a real challenge for teachers in finding a suitable time to participate in the SBST or to seek help from its members. Insufficient time for consultation was also reported.

Overall, the SAIA model was found to be feasible for indirect service delivery and can be used by psychologists, since it provides a problem-solving tool for psychoeducational assessment which can be used in a school setting.

SCOPE Project (2003)

SCOPE attempted to examine the development and to pilot the implementation of the Inclusive Education policy in South Africa as outlined in the EWP6. The document explored field experiences in two provinces, namely: Mpumalanga and Northern Cape, through the SCOPE programme.

Initially, the personnel in SCOPE were trained using the Remedial Teaching Foundation (RFT) materials and it was structured as a cascade model, first training the District Management Team (DMT) or teachers as master trainers who then were responsible for report back and training at schools. This was not entirely successful as many schools received watered down training and the number of workshops at schools varied from 2 to 15 sessions.

Thereafter the face-to-face training was taken over by the District Team which also called upon the special schools as resource centres to offer training by their therapists. In addition, they used community projects and NGOs in their training and collaboration. In the research report there are many examples of good collaboration and cooperation between the role players and many challenges have also been highlighted.

The challenges that were experienced in those two provinces are as follows: The majority of the pilot schools experienced difficulties in practical delivery of the District Support, due to the distance between schools. In addition, many school

psychologists did not know the language of the communities in which the schools were situated and as a result, interpreters were required. However, it is argued that the school psychologists could make classroom observations, valid assessments and develop educational interventions with the teachers rather than one-to-one counselling. Even though the psychologists worked more systemically, there is a need for individual counselling but this is regarded as impossible if one is required to have an interpreter.

It was also difficult to translate theory into practice in the day-to-day life of the schools when teachers face other pressures. However, the intention was to follow the recommendation to develop inclusive practices, reflection, sharing and problem-solving approaches.

In some schools the parents were invited to discuss their children's progress, but such schools encountered problems as most of the parents work on farms until late. Some parents never met the teachers, but a few were interested in their children's work and progress. It was noted that it is not enough to ask parents to help their children; learners' programmes should be designed and then the parents should be notified and given workshops on how to help the learners at home. A couple of schools admitted that there is a slight communication gap between the parents and schools. However, there were some schools which indicated that there has been a change after involving parents in school activities - this resulted in the improvement of parents' involvement.

SCOPE did find some benefits through the implementation of Inclusive Education and how teaching skills were enhanced. The SCOPE programme imparted confidence by encouraging teachers and school communities to believe in their own strengths. It was also indicated that teachers and the officials benefited from the project in terms of professional development (Department of Education, 2003).

Many schools discovered that Outcome Based Education (OBE) and Inclusive Education are interrelated. OBE is considered a useful tool for implementing Inclusive Education. In other schools, Inclusive Education helped in training teachers to understand and implement it (Inclusive Education).

In most schools, the SGB supported the schools by raising funds for new infrastructure, gained access to community resources and created networks for other initiatives.

In many schools, it was discovered that the feeding schemes help to control absenteeism among learners. This is regarded as a form of support for orphans and other poverty stricken learners, and is an example of a collaborative effort between different departments, for example, health and education.

Both successes and challenges were experienced during the process. These will need to be considered as schools move further towards Inclusive Education. Building support structures at school level to provide ongoing support and the strengthening of SBST to ensure that other educators receive support, will be needed. In other schools SBST were not functioning at all. Similarly the pilot schools should play a major role in the provision of in-school support for the neighbouring schools that were not included in the pilot project. The collaboration between the pilot schools and education officials should be considered. With regard to the DBST, they already have skills to effectively support educators in the classrooms. DBST can also liaise with all stake-holders to take part in supporting all those in need of support.

In a similar manner, Engelbrecht, Oswald, Swart & Eloff (2003) conducted a study in two provinces in South Africa, namely the Western Cape and Gauteng. The study aimed to investigate the stressors experienced by teachers related to the specific situation of including learners with intellectual disabilities in South African mainstream classes. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods in this study, the results identified the stresses experienced by teachers. They are: administration, support, learners' behaviour, teachers' self-perceptions and the lack of involvement by parents of learners with intellectual disabilities.

Lazarus *et al* (2004), drawing from their experience in the development of policies and practices in the area of ESS and health promoting schools in South Africa, raise the issue of health in education within South Africa and also focus on the challenges relating to collaboration of key professionals and other role players in the context of support services. Their study highlights the key challenges that are related to human

material resources, organisational dynamics, personal and interpersonal dynamics, challenges relating to differing professional discourse and differing worldviews.

The collaborative strategy plays an important role as a preventative and developmental approach in educational support (Engelbrecht, 2004). When conducting the research on the changing role of psychologists, the author found that the challenge of a collaborative approach in South Africa is the redefinition of the roles of those working within an Inclusive Educational context and how to make use of the expertise that already exists. The author further explains that the challenge of a collaborative team approach would be effective if existing job roles and responsibilities change. Engelbrecht recommends that when teams work together there is an opportunity to capitalise on the diverse and specialised knowledge of educators and educational support professionals that have various training and experience. She suggests that patience, perseverance and time are important characteristics for successful collaboration in education.

2. 6. Conclusion

This chapter discusses principles, problems and debates regarding Inclusive Education, both internationally and in South Africa. The research topic is also concerned with the collaboration of the DBST, SBST and parents in an inclusive setting; thus collaboration, its benefits and barriers to inclusion are discussed. The next chapter explains the research design and methodology used in investigating collaboration of DBST, SBST and parents in a selected school in providing support and assistance to LSEN.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3. 1. Introduction

This chapter presents the aims of the study, the research design, subject selection criteria and a description of the subjects used in the study. The measures used in the research study are described. Methods of data collection and methods of analysis are also discussed. Issues of triangulation and ethics are discussed.

3. 2. Research problem

As mentioned in Chapter One, this study investigated the collaboration between the District Based Support Team, School Based Support Team and parents in a school in the Western Cape. The focus was on finding out how this collaboration provided support and assistance for learners experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation. Specifically the study sought to answer the question: How do District Based Support Teams, School Based Support Teams and parents collaborate to provide support and assistance for learners experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation?

3. 3. Research design

This study employed a qualitative research design. A research design is "literally the plan for how studies will be conducted" (Berg, 2001: 6). It involves making decisions about how the study will be carried out in order to answer the research question(s). Decisions are made about the study site, setting, data collection instruments and procedure, the sample and the data analysis framework. Questions about *who, where and how* are answered.

In this study, data was collected from questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, non-participatory observation and analysis of minutes of SBST meetings. The data is described and analysed in terms of the themes that emerged from questionnaires, interviews, observations at the literacy workshop and SBST minutes.

3. 4. Use of the qualitative approach

According to Newman (2003), in recent times the qualitative research approach has become very popular among social scientists, especially females. The researcher,

being a female chose to do qualitative study. In educational research, both the quantitative and qualitative approach can be used. Because of the nature of the study, the qualitative method of research will dominate. Mertens (2005) also states that the choice of a qualitative study depends on the researcher's view of the world, the nature of the research question and practical reasons associated with the nature of qualitative methods. Anderson & Ausenault (2001) state that unlike quantitative research which seeks to prove or disprove hypotheses in search for the truth, the qualitative research community seeks an understanding of phenomenon from multiple perspectives, within a real world context. These authors (2001: 119) define qualitative research as "a form of inquiry that explores phenomenon in the natural setting, and uses multi-methods to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to them". Fraenkel & Wallen (1993) and Babbie & Mouton (2001) support the above statement that qualitative research takes place in its natural setting. Therefore a qualitative approach was used in order for me to conduct this study in a natural setting. Context also plays a major role in a qualitative approach. While a quantitative approach is interested in analysing variables and relationships between them in isolation from the context, the qualitative researcher is interested in the context to describe and understand events as they occur in their concrete, natural context. Anderson and Arsenault (2001) further state that a fundamental assumption of the qualitative research paradigm is that a profound understanding of the world can be gained through conversation and observation in natural settings rather than through experimental manipulation under artificial conditions. The ideas came from the participants and I studied and placed them within the context of natural settings.

Qualitative research, according to Hitchcock & Hughes (1995), enables researchers to learn first-hand about the social world they are investigating by means of involvement and participation in that world through a focus upon what individual actors say or do. However, Denzin and Lincoln (1998) state that there is no correct method for conducting qualitative research. The authors indicate that a qualitative study explores the topic in more depth.

Qualitative methods that are used in the research are designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific programme, practice or setting. Mertens (2005: 229) names this definition generic; the author states that it is when the qualitative research focuses

on an activity that locates the observation in the world. These are sets of interpretive material practices that make the world visible. The author indicates that the practices transform the world and turn it into a series of representations field notes, interviews, conversations, recordings and memos to the self.

Merriam (1998) indicates that the product of the qualitative study is richly descriptive since the qualitative researcher focuses on process, meaning and understanding. The participants' own words and direct citations from documents are included to support the findings of the study.

In a qualitative approach, the researcher is interested in viewing the world through the eyes of the participants. This is related to how participants perceive their world. Events are seen from the participants' point of view (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Neuman, 2003). As a researcher, I wished to study events as they occur; therefore I was interested in how the collaboration between DBST, SBST and parents occurs.

In qualitative research, the researcher does not formulate the hypothesis at the beginning of the study as one does in quantitative research, but rather tends to analyse the data inductively. The qualitative researcher analyses during the process of the research, not at the end product as in quantitative research.

3. 4. 1. Limitations of qualitative research

Anderson and Asernault (2001) provide some of the limitations of qualitative research. They state that in any social situation, there is always more than one valid perspective. This indicates that people might agree on the facts but differ in their meaning. They indicate that participants' personalities and the relationship to the researcher may influence the interpretation of data.

3. 5. Scope of the study

This study was conducted in the Western Cape in a school in an EMDC Metropole East. This location made it possible for me to travel to interview the staff at the school and at the EMDC. The school and the EMDC were selected because I could make continuous contact visits to interview the participants. This school also had an SBST, as well as a District Team at the EMDC which is responsible for supporting the

school. Metropole East EMDC is situated in Kuils River. The study focused on Specialised Learner and Educator Support (SLES) which is one of the components within the EMDC. SLES consists of professionals such as: school psychologists, social workers, different therapists and LSA. The school is situated in low socio economic area in Khayelitsha in Western Cape. It is surrounded by an informal residential settlement where families of the learners live and the place is a Xhosa speaking area.

3. 6. Sample

Babbie & Mouton (2001); Lankshear & Knobel (2004) and Mertens (2005) refer to a sample as the method and process of selecting a given number of people from the population. Babbie & Mouton go on to say that people never study all the members of the population that interest them. In addition, Mertens (2005) states that in most research it is not feasible to collect data from every individual in a particular population.

Therefore purposive sampling was used in this study. Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) indicate that in most qualitative studies, it is up to a researcher's judgement to believe that particular individuals possess the information s/he wants. In addition, purposive data provides data that is more specific and indirectly relevant to a research concern or interest (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). However, the extent to which the findings can be generalised is unclear. According to Burgess (1982: 76; cited in Merriam, 1998) the researcher needs "to consider where to observe, when to observe and what to observe. In short, sampling in field research involves the selection of a research site, time, people and events". The study is intended to involve members of the DBST, SBST and the parents from the School Governing Body (SGB) as part of the community. For the purpose of this study, a sample was selected from the above bodies and was interviewed.

3. 6. 1. Participants of the study

In order to derive authentic data in relation to the study; five members from each of the following groupings were interviewed: representatives from a DBST, a SBST and parents concerned with the school under study. The DBST comprised the following: a Learning Support Advisor (LSA), a school psychologist and a social worker. The

SBST sample consisted of: an SBST coordinator and also a Learning Support Educator (LSE) and the other four members of the SBST. In the SGB there were five representatives from the parents; three of them were teachers.

A total number of five SBST members were selected to fill in the questionnaire and all of them had a follow up interview. Tables 1, 2 and 3 below illustrate the personal information of the participants.

The tables present the biographical information of DBST, SBST and SGB. Table 1 represents the total number of SBST which was five. Four SBST members were females while one was a male. Two were married, two single and one a widow. Their age ranged between thirty to forty-four years. Their experience ranged from two to eleven years. All phases were represented. Their first language was Xhosa while their second language was English.

Table 2 represents three members of the DBST; two were females while one was a male. Two were married and one was single. Their age ranged from twenty-five to thirty-four. Two spoke Xhosa as their first language and one spoke Afrikaans. Their second language was English.
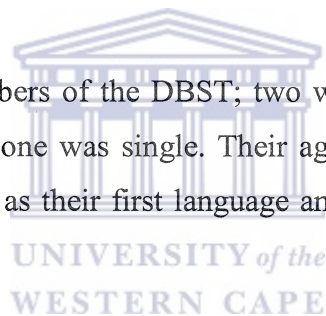
Table 3 represents five members of the SGB. All participants were male. Two were married. Only three of them stated their marital status. Two stated that Xhosa was their first language and one indicated that English was his second language.

3. 7. Research methodology and procedure

3. 7. 1. Data collection methods

The purpose of data collection is to learn something about people or things (Mertens 2005). Qualitative data is empirical; it is collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers (Ndagi, 1984; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993; Neuman 2003). Neuman (2003) makes the distinction by using 'soft data' which is impressions, words, sentences and symbols, and 'hard data' in the form of numbers. This involves documenting real events, recording what people say, observing specific behaviours, and studying written documents. In addition, Fraenkel & Wallen (1993) and Merriam

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(1998) state that data is not out there awaiting collection; data will always be collected during the research study, and not only at the end of the study as in quantitative research. Collecting data always involves selecting data - the techniques of data collection are determined by the researcher's theoretical orientation, by the problem and purpose of the study and by the sample selected. Lankshear & Knobel (2004) indicate that the data process is always selective, as the researcher cannot collect everything. Therefore the researcher decided on a specific strategy when deciding what to include or exclude.

Table 1: Personal information of some SBST members

Teachers	Gender	Marital status	Age	Teaching experience	Qualifications	Area of specialisation	Phase	Grade	Learning area	First language	Second language
TA	Male	Married	35-39	12	SPTD	Xhosa, English, Geography	Intermediate	5		Xhosa	English
TB	Female	Single	30-34	2	HDE	ELSEN	All phases	All grades	all	Xhosa	English
TC	Female	Widow	40-44	11	SPTC, BA		Intermediate & senior	6 & 7	Life Orientation	Xhosa	English
TD	Female	Married	40-44	10	JPTD		Foundation	3	Numeracy, Literacy and Life skills	Xhosa	English
TE	Female	Single	35-39	10	FDE		Intermediate	4		Xhosa	English

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Table 2: Personal information of some DBST members who participated in the study.

EMDC officials	Gender	Marital status	Age	Years of experience	Qualifications	Area of specialisation	First language	Second language
OA	Female	Married	30-34	As a teacher 5 years, special education- 2 years & school psychologist 5 years	B primary Ed (psych), B ed (psych) Med (psych)	School psychologist	Afrikaans	English
OB	Female	Single	30-34		BA, HDE & ACD (SEN)	SEN	Xhosa	English
OC	Male	Married	25-29		BA (social worker)	Psychosocial support	Xhosa	English

Table 3: Personal information of some SGB (parents)

Parents	Gender	Marital status	Qualifications	Position in SGB	First language	Second language
PA	Male		HDE	Teacher	Xhosa	
PB	Male		Std 9/Grade11			
PC	Male	Married			Xhosa	English
PD	Male	Married				
PE	Male	Single				

Qualifications of participants

ACE (SEN):	Advanced Certificate in Education (Special Educational Needs)
B primary Ed:	Bachelor of Primary education
BA Social Work:	Bachelor of Arts in Social Work.
BA:	Bachelor of Arts
Bed:	Bachelor of Education
FDE:	Further Diploma in Education
HDE:	Higher Diploma in Education
JPTD:	Junior Primary Teacher Diploma
Med:	Masters in Educational Psychology.
SPTC:	Senior Primary Teachers Certificate.
SPTD:	Senior Primary Teacher Diploma

Participants:

T:	Teacher
O:	Official
P:	Parent

Looking at the recommendations provided by Lankshear & Knobel (2004) that the researcher has to develop a data collection design, the authors regard this as an important part of the research study's overall design as well. The authors suggest the design or areas to be considered in data collection:

- kind of data to be collected, that is: what kind of data is required to answer the research question.

- means of data collection, that is: which tools and methods will be used to collect various types of data.

- justification of the data to be collected: for instance, how will each set of data collected help to answer the research question and

- sources of information and guidance: who will provide good advice for information about data collection in general.

Merriam (1998) states that data is mediated through the researcher as the human instrument. In addition, Mertens (2005) indicates that the researcher decides which questions to ask, in what order, what to observe and what to write. As the researcher, I was responsive for the context and made decisions on which questions to ask about collaboration.
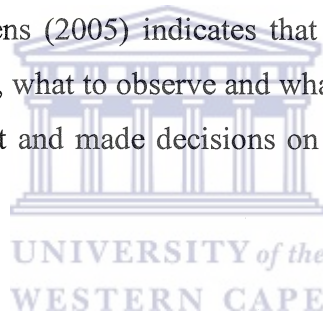
3. 7. 2. Procedure

I submitted a letter to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) requesting permission to conduct the research at the particular school and the EMDC (refer to appendix I). The Director of Research from WCED approved the letter through e-mail, which included regulations as to how to conduct the research within educational institutions in the WCED (refer to appendix IV & V). Meetings with the principal of the school and the DBST area were arranged telephonically, and by e-mail and fax. Dates to visit the school as well as the EMDC were arranged. I went to the EMDC A and School B to explain and distribute the questionnaires. The questionnaires were designed to gather information from the above bodies in order to understand how they collaborate as well as the processes and methods of identifying and addressing the barriers to learning, development and participation.

During the first day for distributing the questionnaires, I introduced myself to the participants; explained the aims of the research, as well as its significance to

education as a whole. Ethics of the research were also highlighted. Questionnaires were handed out and explained to the selected sample (refer to appendix VI, VIII, X & XI). I explained the purpose of the study, and how to answer the questionnaires. I also explained the ethical aspect of the study and about confidentiality.

There was a follow-up interview with the participants whose responses to the questionnaires were not clear and where clarification of certain answers was needed. The latter was conducted as an oral interview (refer to appendix XIII).

3. 7. 3. Data gathering Methods and Instruments

Many authors suggest the following methods of collecting data as mostly useful in a qualitative study. Namely: observation, interviews and document and records review. For the purpose of the study the following data collection steps were used:

- Questionnaires given to SBST (appendix VI)
- Questionnaires given to DBST (appendix VIII)
- Questionnaires given to SGB (appendix X & XI)

2. Follow up interviews with SBST and DBST (appendix XIII for SBST)

3. Observations of a group (appendix XIV)

4. Field notes and documentation research

These methods, the motivation for the choice of the method and how they were employed, will be briefly discussed.

3. 7. 3. 1. Questionnaires

Since the study sought to understand the phenomenon of interest from the participants' perspectives and not the researcher, questionnaires for the DBST, SBST and SGB were designed. According to Ndagi (1984: 59), a questionnaire is defined as "a device for getting answers to questions by using a form which the respondent fills in himself". In addition, questionnaires are frequently used in conjunction with other data collection techniques.

Questionnaires were used as the main method of collecting data from the participants to gather information on their understanding of their collaboration as a team. Questionnaires contained both closed and open-ended questions, and they were both

generic and specific. Open-ended questions sought for: feelings, knowledge, thoughts and ideas about collaboration. On the other hand, the purpose of the closed questions questionnaire was to gather background information about each individual: their gender, marital status, age, teaching experience, qualifications, area of specialisation, phase, learning area, first language and second language. All questions in the bio-demographical questionnaires were closed and required specific answers (refer to table 1, 2, & 3). The questionnaire also included open-ended questions, which were not followed by any kind of specified choice and participants' responses were answered in full. Nachmias and Nachmias (1990) indicate that open-ended questions do not force the participant to adapt to preconceived answers. If the participants understand the questions fully, s/he can express ones thoughts freely and spontaneously.

Mertens (2005: 344) states that "questionnaires are used for a person who needs a quick and / or easy way to get lots of information in a non-threatening way from participants". The author considers questionnaires as easy to administer, easy to compare and analyse and a method for obtaining a large amount of data. In addition, the participants have a greater feeling of anonymity, as the researcher does not influence them when they fill in the forms. Anderson & Arsenault (2001) indicate that if questionnaires are well constructed, they permit the collection of reliable and reasonably valid data in a simple, cheap and timely manner.

However, questionnaires have limitations and it is argued that "careful feedback might not be got, - wording can bias participants' responses, - the researcher might not get the full story, - and are also regarded as impersonal" (Mertens 2005: 344). Furthermore, Amod (2003) states that misinterpretations and misrepresentations commonly occur when using questionnaires.

To take sufficient care, as the researcher, I went to distribute the questionnaires personally, allowed participants to fill them in and when completed, I collected them.

3. 7. 2. 2. Interview schedule

Interviews were conducted with the participants to clarify information given on the questionnaire.

A research interview is "an interpersonal situation, a conversation between two partners about a theme of mutual interest" Kvale (1996: 125). Denzin & Lincoln (1998) view an interview as a conversation, the art of asking questions and listening. Lankshear & Knobel (2004: 198) view interviews as "…planned, pre-arranged interactions between two or more people where one person is responsible for asking questions pertaining to a particular theme or topic of formal interest and the others are responsible for responding to these questions". The authors also point out that the interview remains the best available means for accessing study participants' opinions, beliefs, values and situated accounts at the particular point in time. Ndagi (1984) and Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that in research, an interview is typically a technique used to collect information from others in a face-to-face contact.

To understand more about participants' impressions or experiences fully on how DBST, SBST and parents collaborate to support and assist LSEN, a follow-up interview was given in order for the researcher to seek more information and ask participants to clarify and say more about what they had written.

Marshall & Rossman (1989) indicate that interviews access immediate follow up data collection, clarification and omissions. If a question is not clear to participants, the researcher is able to rephrase the question; similarly the participants will elaborate on answers that are not clear. Ndagi (1984) supports the above statement and also indicates that interviews are useful in collecting personal information, attitudes or beliefs and are particularly useful in probing for additional information if the need arose. Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) point out that the previous occurrence of participants' thoughts, feelings and intentions and their behaviours cannot be observed. That is the researcher cannot observe the collaboration at some previous point in time therefore an interview is required.

The researcher talks to the participants and records the conversations. Denzin & Lincoln (1998) indicate that interviews gather information and a full range and depth of information is supplied. Nachmias & Nachmias (1990) also indicate that the researcher can control the interview situation so that participants answer questions in an appropriate sequence or can even answer certain questions before they are asked subsequent questions. Interviews carry the possibility of depth; they enable the

researcher to clear up misunderstandings and also encourage rapport. Therefore interviews are regarded as flexible and applicable to different types of problems (Ndagi, 1984; Tyson, 1991). Interviews also develop the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998).

However, interviews are found to be time-consuming, their analysis and comparisons can be difficult, they can be costly and also the researcher can bias participants' responses (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1990; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). Nachmias & Nachmias (1990) also argue that the participants may not be willing to share information that is required with the researcher. Interviews lack anonymity as the researcher will know the participants and they may feel frightened and have difficulty in answering. Lankshear & Knobel (2004) also criticise interviews that may be partial and incomplete. They state that interviews can never be used in a study as though they are direct representations of some definite 'truth' as expressed by the participant.

In this study the follow up interview was semi-structured and included a list of prepared questions. The researcher used it as a guide and it allowed the researcher to probe interviewees' responses. The questions encourage the elaboration of important emerging themes in the course of the interview rather than tying interviewer and interviewee to a fixed-schedule that can limit opportunities to enrich spoken data and gain insight into how interviewees 'see' and understand the world. For the above reasons, the semi-structured interview was adopted as a data-collecting tool because it was found to be important in structuring the responses of the participants so as to gain information on the required area (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004).

3. 7. 2. 3. Collecting interview data

Lankshear & Knobel (2004) suggest three main ways in which interview data is collected, namely: by notes, audio recording and video recording. It is possible to take full notes during the interview in order to record replies at interviews. However, the method seems to have disadvantages. The criticism is that handwritten notes focus attention on the content of what the interviewee says and much less on how they say it. Also, notes are taken during the course of the interview – this means that the interviewer may not be able to give sufficient attention to what is being said because s/he is busy trying to record it and this may disrupt the effectiveness of

communication between the researcher and the participants. Rapport may be difficult to maintain because the researcher is likely to have his head down for long periods and then eye contact is lost.

According to Bernard (2002: 220), "tapes are a permanent record of primary information that can be archived and passed on to other researchers". The author recommends that researchers should not rely on their memories, unless the participants specifically require a tape to be switched off. Silverman (2003: 160) points out that audio recording when using open-ended interviews is useful. Kvale (1996) states that tapes are recorded in a permanent form that can be referred to again and again for re-listening.

The tape recorder was used as it was able to produce the most complete record of what was said (Hicthcock & Hughes, 1995). I used an audiotape in order to hear the conversation as it happened - I could then use the replay button to improve transcripts as audiotapes also preserve the sequence of talk. However, compared to video recording, audio tapes are criticised as they do not show the visual aspect of the situation; that is the setting, gestures, facial expressions and body movements of the participants during the course of interviews (Kvale, 1996; Lankshear & Knobel, 2004).

3. 7. 2. 4. Transcribing the interviews

The recorded interview was transformed into written text in order for the researcher to be able to analyse it easily. Kvale (1996) indicates that structuring the material into texts facilitates an overview and it is itself a beginning of the analysis.

To reduce bias in the research findings, other methods of data collection were used as well.

3. 7. 2. 5. Observation

According to Ndagi (1984: 54), observation is "a direct means of studying the overt behaviour as it happens". The author states that observation is regarded as a very important primary tool for scientific research. Lankshear & Knobel (2004: 219) also indicate that "…observation data is pieces of information collected by means of

systematically watching or observing events as they unfold". Observation should include the written records of observations, for example: field notes which are recorded at the very moment that events occur.

As a researcher, I designed observation criteria that focused on how collaboration takes place between the EMDC officials and LSE as members of the SBST (refer to appendix XIV).

3. 7. 2. 6. Non-participant observation

In non-participant observation, the researcher does not participate in the activity under observation but rather sits and watches. The researcher is not directly involved in the situation s/he is observing. Since the DBST members held workshops, as a researcher, I was a non-participant observer of the activities undertaken at a workshop. While observation is regarded as first-hand information on social processes which occur in a natural setting (Silverman, 2003; Merriam, 1998), no one can observe everything. Merriam (1998) suggests that the following should be considered when making observations: where to start, the physical setting, the participants, who is involved, the number and their roles, the activities and their roles, conversations, subtle factors and the researcher's own behaviour. Therefore the observation criteria were prepared beforehand and focused on how collaboration takes place between the EMDC officials and LSE as members of the SBST (refer to section 4.5. and appendix XIV).

According to Lankshear & Knobel (2004), direct observation involves carefully planned, deliberate and systematic examination of what is taking place, who is involved and what and where everything is happening.

Observation is regarded as firsthand information in qualitative research, however the observation method is criticised as a technique which points to the highly subjective and therefore unreliable nature of human perception. This can also be contradictory on account of what happens (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Silverman, 2003; Mertens, 2005). I endeavoured to be as objective as possible in my observation and to reduce the limitations of the observations; other tools were used as well.

3. 7. 2. 7. Field notes

Neuman (2003: 381) states that the field data "are what the researcher experiences and remembers and what are recorded in the field notes and become available for systematic analyses". Lankshear & Knobel (2004) state that data includes field notes of spoken and written information. Again, the researcher listens carefully to what is being said and how it is being said as well as what is being implied (Neuman, 2003).

Fraenkel & Wallen (1993) note that field notes include both descriptions of what the researcher hears, as well as what the researcher thinks about what has been observed. What the researcher observed and wrote is referred to as field notes. The authors also suggest that the notes have to be neat and organised, as the researcher will have to refer to them over and over again.

As the researcher, during the research process, I went physically to the participants, the setting, the site, and the institution and took notes on the field.

3. 7.2. 8. Documentary research

Records and documents give the researcher access to information that would otherwise be unavailable. However, when providing the difference between records and documents, Lincoln and Guba (1985) cited in (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) indicate that records are prepared for official reasons while documents are for personal reasons. They argue that documents are easily accessible while records can be restricted by law with regard to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity.

What people say is the major source of qualitative data, whether it is obtained verbally through an interview, or in a written form through document analysis (Patton, 1987). A literature review on inclusion was explored; both published and unpublished documents (Reports, records and annual reports).

As the researcher, I could not be in all places at all times, I had to turn to the documents and records to obtain the necessary background information about the situation and insight into the dynamics of the everyday functioning of the selected interviewees. The literature review illustrated what has been done in the area of research and demonstrates how these bodies have performed in other countries.

3. 8. Triangulation

Berg (2001) indicates that triangulation can be characterised by the use of multiple researchers, multiple theories and the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999: 128), triangulation "entails collecting material in as many different ways and from as many sources as possible … and approaching it from different angles". For the purpose of the study, triangulation was used to check the information that was collected from different sources and methods to ensure consistency of evidence across sources of data (Mertens, 2005). When collecting data from various sources, that is the DBST, SBST and parents from SGB, I ensured the process of triangulation was followed when conclusions were drawn. In addition, different methods of data collection were used. Berg (2001: 5) supports this by stating that triangulation "…is not simply the combination of different kinds of data but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each". Use was made of questionnaires, follow-up interviews, observation and document review and the information was sought from multiple sources. The data was collected from three different sources; the DBST, SBST and parents' representatives. My findings in all the data were combined from the different sources to support each other. Anderson and Asernault (2001) indicate that triangulation helps to eliminate bias and also helps in detecting errors or anomalies in new discoveries.

3. 9. Data analysis methodology

Merriam (1998) indicates that in qualitative research, education is considered to be a process and school is a lived experience. Understanding the meaning of the process or experience constitutes the knowledge to be gained from an inductive, hypothetic or theory-generating mode of inquiry. Anderson and Arsenault (2001) indicate that data analysis relies heavily on a triangulation process. Mertens (2005) states that the researcher, in collecting data, allows the categories of analysis to emerge from the data as the study progresses.

To consolidate the data and generate meaning, I used the following tactics from Miles and Haberman (1994):

- I noted the recurring patterns and themes, which combine together many separate data pieces and indicate how they are related. I also had to understand patterns and the recurrence of information.
- I used clustering where I was able to cluster data into categories. Ideas or process were grouped into categories in order to identify patterns.
- I also made comparisons or contrasts to highlight and sharpen understanding of the data collected.

The above sources rest on a series of human decisions that were taken during a meeting of the above bodies. Closed and open-ended questionnaires and interviews were related to several factors highlighted in the study by the researcher in order to ascertain how these bodies collaborated when assisting LSEN. Therefore, this approach forms a crucial part of the study when analysing the actions of these bodies.

3. 10. Ethical considerations

Ethics refer to questions of right or wrong (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). This is the method used to conform to the standards of conduct of a given profession or groups. Within the realm of educational research, ethics is concerned with ensuring that the interests and well-being of people are not harmed as a result of the research being done (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). Consequently, Denzin and Lincoln (1998) support the above statement as they both consider informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, accuracy and feedback as important ethical concerns.

For this study, it was necessary that access to one's subjects be negotiated. Before the research was conducted, negotiations were done with the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). A letter of application for gaining access was written and permission was granted. The researcher personally approached the school and EMDC.

The following considerations were taken into account during the course of the study:
- Voluntary participation

    Prior to the distribution of the questionnaire and interviews, participants were assured that if they felt uncomfortable about the research, they should feel free to leave the site.

- Possible harm to the participants

  Participants were assured that they would not be harmed, either physically or psychologically.

- Anonymity

  All completed forms were anonymous; no names appeared on the completed forms or in the mini-theses. Letters of the alphabet were assigned to identify participants for the follow-up interview.

- Confidentiality

  To ensure confidentiality of the research data, information was treated as anonymous. Although as a researcher I was able to identify particular participant information, I did not reveal it publicly. Questionnaires and interviews were kept confidential. Nobody else has access to the questionnaires and interviews. Participants were also told that the private data-identifying participants would not be reported publicly.

- Feedback

  Participants would be notified about the conclusions of the study.

3. 11. Conclusions

This chapter highlighted the aims and question of the research, as well as the rationale for choosing a qualitative approach. The design and collection of data methods were explained and discussed, as well as how the data was analysed and the ethical considerations. The following chapter will focus on the presentation and analysis of data.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH FINDINGS

4. 1. Introduction

As stated in Chapters One and Three, the study aims to investigate the perceptions of collaboration between SBST, DBST and parents (SGB) in a particular school in the Western Cape and how they assist and support learners experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation. This chapter will present the analysis of data collected from five members of the SBST, three officials from the EMDC and five members (parents) from the SGB. The data for this study was collected by means of questionnaires that were completed by SBST, DBST and SGB. The SBST questionnaires were followed by interviews if responses were not clear. All the questionnaires for the three groups SBST, DBST and SGB contained specific and generic questions. The responses from each group were analysed separately and reported under different headings: 4.2. – SBST, 4.3 – DBST and 4. 4. - SGB (parents). The questionnaires and interviews from the SBST and DBST were conducted in English, while the questionnaires for the parents (SGB) were conducted in Xhosa, which was later translated into English.

The table below illustrates how participants from the SBST, DBST and SGB are named in this chapter.

Table 4: Names of participants used in chapter four.

Participants	N	Codes
SBST	5	TA, TB, TC, TD, TE
DBST	3	OA, OB, OC
SGB	5	PA, PB, PC, PD, PE

T- Teacher   O- Official   P- Parent

4. 2. Results of analysis of School Based Support Team responses

4. 2. 1. Teachers' attitudes to LSEN.

The teachers' responses to questions regarding their feelings and attitudes differed in how they view LSEN. Some teachers have positive and others have negative attitudes.

Some of those expressed negative attitudes, others expressed feelings that were mixed. Only one teacher (TB) had a positive attitude, while the other four had mixed feelings.

One teacher (TB), who is the LSE, felt positive and confident about knowing how to handle learners with barriers to learning. "…I feel happy because I know how to handle a child".

TA and TC expressed feelings of frustration but at the same time they were prepared to make an effort in dealing with the learners. The other teacher said that he needs to get more information. TD responded with positive feelings about being challenged and privileged but was at a loss if the learner's problem was severe. TE responded by blaming the previous teacher but said she is prepared to either work with or help the learner. "…I feel that the previous teacher has not done a proper job and now I have to bridge the gap and do extra work to help the learner". Although four out of five teachers expressed negative attitudes towards LSEN in their classes, they were all prepared to take some steps to support the learner.

4. 2. 2. Description of barriers

The following section will describe the barriers to learning experienced at the school. The barriers that were mentioned are: reading, spelling writing, mathematics, poverty, sexual abuse, lack of discipline and violence.

The teachers reported on the various kinds of barriers experienced by learners and all of them said that they have learners who experience barriers in reading, writing, and spelling. The learning difficulties are more severe in English than in Xhosa. TE provided the following statement with regard to learners who experience barriers in reading, writing and spelling:

> …they are so many, some learners cannot spell, spelling, if they spell, they cannot write, sometimes they don't copy from the board…some they cannot read, if they can read, they can only read their first language, just Xhosa, they are few who can read English, I don't think they are more than 5. (sic) (Grade 4)

TA emphasised that reading was a problem as well:

> …reading, the reading is the problem you know so much that we have a reading period in our school especially made for each and every class to make use of that, so

that the kids can read well because it is very impossible or it is difficult for them especially when it comes to English. (sic) (grade 5)

TB, the Learning Support Educator, also indicated that learners often omit vowels when writing in both Xhosa and English, but there has been some improvement in reading as a result of the reading period which is held for half an hour a day for the entire school.

Three teachers mentioned Mathematics/numeracy as a barrier (calculation difficulties). TD reported that learners have difficulties with the sequence and reversal of the numbers when writing:

> Sometimes it is difficult for them to follow the numbers, the sequence of the numbers… I do have kids or learners that if you ask the learner to give me the number that is between 61 and 63, and it takes years for them to realise that it is 62 if you say what number comes before this number or which numbers comes after or between such things…they reverse the numbers instead of saying 13 they will say 31 even if you stress that the number that if you write 13 you start with 1 and end with 3 but they will come with 31 but sometimes they …(sic) (Grade 3)

TE reported that there are learners who cannot count and some have difficulties in computing the four basic operations.

Two teachers (TA and TE) reported that poverty is a barrier to learning. TE indicated that the school is situated in an area where there is poverty because they live in an informal settlement. He further asked a question: "…how can you teach a learner who is hungry?" TA reported that there is poverty because the rate of unemployment is high. TA indicated that one can see that the uniform and shoes of some learners are not in good condition. He also pointed out that some learners "come to school without having anything to eat". Teachers are faced with the challenge of hungry learners. TA and TE reported that there is a feeding scheme but it caters for the lower grades only. TA further said that there are some learners from Grade five who go to the smaller children and take their lunch.

Two teachers reported that they suspect that some learners have been sexually abused and that this causes a barrier to learning. It was mentioned that it is difficult for learners to disclose that situation, but a teacher is able to see when a learner is

experiencing sexual abuse at home through observation. A follow-up was made on this issue and it was indicated that the cases were reported to the police.

Two teachers reported that lack of discipline in the learners can be a barrier to learning. TA indicated that:

> ...you know we are having a lot of problems in this area because the kids that we are teaching today lack discipline, maybe it's because they don't understand the aim why they are attending the school or why they are here. (sic) (Grade 5)

Violence as a barrier was also emphasised by two teachers. One teacher mentioned constant fighting and bullying as a factor (aggressive behaviour).

Two teachers (TC and TB) have learners with a physical disability in their classes. TB indicated that there is a learner who has a disability in one arm. He indicated that such learners have a physical disability but their scholastic work in class has not been affected and is good.

TC and TE reported overcrowding in their classes as one of the problems encountered. TE emphasised the problem of big classes by saying: "...they are so big, they are big, they are too big". (sic) (Grade 4)

Individual teachers highlighted the following intrinsic and extrinsic factors as some of the barriers to learning experienced at school: learners with speech and hearing impairments, use of vulgar language, lying, cheekiness, withdrawal and hyperactivity.

The above barriers to learning were ranked in order and teachers' observations differed depending on the severity each teacher experiences in his grade. The table below illustrates the severity of barriers to learning in each grade for members of the SBST.

Table 5: Teachers ranking in relation to learners' barriers to learning with the most severe problem rated 1 and the least rated 5.

Numbers (rating)	Teacher A- Grade 5	Teacher B- LSE	Teacher C- Grade 6&7	Teacher D - Grade 3	Teacher E- Grade 4
1	Numeracy	Writing	Reading	Punctuality	Reading
2	Reading	Reading	Writing	Absenteeism	Writing
3	Writing			Discipline	Maths
4				Reading	Poverty
5					Behavioural problems

In the above table, reading is ranked the highest by four out of five teachers and thus indicates that reading as a barrier is the most severe problem at school when compared to other barriers. Writing, numeracy and punctuality are also observed to be severe problems according to different members of the SBST who participated in this study.
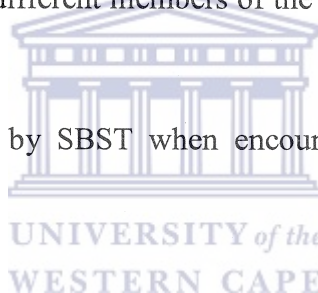
4. 2. 3. Procedures followed by SBST when encountering learners with learning difficulties in their classes.

This section explains the procedure that the SBST follows when there is a LSEN. The following are highlighted: more exercises in Mathematics, discussion consultation, activities at their level, refer to SBST, refer to LSE, refer to school clinic, give homework, consult parents, interview the child.

Teachers gave various responses to the question about what they do when learners in their classes experience learning and behavioural difficulties. The following are the steps that teachers take when learners experience barriers in their classes.

Two teachers reported that the first step is to give learners multiple chances and more exercises. TD gave an example in mathematics:

> I normally do, I give them more exercises I make it a point that I do the concrete task with them that they understand the number or even the number concept how much is 13 how much is 31 so that they can see the difference between these two numbers.

The next step is to discuss the problem with the grade teachers. This was emphasised by three teachers. TC and TE refer the learner to the grade leader while TA emphasised that the problem is discussed among other teachers in the same grade but TE said that the class leader will take the referral forms from other teachers and then give it to the LSE. He also reported that there are action groups[4] that deal with different learning areas though he thinks that they are not effective. TD asks for help from other teachers in the grade.

Two teachers said that they provide learners with activities that are at their level. TE indicated that he gives work according to the learner's level. TA indicated that it should be activities that are different from other learners in the class in order to enable the teacher to identify the particular problem experienced by the learner.

Three teachers said they referred learners to the SBST. One of the teachers (TB) indicated that: "the class teacher maybe she identified that learner, so I give them referral forms…to refer that learner to the TST". Teachers indicated that they can also discuss the learner with the other SBST members.

Four out of five teachers reported that they refer the learner who is experiencing barriers to learning to the Learning Support Educator (LSE). It becomes clear that this referral is used as a last resort if teachers fail to work with the problem in the classroom.

Two teachers reported on the referral to the school clinic. TB indicated that he consults the social worker and the psychologist from the DBST if a learner fails completely.

Two teachers reported that they give learners homework. TA said: "If I give him work at school I am going to give him at his level, then the parent must assist this kid and also he must have concrete objects to count with…".

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[4]   Action groups are different committees of teachers at school level who look at the school's needs; each committee is intended to deal with specific needs. For example: behavioural, numeracy, literacy, health & social and HIV/AIDS committees.

Two teachers reported that they consult parents whose children have barriers to learning. Individual teachers highlighted the following responses: TA indicated that he consults the previous teacher, and also does some interventions. TB reported that he talks to the class teacher as he does the cooperative teaching. He also provides activities in his class. He arranges with the class teacher to do similar activities to the ones he does in his group. TC indicated that he interviews the child and also investigates further. TD indicated that he does his best to accommodate the learner. He also tries to find out about the learner's background and talks to people whom he thinks know the learner better and tries to calm the learner through talking and tries to establish a rapport, e. g. "brings the learner closer to him."

4. 2. 4. Identification of barriers to learning

Teachers reported different ways of identifying barriers to learning in their classes. TA and TD reported that they identify barriers to learning if a certain behaviour happens constantly. TD indicated that he observes the behaviour - hyperactivity or withdrawal. TD emphasised this situation by indicating that:

> ...normally I would see the hyperactivity, of the kid because most of them are those that are experiencing the barriers, they are so hyperactive, they talk too much in the lesson, they rumour around the class, asking for something that you would never know what it is, asking for pencil and asking for every thing, they disturb other kids. Yah, some of them are withdrawn, as well as constant moving up and down. (sic) (Grade 3)

TA indicated that it is easy to identify barriers to learning through Mathematics. He indicated that:

> I am going to do some bit of Maths because it is easy to identify kids in Maths, you know whenever you give them a work to do, you will see him or she gets to zero or one and then you try and ask a previous teacher you know, what's the problem with this kid. (sic) (Grade 5)

TB and TC reported that a reading difficulty is a sign which helps to identify LSEN. TC reported that it becomes easy to identify barriers to learning when there is a learner with a physical disability; he indicated that to identify other barriers is difficult because barriers can only be identified after observation over a long period. TB reported that he pays particular attention to the learners who cannot read or write as well as learners who cannot recognise vowels especially in grades one and two.

4. 2. 5. Assistance by School Based Support Team and benefits

All teachers had positive attitudes towards the existence of SBST, but differed in how each one views it.

Two teachers (TA and TB) reported that the SBST helps learners who are experiencing barriers to learning. TA added that teachers provide help to learners who experience barriers to learning. TC and TE also indicated that SBST can advise other teachers in dealing with the problems they encounter in their classes. TE reported that teachers gain new ideas and experiences from the SBST and s/he indicated that those problems are solved more easily and quickly. TC agrees with him that problems are discussed.

TA reported that SBST provides strategies to deal with learners' needs; while TC indicated that SBST establishes programmes to assist learners.

TB indicated that learners are referred to psychologists, social workers and doctors through SBST.

TD reported that SBST has the skills to provide help to teachers and learners. TE also reported that SBST discusses how to prepare certain lessons at a lower level and which are easier for learners. This is done with the cooperation of Foundation Phase teachers. He indicated that no member's contribution is undermined or underestimated in the team. TE emphasised this by saying:

> Yes, sometimes I am in Grade 4, and sometimes it is difficult for me to teach a child to write from the beginning, but through the TST, we meet the foundation phase teachers and they teach us and they show us how to do this, and how to do that and give us tips, things like that. (sic) (Grade 4)

4. 2. 6. Collaboration between SBST members and DBST

The following section will describe collaboration within the SBST, benefits and challenges within SBST, as well as general challenges that arise from the school as a whole.

4. 2. 6. 1. Collaboration within SBST

Teachers have different views about collaboration within SBST as described in this section. All teachers reported that they discuss and find solutions to the problems. TC

also reported that this helps him since he sometimes is undecided as to how to tackle a problem but the collaboration between SBST members helps to enlighten them.

Three out of five teachers indicated that they share ideas and TD also indicated that they share strategies. TA remarked that their work becomes easier.

TC reported that the SBST develops and empowers other teachers. TD reported that they seek information and delegate work, and at times they do not have to refer a learner to the LSE due to the strategies they share. TE said:

> Yes, sometimes I am in Grade 4, and sometimes it is difficult for me to teach a child to write, from the beginning, but through the TST, we meet the foundation phase teachers and they teach us and they show us how to do this, how to do this and how to do that and give us tips things like that. (sic) (Grade 4)

4. 2. 6. 2. Benefits of collaboration

Teachers expressed different views about the benefits of collaboration but all of them reported that collaboration ensures that all learners have the opportunity to learn. TE indicated that advice from different people helps them a lot; For example, how to deal with reading difficulties. TB provided an example of how collaboration can provide learners with opportunities. He gave an example of a learner who was having a problem at home. The problem was discussed with SBST and referred to an NGO where the learner attended counselling sessions. Previously the learner was not doing well in class but now he has improved.

4. 2. 6. 3. Challenges of collaboration within SBST

Teachers had different views with regard to the challenges of collaboration within the SBST. All teachers emphasised that unpunctuality amongst SBST members was a challenge. Four teachers out of five reported that some teachers do not attend the meetings. TE reported that this happens when they have to attend other workshops. TD emphasised that many teachers come with apologies and excuses when they do not attend meetings.

TE reported that some teachers tend to refer learners to SBST without trying different strategies in classes. In addition to that, TA also reported that some teachers seem to view SBST as a 'dumping ground'. He gives an example; if a learner obtains zero twice consecutively, such a learner is considered as having a problem and he will be

referred to SBST even when the teacher has not tried other methods of teaching. He indicated that he normally is frustrated, as some teachers tend to submit incomplete referral forms to SBST. TC reported that there are some educators who are unable to identify learners with barriers to learning; furthermore the contribution from other teachers is minimal as they are not experts in the area of special needs.

4. 2. 6. 4. General challenges facing the SBST

Although views amongst teachers differed, there were some teachers who have similar views.

TC and TD reported lack of parental involvement as a barrier; TD added that some parents are illiterate, therefore it is not easy for them to help their children. TA and TC mentioned the lack of commitment by the teacher. TA further indicated a need for capacity building and developmental workshops as a means to overcome barriers.

TE reported that SBST has to be able to solve the diverse problems referred to it, and to work with other teachers who seem to be uncooperative. Moreover, TE emphasised the issue of workload among the SBST members:

> TST members are class teachers, they are facing problems in the class, they are also in the mural activities, so they have to attend the workshops here, they have to come to TST, it is DST so much on them, it is too much. (sic) (Grade 4)

4. 2. 6. 5. Collaboration between the SBST and DBST

Members of the SBST reported collaboration between the SBST and DBST. TA and TC reported that there is collaboration between the DBST and SBST. TA and TC indicated that DBST and SBST usually work together; and SBST members rotate their visits to the EMDC or other schools. He indicated that they used to have different topics which were discussed at the EMDC and normally reported to the school when they came back. In addition to that, TE reported that DBST works with the LSE directly. TB reported that DBST and SBST work together to support learners and encourage them to hope for a brighter future.

All teachers reported cooperation from the DBST and its members. They said that its members visit the school for different purposes. TA reported that: "they come if they

want to conduct workshops". TC and TD indicated that they visit the school to discuss problems, and TE indicated that they come when they are needed but they do not come if they are too busy.

- Running workshops

All teachers agreed that the DBST runs workshops for SBST but there were different responses regarding the organisation of workshops. TB reported that DBST holds workshops on how to establish SBST as well as how it functions. TC indicated that the LSE and another two SBST members attend workshops, but on a rotation basis. TD reported that teachers are invited to seminars. TA and TE indicated that all SBST members rotate so that everyone can have a chance to attend the workshops and then report back. TA indicated that workshops are organised once a term and the DBST visits the school and workshops with the entire school and discusses the action groups.

- Frequency of school visits

Teachers differed in their views about the frequency of DBST visits to the school; however TC, TD and TE indicated that DBST members seldom visit the school; while TA indicated that they come once a term. However, TB indicated that DBST often comes to the school.

4. 2. 6. 6. Challenges encountered in the collaboration between the SBST and DBST

Each of the teachers viewed the challenges of collaboration between SBST and DBST differently. All teachers reported on the delay in response from the EMDC. TA indicated that there is a long delay in attending to some problems, while TB emphasised that they have to wait for the expertise from the DBST to attend to the problems they encounter at school. In addition to that, TE reported that sometimes they have social problems that need to be attended to by a social worker, who is not easy to reach.

TC reported that there is a high enrolment at the school; and that it becomes difficult for the LSE to take all the learners who experience barriers to learning at any one time. He indicated that LSE has to take a specific number of learners; and others are

excluded; while some learners have to go back to the normal class because of the high enrolment numbers, which leads to insufficient attention from the class teacher.

4. 2. 6. 7. Collaboration with the NGO's

TB reported that if the DBST does not provide a quick service, he collaborates with two NGOs and works with them and a clinic outside of the school. Some of the education support personnel from the EMDC are not available. He mentioned that he works with the social worker, counsellor, and a psychologist from Empelweni and Noqeba family (NGOS) in Khayelitsha. He consults the psychiatrist at Groote Schuur and he also uses the services of a school nurse based at Harare Clinic. He indicated that he normally phones them and receives a response. The issues they support are: HIV/AIDS, behavioural problems and child abuse (rape).

4. 2. 6. 8. Successful collaboration

Teachers had different experiences as to what they consider successful collaboration.

Three out of five teachers reported that they experienced successful collaboration when learners needed to be referred to a special school because it was a team decision. One teacher indicated that a successful collaboration is when SBST works together with LSE. Another teacher experienced a successful collaboration when DBST helped them to understand the importance and strategies for conducting a reading period. He further indicated that there was a learner who attended LSE who passed the first grade - it was later discovered that he did not need to attend that class again. This learner was doing well even in Grade Five - there are other learners who benefited and did not need not to go back to LSE.

4. 2. 6. 9. Suggestions of SBST when collaborating with DBST.

Teachers made suggestions about what should be done in the future to improve the collaboration between the DBST and SBST.

Four teachers out of five suggested that the Department of Education (DoE) should employ more human resources. TA, TB and TE suggested that each school should have its own psychologist. TB and TE suggested employing social workers and TB indicated that each school should have its own social worker. In a similar manner, TA

would like more specialists to be involved. He indicated that the problem may become even more severe while they are waiting for the psychologist. TA suggested employing more advisors and using other human resources who should provide constant support to SBST. TE suggested that there should be more clinics, at least a minimum of five schools per clinic.

Three teachers said that the DBST should visit the school regularly. TA added that the psychologists should be employed at schools full-time and provide constant support for SBST, as it is difficult to get hold of them when they are needed. He indicated that they should be available whenever they are needed, as the school advisor cannot answer all the questions. TD suggested that the DBST should always keep contact with the school. TE suggested that the DBST should work with all those who can be found both within the school and outside.

TA maintained that DBST needs to be more visible and provide the SBST with strategies. TB suggested that they should build a school community; as well as assist with every aspect that helps the learner when there is a problem. TC suggested that there should be different groups which specialise in different learning areas. There should also be follow-ups and reports should be kept of what happens in school. TD indicated that they should always keep contact with the school. TA added that the support provided should be consistent.

4. 2. 7. Sources of support

4. 2. 7. 1. Support from the DBST

Teachers' responses made it clear that there is support from the DBST but they differed in how they view the support.

All teachers indicated that there is support from the DBST and that it visits the school although they differed in the reasons it visits the school. TA indicated that: "they come if they want to conduct workshops". While TC and TD indicated that they visit the school when they attend SBST and discuss problems. And TE indicated that they come when they are needed and if they are not busy.

On the contrary, TB reported that there is a lot of support from the DBST. He indicated that there is a social worker and a school psychologist available. He also reported that he does not get the support from the EMDC alone, but also from the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Khayelitsha.

Three teachers reported that DBST discusses the problems referred to SBST. TD indicated that LSE coordinates discussions with the DBST about the problems, while TE indicated that SBST calls DBST when they encounter a problem beyond their capability. TD reported that the DBST does come to the rescue of the SBST if there are problems. TE indicated that DBST guides SBST and gives it advice.

While teachers did report on the support they receive from the DBST, they were also dissatisfied. Four out five teachers reported that they do not get as much support as they want. TA emphasised this situation by saying:

> "…to be honest, I want to be honest, school clinic, we don't get much help from them…may be it's a shortage of advisors or what… we don't get much support from them…they come if they are not busy".(sic) (Grade 5)

4. 2. 7. 2. Parental Support

Teachers' comments were either positive or negative regarding parental support. Four out five teachers provided positive and negative feelings towards parental support, while only one teacher expressed positive feelings.

TA and TE reported that parents who come to school are the parents of LSEN because they already know since the lower grades that their children are experience barriers to learning. TE further explains that parents tend to loose interest when their children grow up. TA and TE also reported that some parents do cooperate, and TD reported that some parents come to school and follow up what they have been told.

TB as a Learning Support Educator reported that he receives support from the parents. He reported that he normally calls the parents before a learner attends his class. They sit together with the class teacher and the parent. He reported that he talks to them and explains why the learner comes to his class. He further indicated that he explains to parents that their learners might not have understood the new teacher - subsequently some of the learners improve and go back to regular class.

4. 2. 7. 3. Challenges with regard to parental support

Three teachers reported that parents do not come to school when they are called. TE indicated that the parents who are most needed do not respond, and TD emphasised that there was minimal support. TA indicated that some parents who come to school when they are called tend to make promises that they will help learners but they do not, and are not seen at school again. TE reported that he normally writes letters to some parents and they never come back and he becomes stuck with the problem. TA reported that other parents work and their response towards helping learners is negative. He reported a learner who was not doing work and called the parent. The learner reported that his parent boldly said: "…tell your teacher I am going to watch the Bold and the Beautiful, I cannot come to school for that nonsense…". (sic) (Grade 5). The teacher reported that he ended up reporting the matter to the higher committee, as that particular parent could not understand why his child failed. He indicated that the same parent came and apologised because he appreciated his initiative.

4. 2. 8. School Based Support Team management

4. 2. 8. 1. Coordination between SGB and SMT

The teachers' perceptions differed as to how SBST is managed. TA, TD and TE indicated that there is coordination though they differed on how it occurs. TA indicated that as a member of the SBST, he calls meetings together with the secretary. TD indicated that they keep records of what will be reported to the school clinic and SMT, while TE ensured that all the members of the SBST attend the meetings and that minutes are taken.

TC reported that there are two teachers who are members of the SMT and the SBST and that they report SBST progress to the SMT and to the principal. He indicated that if there is a problem, it is discussed among SBST members - if they cannot reach a solution, the problem is referred to the principal who will also write a letter to the SGB. They usually meet on Sundays.

4. 2. 8. 2. Frequency of SBST meetings

The responses from the SBST members differ as to the frequency of their meetings.

Four out of five teachers indicated that the team meets fortnightly. Only one teacher indicated that the team meets once a month. For the teacher who provided a different response, the same question was repeated on the follow-up interview and the response was still the same. This is how TA reported:

> Yes, according to the timetable we have at school the team is supposed to meet once a week, but due to some developments that occur, we don't usually meet according to the timetable, we meet maybe once in a month because of the workshops....maybe the advisors from the school clinic are here and they want to address something or they have to attend something and it is when we usually meet, we don't frequently meet as the timetable is suggesting. (sic) (Grade 5)

4. 2. 9. Addressing the issue of learners repeating grades and drop-outs

Teachers reported different experiences with regard to learners repeating grades and dropping out of school.

Three out of five teachers reported that there are learners who repeat classes although it is a small number. The other two teachers reported that they have no repeaters though TE responded thus: "...but there are learners that you look at them and you ask yourself that these ones, how did they come to grade ... because they are in a level of grade ..., some times they pass because of their age...". (sic) (Grade 4)

Concerning the drop-outs, all teachers reported that there are no drop-outs, TD responded thus: "... we don't have drop-outs, unless the kid is taken to another place and being withdrawn by the parents saying that they are going to Eastern Cape...we don't have kids...dropping the school because of learning disabilities". (sic) (Grade 4)

4. 2.10. Responsiveness of education towards learner diversity

All teachers' views were positive in regard to the responsiveness of the education system towards learner diversity. Though all teachers had positive opinions, they differed as to how various aspects of education become responsive to learner diversity.

Three teachers out of five indicated that RNCS caters for every individual learner. TC added that RNCS addresses skills, knowledge, attitudes and values. TB indicated that the education offered nowadays is inclusive in nature and also assists learners with disabilities and TD indicated that the programmes in education cater for all learners.

However, TE indicated that the use of assessment standards indicates exactly what is expected from the learner because learners work differently. He reported that:

> We have assessment standards, assessment standards are assessments in different levels, so you can just assess the learner in that level. If you assess in LO1 and you look at which assessment standards you should use for this particular learner looking for his ability. (sic) (Grade 4)

TA indicated that learners respond positively towards the current education system.

4. 2. 11. Addressing diverse learning needs

All teachers differed according to how they address diverse learning needs in their classes.

Two teachers had similar ideas about using different methods of teaching or teaching adapted to accommodate the learners' needs.

One teacher recommended that various teams specialise in the learning areas; he reported that there are action groups that deal with different learning areas although they are not effective. TB indicated that he tries to identify the problem of the learner as he will be filling in referral forms for the learners according to their needs. He provided the example of English lessons when he groups learners according to the problems they experience in knowing single, double and triple sounds in the language. One teacher reported that he can address diverse needs by involving all stakeholders and through discussions with the parents.

The above section was the presentation of data from the SBST. The section that follows is the presentation of data from the EMDC officials.

4. 3. Responses of the three officials from the Education Management Development Centre Metropole A

4. 3. 1. How ESS are linked

Three members of the EMDC officials expressed their opinion on how the ESS are linked to help LSEN. OA reported that all members from the EMDC have different roles within the support networks. He reported that the school principals are notified about the DBST job descriptions and their field of expertise. He indicated that

sometimes their expertise overlap and they decide among themselves which person will manage the case. He gave an example of an HIV/AIDS programme.

OB reported that LSAs work together with the psychologists, especially in establishing SBSTs as well as drawing up Individual Education Development Plans (IEDP) for LSEN; in addition, they sometimes hold workshops for teachers. OC reported that there are Multi-Functional Teams[5] (MFTs) that are established to look after learners' and teachers' needs.

4. 3. 2. District Based Support Team management

OB reported that there are different hierarchies where people report to their superiors before reaching the LSE, while OC reported that each MTFs has its own leader and they report standards to top management. They differ about when each team meets.

OA reported that their responsibilities and job descriptions are made available to all members. He also reported that the emerging projects are discussed and each person's role is identified, for example, behaviour modification. He reported that others involved in the curriculum are drawn into the project.

OA indicated that they meet fortnightly while OC indicated that they meet once a week.

4. 3. 3. Collaboration between District Based Support Team and School Based Support Team

The three selected members of the DBST differed in the manner that they view collaboration between the DBST and SBST.

OA and OB reported that DBST establishes SBST at schools. OB emphasised the implementation of SBST for schools in need.

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[5] These are services offered at EMDC and are divided into four pillars, namely: Curriculum development and support; Specialised learner and educator support; Institutional management and governance support; and Administrative services.

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OA reported that they hold workshops for training SBST members in specific skills; and that SBST calls for help and information whenever it is needed. SBST also provides vital information to DBST members in order to understand and manage the cases correctly when there is a learner who is referred to DBST. OB reported that DBST arranges follow-up sessions, particularly in action groups. OC reported a good working relationship with MFT and that DBST coordinators are the ones who are sent to schools.

4. 3. 3. 2. Benefits of collaboration

- Benefits between the DBST and SBST

DBST members have different views about the benefits of collaboration.

OA and OB reported that the workload is shared which results in work becoming lighter. OA and OC indicated that the knowledge is shared among DBST members, while OC added that the experts are provided with the multiple skill approach when dealing with issues. OA indicated that a better understanding is gained of the specific case. He can then set up a prevention plan. He also indicated that collaboration brings hope to its members. OB indicated that learners obtain support quickly, while OA indicated that they assist each other and so ongoing support is made possible.

OB indicated that it becomes easier for SBST to refer learners, as they are the ones who know learners better and deal with them on a daily basis.

- Benefits within the DBST

Three DBST members have different views about the benefits of collaboration within the DBST.

OA and OB reported that they learn from one another; and that they support one another whenever one of the members needs help. OA emphasised that moral support is gained and that there is a better understanding of each other's field of expertise; he also mentioned that the workload is shared. OC reported that DBST members gain strengths and that work becomes easier for both the EMDC and schools.

4. 3. 3. 3. Success in collaboration

OA reported that successful collaboration is "…when all members walk away feeling they have been able to make a contribution…". Again all members have gained from the intervention and he considered that witnessing a difference in a client as the most important factor. OB reported that success is realised when all members learn from and support one another as well as planning together which produces good results, while OC believed that success is achieved when there is a combination of knowledge from experts.

4. 3. 3. 4. Challenges of collaboration

- Challenges of collaboration within the DBST

The officials from the EMDC had different views about the factors that seem to hinder their success in collaboration. OA reported that when all parties are not present, the problem of time constraints as well as workload interferes in the process of collaboration. He also said that some DBST members are not being debriefed. OB reported the resistance of staff to change, particularly in Inclusive Education. The other members of the MFT consider Specialised Learner and Educator Support[6] (SLES) as less important. OC reported a lack of teamwork among the members of the DBST.

- Challenges of collaboration between the DBST and the schools

OA and OB reported many challenges. They do not receive referral forms soon enough from schools. In addition, OB reported that teachers tend to have informal conversation with him and want to refer learners without following the proper procedure. OA complained of time constraints, workload and reported the problem of parents who do not show up for appointments.

OC reported that the change seems to be difficult in schools due to educators being dependent.

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[6]   This is one of the pillars of the Multi Functional Team, which consists of LSEN advisors, school psychologists, social workers, therapists and HIV/AIDS personnel.

4. 3. 4. Barriers to learning that are encountered by DBST when working with schools

The following is a list of problems and the type of disabilities that OA highlighted when working with schools: language delays, intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments, visual motor problems, conduct disorder, and behavioural difficulties. Other factors are: rape of learners, witnesses of violence, being the perpetrator, divorce, suicidal thoughts, violence at school and depression.

4. 3. 4. Support to schools for learners experiencing barriers to learning

4. 3. 4. 1. Support by the DBST to schools

Officials from the EDMC reported a variety of support services that each person provides to schools. OA reported that he identifies the barriers to learning through assessment; he supplies therapy, he consults and guides parents, deals with staff development, deals with HIV/AIDS management, supports staff through therapeutic interventions, makes referrals to NGOs and other DBST members, deals with specialised needs in educational settings, runs workshops and deals with management strategies for social issues, that is: poverty and HIV/AIDS.

OB indicated that IEDPs are drawn up with DBST members and SBST. He also trains mainstream educators and trains LSEs. OC emphasised the need for the empowerment of teachers to deal with learners who experience barriers to learning. He reported that he provides moral support and intervention that is dependent on the learners' needs.

4. 3. 4. 2. Barriers to effective support

OA maintained that transport is a problem, as government vehicles do not accommodate all the EMDC officials. He also reported language as a barrier to effective support provision to schools. He indicated that as an Afrikaans speaker, he has to find an interpreter to execute interventions in Khayelitsha which is a Xhosa-speaking area. Similarly, OB reported a lack of Xhosa-speaking personnel as well as Xhosa materials in the department. He also said that the lack of support from the EMDC officials, leads to lack of involvement from other members. OC viewed the lack of human resource capacity as a problem. He indicated that educators are provided with too much work; he also meets uncooperative parents. In his opinion,

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change is not easy in schools due to teachers who have a culture of dependency and who are also de-motivated.

4. 3. 5. Frequency of schools visits

OA reported that he normally visits schools whenever referrals are sent to him - he then contacts the school immediately. He makes the appointment and provides feedback. He visits the school twice a term unless there is an urgent referral. OB reported that he visits different schools every day, while OC reported that it depends on whether there is a need to visit schools, or else he visits different schools four days a week.

4. 3. 6. Suggestions by some EMDC officials to overcome the problems

OC reported that there should be extra time and support for learners in the light of Inclusive Education, while OA reported that more educators are needed in order for classes to become smaller. He indicated that consultation and experts' advice may be wasted if teachers are overloaded with as many as 58 learners in a class. Also, some of them experience poverty as a barrier. He further indicated that there should be proper training for teachers before a new idea is implemented. He gave an example of the inclusion policy, which was implemented before teachers were trained and which resulted in teachers having negative attitudes and feelings because they were disempowered. OB reported that there should be collaboration with the DBST. He pointed out that the curriculum and SLES personnel are part of the DBST. OB suggested that people from head office should come to address the problems since learners suffer when the teachers do not want to fill in referral forms.

4. 3. 7. Area of specialisation

The EMDC official roles were as follows: OA is the educational psychologist - he identifies barriers by using assessment, deals with therapy, parental consultation and guidance, HIV/AIDS management, staff support via therapeutic interventions, referrals to NGOs and DBST members and a special education specialist.

OB is a Learning Support Advisor - he supports mainstream and LSEN teachers in dealing with LSEN, runs workshops, demonstrates lessons and supports SBST. OC is

a social worker and deals with psychosocial matters, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, suicide, child abuse and HIV/AIDS.

The above section presented the data from the EMDC officials; the following section will present data from the SGB.

4. 4. Results of analysis of SGB (parents) responses

Five parents from the SGB completed the questionnaires and the responses are recorded below.

4. 4. 1. Collaboration

4.4.1.1. Collaboration with the school

Two parents (PA and PC) out of five indicated that they work together with the school through writing letters. They also reported that they communicate at meetings. PB and PD reported that they communicate telephonically. One parent (PD) indicated that he represents parents' and learners' rights and indicated that he is always at school as he is a teacher at the same school.

4. 4. 1. 2. Obstacles preventing collaboration with teachers

All parents reported that they do not have obstacles that prevent collaboration with teachers, which is contrary to what the teachers have said.

4. 4. 1. 3. Benefits of collaboration within SGB

SGB members had different views about the benefits of collaboration.

PA reported that there is collaboration with the school and PB reported that there is progress with their goals. PA also reported that learners develop in all areas. And PB reported that they also stand together in respect of plans.

PD and PE said that there is a common understanding amongst the members. PD reported that in collaboration, members tend to have a sense of humanity and trust, while PE reported a sense of unity and said the workload is reduced amongst the members.

4. 4. 1. 4. Successful collaboration

Some SGB members had different views on how they experienced successful collaboration. PA reported that successful collaboration is when the school strives to reach its goal, and when the learners and the school develop. PD added that successful collaboration is when he sees learners developing in education and in sport, and when he sees the school progressing.

4. 4. 2. Parents' positions in SGB

Three out of five in the sample of SGB were parents while two were teachers.

4. 4. 3. Support

Support refers to support provided by the SGB and to the parents of LSEN. This is followed by suggestions.

4. 4. 3. 1. Support provided by SGB to LSEN/ disabilities

The following SGB responses are discussed with regard to support provided to LSEN/disabilities. Four out of five parents reported on the provision of support to LSEN. PA reported that the SGB provides support in the classroom. PC reported that SGB provided a classroom for learners with disabilities. He said that such learners get support even though there are no doctors at the school. PD reported that they give love to such learners in order for them not to feel isolated from other learners. PE reported that as a Mathematics teacher, he assists the learners and if the problem persists he refers the learner to the LSE.

PB had a different view as he reported no support is provided to learners because SGB is only starting to develop in respect of specials needs.

4. 4. 3. 2. SGB support to parents of LSEN/ disabilities

All SGB participants reported on support to parents of LSEN / disabilities. PA said that he encourages parents to believe that their learners can read like any other learners. PC sounded eager to help and motivate parents to send their children to school in the future, as there are classes to accommodate such learners. PD indicated that they work together and identify problems in order to organise social workers. PE indicated that he first assists the learner in class but then refers the learner to SBST. However, PB reported that there are no learners with disabilities in the school, which

differed to other teachers' responses that there are learners with physical disabilities at the school.

4. 4. 3. 3. Suggestions for supporting LSEN / disabilities

Some members of the SGB had different views on whether there is enough support for LSEN/ disabilities. This is how they responded with suggestions.

Three out of five parents reported that the support for LSEN is inadequate. PA suggested strong parental involvement while PC and PE recommended that more psychologists, optometrists, neurologists, and school doctors are needed. PE recommended that people who are trained in different categories such as a psychologist, social workers and physiotherapists, should be available. PE emphasised that they should be accessible as there are learners who experience diverse learning needs, which lead to learning barriers.

PD sounded satisfied with the LSE though he suggested they should have another LSE and that they should not lose hope altogether.

PB had a different opinion altogether as he indicated that the support is enough because SGB has just started.

4. 4. 4. Sharing information with the school community

Each parent had different opinions on how they share information about learners.
PA reported that information is shared through meetings and receiving information and that sharing depends on the learner situation and the matter at hand. He reported that they look at factors that determine the learner's situation at home; while at the same time they look at the physical background of the learner.

PC said that there are times when parents are invited to come and see their children's work while PD responded that information is shared with teachers and parents by engaging them in educational activities that help them learn. PE reported that information is shared on open days once a quarter.

4. 5. Observations (Appendix XV)

The observations were made in a 4-day workshop, which was organised by the EMDC for the LSE and other EMDC officials. The workshop dealt with teaching reading to struggling learners and was attended by officials from the EMDC, as the members of the DBST and LSE are also the members of the SBST. I observed for the three last days of the workshop. I studied the style of participation of the members who attended the workshop and how the theme of the workshop was achieved.

Officials who attended the workshop were mainly from the SLES, followed by officials from curriculum services. English was the medium of instruction. It was discovered that the instructor was an Afrikaans-speaking person, so he also switched to Afrikaans. There were more females than males at the workshop and there were more coloured teachers than Xhosa teachers.

Reading problem was identified and it has been a concern for both the LSA and LSE to solve the problem. The EMDC invited an expert in the field of reading who demonstrated how to teach reading to struggling learners. The workshop was aimed at equipping both the EMDC officials and LSE to overcome reading problems in schools.
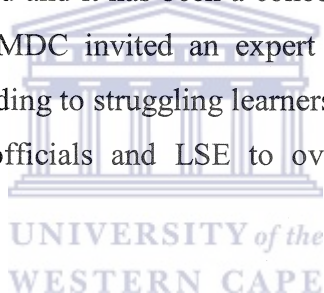
The attendance and participation of members invited to the workshop indicated some collaboration. Learners who experience reading difficult were brought to the workshop and the presenter practically taught such learners in the presence of officials and LSE. This was when the purpose of the workshop was fulfilled when teaching reading was demonstrated to a group of learners who had reading difficulty and the methods applied were suitable for the learners. That resulted as a solution to the identified problem. The workshop was successful - it was an example of collaboration and support from the EMDC to SBST.

4. 6. Records of the minutes from SBST meetings

As the researcher, I analysed the minutes of the SBST from the beginning of 2004 until mid 2005. The focus was to find out whether there was collaboration between the SBST members and how the problem solving measures are taken. I studied the minutes of the SBST meetings and discovered that all the meetings are scheduled at

either 14:20 hours or 14:30 hours, which is during normal working hours. Teachers are expected to leave at 15:00 hours in order to do other school business. Normally learners leave before this time.

For several times, the SBST are invited in writing to sign whether they have read the invitation and the minutes indicate that the majority signs though there will be apologies and absenteeism of teachers. Some of the meetings are postponed because of this. Other meetings are postponed due to other departmental workshops. The minutes show that at times teachers were asked to bring referral forms but they did not submit them because they were still busy working on them.

Eleven meetings where SBST discussed their problems were analysed and these are the issues that are discussed to show some collaboration in the meetings between SBST and DBST:

- submission of referral forms, and the discussions with grade one teachers and SBST members.
- discussion of action groups- the discussion among the different groups and then the report back
- discussions on portfolios
- discussions on the difficulties experienced by each referred learner
- discussions on the failures of the learners, recommendation to repeat or to pass the grade.
-the discussion with the LSE, Head of Departments and grade teachers:
- invitation to parents whose children need to repeat the grade.
- reports from outside support, for example, doctors, social workers and psychologists.
- school psychologist visit to school and selection of four learners with severe difficulties. Similar themes were clustered.

4. 7 Conclusion

This chapter presented views on collaboration between the DBST, SBST and SGB (parents) to support and assist learners who experience barriers to learning, development and participation. Similar themes were grouped together and clustered.

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The comparisons and contrasts between the responses of each group have been reported.

Chapter Five will summarise the findings and how they link with the previous research related to collaboration. The limitations of the study will also be discussed, recommendations will be highlighted for future use as well as implications for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE
FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. 1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate the nature and extent of the collaboration between the School Based Support Team, District Based Support Team and parents from the School Governing Body. The issue of collaboration was the main focus.

In this chapter, the findings from the SBST, DBST and parents on the SGB will be discussed and conclusions arising from the research will be presented within the context of the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter Two. Reference will also be made to the limitations and strengths of the study. Conclusions and recommendations will also be highlighted.

5. 2. Discussion of the results (findings)

The synthesis and discussion of the findings of the study will focus on the following issues that were researched:

- The collaboration between SBST, the DBST and parents on the SGB at a school, focusing on how they work together to support and assist learners who experience barriers to learning, development and participation in that school.
- The coordination between the above bodies and how they communicate with each other to support learners who experience barriers to learning, development and participation.

5. 2. 1. Attitudes of teachers towards Learners with Special Educational Needs

The attitudes of the teachers on the SBST towards the inclusion of LSEN were questioned. It was considered important for them to be aware of their own attitudes in order to assist other teachers who referred learners to the SBST. Only one out of five teachers expressed positive feelings towards assisting LSEN in his/her own class. The others expressed ambivalent feelings and attitudes for various reasons, such as the problem of having to cope with large classes. Even though there might have been some negativity amongst them, the teachers all expressed a willingness to seek information and a preparedness to make an effort to support these learners. These

questions regarding attitudes were not included in the questionnaires administered to the DBST and SGB.

5. 2 .2. Types of barriers to learning experienced by SBST and DBST

The responses from the SBST members highlight the kinds of barriers to learning and development that are experienced in the school. The following barriers emerged from the teachers' responses. These barriers have been classified into: scholastic work, social factors, disabilities and systemic barriers.

Scholastic work: Scholastic barriers that were noted by the SBST are the lack of basic skills in Numeracy and issues in Language and Literacy. The difficulties occur both in the mother tongue (Xhosa) and in English.

Socio-economic factors: The extrinsic socio-economic factors that give rise to the barriers were noted by the teachers. They commented on the lack of discipline amongst the learners due to poverty and adverse home circumstances as discussed in Chapter Four. The behavioural difficulties that they referred to were noticed in aggressive behaviours such as bullying. Though there is a feeding scheme in the Foundation Phase, it only caters for younger learners, but not for the older learners. Another serious concern for LSEN was the reported cases of child abuse.

Disabilities: The teachers' responses indicated that there are learners with mild physical disabilities, speech and hearing impairments, hyperactivity and emotional factors (withdrawal). One teacher indicated that the physical disabilities of the learners do not affect their performance in classes.

Systemic barriers: The ones they referred to are lack of resources and overcrowding since there are many learners in the classrooms.

The barriers to learning that were highlighted do not only reflect the intrinsic barriers but also factors that are extrinsic to the learner. Barriers within the social context and education system are highlighted. These findings are similar to what EWP6 (2001) identifies as barriers to learning and development in South Africa.

The DBST reported on the types of disability experienced and addressed. See Chapter Four, section 4. 3. 4. 1. Referrals to the DBST mainly come from the SBST. They are therefore dealing with the same barriers. The referrals to the DBST may be the more severe cases, whereas the SBST focuses on the scholastic and behavioural barriers.

5. 2. 3. Collaboration between SBST, DBST and the SGB

The three aspects which apply to teams working together are collaboration, cooperation and coordination (Intriligator, 1994). This is described in Chapter Two.

Collaboration - All SBST responses were in agreement that they work together with the DBST. One teacher indicated that SBST members visit the DBST and other schools for workshops. Topics are discussed when SBST members visit the EMDC and as teachers they report back to other staff members. The DBST cooperates and works directly with the LSE.

Cooperation – All teachers reported that there is cooperation between DBST and SBST. Some DBST members visit schools and conduct workshops for different purposes; for example, on how to establish a SBST and its function. Sometimes they conduct workshops for the entire school; for example, when establishing action groups. They also discuss problems and the DBST goes to the school when needed, but they are not always available as they may be busy. Two teachers stated that SBST members attend workshops and seminars on a rotation basis.

Coordination - The LSE who is a member of the SBST is responsible for coordination between the SBST and DBST. At the SBST meetings, records are kept for reporting on the referrals to the EMDC (DBST) and SMT. The LSE is responsible for coordinating activities between the school and DBST. There are two SMT members in the SBST who take responsibility for reporting to the SMT and to the principal about the progress of the SBST. If the solution to a problem is not reached it is referred to the principal who writes a letter to the SGB, which normally meets on Sundays.

At the research interview, the LSE indicated that she contacts outside support as well. There are two NGOs in Khayelitsha that work with the school and provide support.

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The above findings are associated with the recommendations of the EWP6 (2001) to support members of the learning community that can provide support to LSEN. Other community resources can also provide the necessary support.

Findings from the responses of some officials from the EMDC claim that there is collaboration amongst themselves. Each member has a different role within the support network. For some DBST members, the field of expertise overlaps and they decide among themselves who can manage the case. The school psychologist and LSA work together in establishing the SBST and drawing up Individualised Education Development Programmes (IEDPs). They conduct workshops together for training SBST members in specific skills. Some DBST members also arrange follow-up sessions, particularly in the action groups. LSA supports the establishment of SBST in the schools. There is a good relationship between MFTs within the EMDC and they are the ones that are sent to schools. The description of the MFT is in section 4.3.1. The above results correspond with the work of Ericedrs (2000) and Robinson *et al* (2002) who advocate that collaboration eliminates the duplication of services and provides a diversified approach to solving and providing the services needed by learners. In addition, multiple problems are addressed through different solutions. Though a good relationship was reported within the MFT, there is a contradiction by the other EMDC official that SLES feel that they are regarded as less important by other MFTs.

It was reported that the SBST calls for help and information whenever it is needed. The SBST provides the DBST members with important information to ensure that the understanding and management of the case is correct when a learner is referred to DBST.

As reported by the SGB the collaboration between the SGB and the school takes place through communication. Parents communicate either by writing letters, or through meetings or telephonically. One parent indicated that there are times when parents are invited to school to see their children's work. Ericedrs (2000) indicates that clear communication is one of the fundamental requirements of collaboration.

Donald *et al* (2002) indicate that collaboration within the ESS, demands the working together of government departments, disciplines, professions and sectors. The authors indicate that the sectors refer to the district and local school, which is the focus of this study.

5. 2. 3. 1. Characteristics of collaboration

The following characteristics of collaboration have been identified by Welch (2000): a common goal, interdependence and parity of members involved, sharing of resources, decision-making, problem-solving and communication skill, each of which will be discussed below.

- Common goal

One of the characteristics of collaboration for inclusion and support is to work together towards a common goal. From the perspectives of the SBST, the study shows that SBST and DBST work together and both support and hope for the brighter future of learners. For example, teachers prepare IEDP's to deal with learners who experience barriers to learning. The planning of an IEDP is the responsibility of all role players at the school and in the district.

Some DBST members, in particular the school psychologist and LSA, confirmed that they work together for a common goal in establishing SBST and drawing up IEDPs. They also run workshops together for training SBST members in specific skills. These results show that the teams work together to address barriers to learning, development and participation.

The responses from the SGB show that teachers and the SGB plan together, and have a common understanding.

There is therefore evidence from the responses that the school, DBST and SGB work together for a common goal.

- Interdependence and parity of members involved

Some of the SBST responses perceive the negative side of interdependence and parity. It demonstrates that the contribution of the other teachers is seen as minimal since

they are not experts in the area of special educational needs. These teachers are not seen as able to identify learners who experience barriers to learning.

EMDC officials included in the DBST claim that they have different roles and job descriptions within the support networks. They also refer to MFTs that look after teachers' and learners' needs, and if there are projects within the EMDC, the roles are identified. The work of Graden and Bauer (1992), agrees with these results as the authors state that collaboration is not a function of one's role but a function of one's interpersonal behaviour. I also believe that in South Africa there are benefits for working as a MFT, especially in the context of scarcity of human resources.

- Sharing of resources

On the SBST, the majority of teachers indicate that they work together and share ideas, strategies, skills, experiences and give some tips on how to support LSEN. For example, the Foundation Phase educators meet regularly and share these ideas and strategies. The need for sharing resources corresponds with the literature (Welch, 2000). One teacher stated that the SBST seeks information and delegates work; as a result there is no need to refer a LSEN to LSE due to the sharing of strategies for learning.

The view of Jordan (1994) also confirms the above findings as she claims that the purpose of the SBST is to provide a pool of ideas and resources to any member of the teaching staff. Furthermore, Mackenzie (2002) states that it is best to equip teachers with the appropriate methods to deal with LSEN; as this is the development of an inclusive school. The work of Welch (2000); Snell & Janney (2000); Friend & Cook (1996) indicates that in collaboration, there is shared decision-making and sharing of resources, which corresponds to the teachers' views about collaboration and sharing. Fullen (1993: 87 in Welch, 2000) states that collaboration may be a process of sharing 'extending the circles of ideas and contacts'.

The majority of the DBST indicate that they learn from each other and support each other. However, one official reported that sometimes teachers do not participate during the case discussions - the EMDC official then tells them what to do. This is

contradictory to what Welch (2000) advocates by contending that collaborators should share ideas and knowledge.

The parents on the SGB claim that information is shared through meetings. The receiving of information and sharing depends on the learner situation under discussion. Information is shared with teachers and parents by engaging them in educational activities that help them learn - it is also shared with them on open days, which take place once in a quarter.

- Decision-making

All teachers indicated that the SBST discusses and tries to find solutions to the problems. Sometimes they are unable to solve the problem and they meet to discuss it. This concurs with the ideas of various authors that in collaboration, the goal is to resolve a problem through various steps. The SBST is a suitable forum for discussing and solving problems and decision-making is facilitated. The team also discusses how to prepare certain lessons so that they are made easier for learners, who can then work at their own levels.
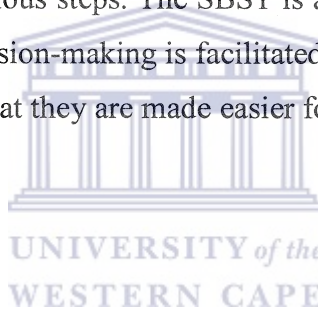
- Problem-solving

The results of the study show that teachers identify barriers to learning; this is one of the steps that should be followed with problem-solving skills. Identifying a problem is the first step and is considered critical in problem-solving (Graden & Bauer, 1992; Hobbs & Westling, 1998).

The second step is to identify causes. The results show that causes can be identified due to academic, social or behavioural factors, which are regarded as contributing factors to barriers to learning and development (EWP6, 2001).

The third step is generating possible solutions. Though the study does not indicate whether the strategies to achieve a goal are brainstormed to find ideas, the meetings held by SBST, DBST and SGB may generate possible solutions by coming up with many ideas through the sharing of different kinds of expertise.

The fourth step is the decision of preparing a plan of action. Through problem-solving, the IEDP is drawn up as a plan of action in arriving at decisions with regard to addressing barriers to learning experienced by learners in order to achieve a common goal.

The results from the DBST show how they identify barriers to learning, and in order to address such barriers, problem-solving steps can be followed. Through the SGB meetings, parents also engage in problem-solving steps because if there is a problem they will need to find a way to address such problems.

- Communication skills

The responses from the SGB show that the collaboration between the SGB and the school takes place through communication. Parents communicate either by writing letters, through meetings or telephonically.

At the SBST, the LSE is the one who is responsible for setting up the meetings and also gives feedback to other members. The LSE is the one who coordinates communication between the SBST and DBST.

5. 2. 3. 2. Benefits of collaboration

In the SBST all the teachers agreed that collaboration ensures that all learners have the opportunity to learn. One teacher indicated that different advice from different people helps them a lot. The advice which teachers received from other SBST members, helped them to deal with reading. DBST also helped teachers as to how to conduct a reading period. Through collaboration, a learner who attended the learning support class later improved and was returned to the regular class.

There was also an example given where the SBST benefited from collaboration with the NGO. (See section 4. 2. 6. 7, Chapter Four). Robinson *et al* (2002) point out that in collaboration, multiple problems are addressed through different solutions and collaboration recognises the different connections of the person and the environment in which people interact. This can lead to problem-solving capabilities beyond one's own discipline. The work of Robinson *et al* (2002) corresponds with the results from the SBST since the authors indicate that, in collaboration, multiple problems are

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addressed through different solutions. Collaborators can share ideas and mentor each other. Interpretations differ as to what constitutes collaboration. Three teachers considered referral of learners to a special school as a successful collaboration because referral was facilitated through collaboration between the members of the SBST and DBST. The other successful intervention was when DBST conducted reading periods for teachers.

Though the members of the SBST and DBST complain about the work overload, the majority of members acknowledge the benefit of collaboration. If the workload is shared, it becomes easier when they work with SBST. Knowledge is also shared and experts offer a multiple skill approach when dealing with issues – a better understanding is thus gained in specific cases. Collaboration brings hope to its members because learners receive quick and ongoing support and assistance is provided to each member. Through ongoing support, it becomes easier for the SBST to refer learners to DBST because the SBST knows the learners better as they deal with them on a daily basis.

DBST members claim that they learn from each other and they also receive moral support from each other. There is a better understanding of each other's field of expertise. When the workload is shared the members gain strength and work becomes easier for both EMDC and the schools. Jordan (1994) states that all members in collaboration learn from each other. Welch (2000), Snell & Janney (2000) and Friend & Cook (1996) confirm that in collaboration, there is sharing of ideas and other resources. The works of Robinson *et al* (2002) and Ericedrs (2000) also indicate that collaboration reduces competition for diminishing resources.

Successful collaboration in the DBST is achieved when each member feels that he has made a contribution, when all members gain from the intervention and when they witness a difference in a client – the most important aspect. When members plan together they produce good results. The combination of knowledge of the experts is beneficial in collaboration, as they plan towards reaching a common goal using problem-solving skills to achieve good results. (Welch, 2000; Snell & Janney, 2000; Friend & Cook, 1996; Robinson *et al*, 2002; Ericedrs, 2000).

From the SGB point of view, collaboration enables the school to progress towards its goals and the learners develop in all areas. Members claim that they stand together in planning.

Successful collaboration is when a school progresses and strives to reach its goal, and when it assists learners to develop positively. This approach was considered by Welch (2000); Snell & Janney (2000); Friend & Cook (1996) as the ability of the collaborators to achieve a common objective successfully. As a way of practising successful collaboration, parents at this school partially sponsored a computer installation project in the school.

5. 2. 3. 3. Barriers to collaboration

All three groups that were researched experienced common barriers to collaboration.

- Resources as barriers

All five teachers were concerned about unpunctuality and absenteeism amongst SBST members when attending meetings. These findings concur with the study of Creese *et al* (2000), which highlights that finding time to attend SBST meetings is problematic. In addition to that, Mostert (1996) also highlights the issue of time as a problem; the author indicates that meetings are scheduled at awkward times, and are often rushed. Amod (2003) also found lack of time to be a barrier when participating in the SBST and seeking help from other members, as well as insufficient time for consultation. In this study, time should not be problematic since the minutes of SBST meetings indicate that all meetings are supposed to be during school hours when teachers are left alone to do other school business. The times do clash with other workshops and meetings which are also held during school hours.

Difficulties with the referral process may be seen as a barrier. There are some teachers who tend to refer learners to the SBST without trying to apply other strategies in their classes. One teacher emphasised that according to him, the SBST is considered a 'dumping ground'. Some teachers tend to submit incomplete referral forms, which need to be done at classroom level. Teachers are not committed to their work. The workload increases for SBST members due to other activities which they have to

attend at school; for example, workshops for SBST and DBST and extra-mural activities at school.

Four out of five teachers perceived a delay in response from the EMDC as a barrier to effective collaboration. The learners wait for a long time before someone attends to them, and one teacher prefers to wait for the advice of a professional. There is a delay to addressing social problems in time as the social worker is not easy to reach. This barrier was only perceived by the teachers and not by the DBST members.

- Lack of parental involvement

The SBST reported on a lack of parental involvement. Some parents are illiterate, therefore it becomes difficult for them to help their children at home. These responses concur with Ebersohn (2000) as s/he highlights poor parental involvement within the ESS in South Africa, and in other areas where it does not exist at all. Certain teachers do not cooperate when working with SBST.

- Time constraints

The DBST indicated certain barriers to collaboration such as the absenteeism of other DBST members. Time constraints and workload among members were reported. Excuses for not attending SBST meetings were reported by the SBST, and the teachers delay in sending referral forms to DBST. Some teachers do not want to complete the referral forms. It is reported that instead, they tend to have informal conversations with the LSA and want to refer the learner without following the proper procedure. Referring to the literature review, in Chapter Two, this finding contradicts the work of Creese *at al* (2000), who indicate that the SBST can contribute to a drop in the number of inappropriate referrals to outside services and other benefits. Both the SBST and DBDT experience the same problems.

- Organisational issues

There is insufficient time for DBST members to sit and discuss cases as a team and to plan together. This is contrary to the recommendations of Mostert (1996) that for collaboration to be effective, there should be proper planning between collaborators with a collaborative focus as well as an atmosphere of creativity with positive results

for learners, families and education professionals. A lack of government transport prohibits EMDC officials from visiting schools as regularly as expected. There is sometimes resistance from the staff in changing to Inclusive Education and a lack of teamwork among DSBT members. This might be due to the fear of losing their professional identity, which is pointed out by Robinson *et al* (2002). An EMDC official indicated that teachers are dependent and resistant to change. This might also be due to a lack of understanding of roles and a reluctance to express opinions.

- Group dynamics

One official reported that teachers do not participate during the case discussions and this results in the EMDC official telling teachers what to do. Robinson *et al* (2002) state that there can be reluctance to express opinions due to fear of each other as well as a misunderstanding of roles. Teachers may think that DBST knowledge is better than theirs and therefore they decide to keep quiet.

- Differing perspectives

DBST members do not have a common understanding and do not agree about how the SBST is supposed to function. This finding is contrary to the ideas of Welch (2000), Snell & Janney (2000) and Friend & Cook (1996) about collaboration. The authors indicate that there should be a common understanding between members to enable them reach a common goal. Robinson *et al* (2002) also agree with this according to the results of their study in the Western Cape. The authors found that within group dynamics there can be a lack of understanding of roles and the provision of services. To eliminate this barrier it is evident that collaboration strengthens relationships and decreases the chance of misunderstanding among its members.

Other MFT members who go out to the schools have different views. This finding corresponds with some of the problems Robinson *et al* (2000) discovered about the differing perspectives experienced among the collaborators. The response of one EMDC official was that some DBST members tend to see the pillar of SLES as less important in the EMDC. See Chapter Four, section 4. 3. 3. 4.

In this research study the different perspectives were not reported by SBST and SGB.

5. 2. 4. Frequency of SBST meetings

There was contradictory evidence about the frequency of SBST meetings. Four teachers out of five indicated that they met fortnightly whereas one teacher reported that they met once a month. The meetings appear in the daily timetable but are not adhered to due to other developments and workshops that are attended by SBST members or if the advisor visits the school. This response could be the most appropriate because the other teachers' responses also indicated a problem with teachers' absenteeism, unpunctuality, and excuses for infrequent attendance at meetings due to workshops and extra-mural activities which they have to attend. Their minutes also prove that the postponements of their meetings are due to absent members.

5. 2. 5. Frequency of school visits by DBST

All officials of the DBST claim to visit schools daily but this depends on their work schedule and so the frequency at each school varies. The visits depend on the work one does at school, and also according to the need as demanded by the school. In one interview with the members of SBST, the two officials claimed to have visited the school and through my informal conversation with LSE it was obvious that they were distributing IQMS forms to the school. It is true that LSA should do school visits everyday, but he goes to different schools, and visits them according to the need. As a researcher, I had to call several times to make an appointment and had difficulty contacting the DBST member because she was visiting schools or attending a workshop.

5. 2. 6. Suggestions to overcome barriers to learning, development and participation.

The SBST has to be able to address the different problems referred to it. One barrier is that some of the non-SBST teachers do not cooperate with the SBST.

5. 2. 6. 1. Human resources

The SBST suggested that DoE should employ the following people: there is a need for more human resources, such as a school psychologist and a social worker for each school. More specialists could be employed as problems increase, for example, more LSA and another LSE for the school. It was suggested that these specialists should provide constant support and visit the school regularly as it becomes difficult for the

SBST to procure services when they are needed. They should be available and visible whenever SBST needs them. DBST should keep contact with the school and also be able to support all who can be found within the school and outside and to build a community school. DBST should make follow-up meetings and record the outcomes. It was reported that the LSA cannot answer every question.

There is a shortage of Xhosa-speaking professionals because language is a barrier in certain areas within the EMDC. This leads to a work overload for the Xhosa speakers who are in demand within the DBST.

5. 2. 6. 2. Physical resources

One teacher suggested there is a need for more clinics with the maximum of five schools per clinic. Though the suggestion was made, the school clinics are incorporated into the EMDC as Educational Support Centres and the school psychologist is a member of the DBST. During the follow-up interview with one EMDC official, I was informed that school psychologists still have to be placed at the EMDC offices.

5. 2. 7. Support for the teams

The following section describes the different kind of support received by SBST. There is a discrepancy between how the SBST views support from the DBST and how the DBST sees its role.

Positive Responses

Teachers acknowledge the existence of an SBST and indicated that there is support from both SBST and DBST even though the support may not be sufficient. The SBST supports teachers by providing advice, new ideas, experiences and strategies to deal with LSEN. On the other hand, the LSE emphasised that there is a lot of support, since she coordinates the two bodies. DBST also provide support through attending meetings, discussing problems and by conducting workshops. The DBST claims to be busy all the time, as the demand is great.

The DBST discusses problems referred to the SBST. If the SBST cannot solve a problem, it calls on the DBST, which guides and advises the SBST. However, one

teacher indicated that there is not enough support; and another teacher assumes that it might be due to the scarcity of LSAs.

From the LSE's responses, it becomes clear that there is an alternative source of support available from the NGOs in the vicinity of the school. The LSE indicated that he receives support from the social worker, counsellor, psychologist, psychiatrist and school nurse outside the EMDC.

The majority of teachers indicated dissatisfaction with the support from the EMDC which is not as adequate and as frequent as they expected.

The SBST has skills to provide help to teachers and learners. Teachers' comments indicate that there is direct and indirect support given to learners experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation. The idea of Creese *et al* (2000) concurs with the above findings that the SBST's are designed to give support and assistance to individual teachers and the SBST also supports learners indirectly by supporting teachers.

Parental support – Positive and Negative Responses
Positive Responses were received from parents who cooperated. Some parents of LSEN come to an interview at school because they already know that their children have been experiencing barriers to learning and development since the lower grades. They cooperate and follow up on the recommendations of the SBST, while other parents lose interest when their children grow up.

The LSE says that she does not have problems with parents because the parents support her and she indicated that she speaks to parents before learners attend her class. She has discussions with the class teacher and the parent and explains why the learner has to attend the learning support class. She explains to the parent that some learners improve and return to the normal classes.

There were also some negative responses. Three teachers reported that some parents do not come to school when they were called, particularly the most needed parents. They claim support is minimal. Other parents tend to make promises that they will

help their children but they are never seen again at school. Some parents do not cooperate even if a teacher writes a letter and other parents have negative responses towards their children.

The DBST officials claim to provide support to schools. Refer to 4. 3. 4. 1 and 4. 3. 7 for discussion about the support DBST provides to schools. As indicated in Chapter Two, Karagiannis *et al* (1996) refers to the three-layered system of the network which is seen to be successful. The authors state that the SBST, DBST and partnership with the community agencies can function to empower staff in a mutually supportive way. However, the support of EMDC officials' provision to schools differs depending on each one's job description, but all of them do provide support to school, in one way or another.

All SGB members reported support to parents of LSEN / disabilities as well as LSEN themselves. Support is through encouragement. The SGB and parents work together and identify the problems they encounter in order to organise outside support. There was one parent who indicated that there are no learners with physical disabilities in the school. This contradicted what the teachers reported and may be due to ignorance because teachers work on a daily basis with the learners who may have a barrier to learning.

On the contrary, one parent claimed that there is no support since the SGB is only starting to develop a system for meeting special needs. The implication is that it is not yet fully established.

The 'three-tier' support system, the SBST, DBST and Provincial and National Departments, corresponds with the results that indicate that it is from DBST that the specialists and other support is expected to gain access to school and indirectly support learners through training and supporting the educators within the SBST and where necessary, support individual learners (EWP6, 2001; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). The study of Jordan (1994) says the purpose of SBST is to pool ideas and resources for members of teaching staff. SBST supports learners indirectly by supporting teachers (Creese *et al*, 2000).

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The above findings also concur with the study of Karagiannis *et al* (1996) that the SBST, DBST and NGO's as the community agency, function to empower teachers and learners in a mutually supportive manner. Local community, DBST and higher educational institutions can strengthen the SBST. This peer support also corresponds with the work of Creese *et al* (2000) where the authors indicated that peer support is a team of teachers who take referrals from individual teachers. However the results do not state whether teachers do the referral on a voluntary basis or not.

5. 2. 8. Barriers to effective support

- Lack of Xhosa materials or support professionals.

From the DBST responses, language and a shortage of Xhosa materials are reported to be a barrier to effective support for schools. Refer to 4. 3. 4. 2.

- Insufficient support

Responses from EMDC officials show a lack of support from other MFT which results in poor involvement of such members. There is also insufficient human resource capacity. Teachers have a workload which these officials hope to reduce through collaborative team work. Parents are not cooperative and teachers are resistant to change due to being dependent.

5. 2. 9. Learners repeating grades and dropping out of school

SBST responses show that learners repeating grades and dropping out of school is not the problem at this school, this includes learners with physical disabilities. However there are some learners who do achieve a satisfactory level in the next grade. Learners leave this school for transfer purposes only.

5. 2. 10. Education responsiveness towards learner diversity

The SBST responded positively about the responsiveness towards learners' diversity in the system of education in South Africa. They stated that RNCS caters for all learners including those with disabilities. The above findings seem to fulfil a call from UNESCO (1994) that Inclusive Education looks at how to transform the education system in order to respond to a diversity of learners' needs.

5. 2. 11. Addressing learner diversity

Two teachers claim to use diverse methods of teaching or teaching adapted to accommodate the learners' needs. The Salamanca Statement (1994) views an inclusive school as one that recognises and responds to the diverse needs of learners by accommodating different styles and rates of learning to ensure education for all. The school reflects the character of an inclusive school. The implementation of action groups in school ensures that the DBST, together with the school, responds to learner diversity. The Salamanca (1994) states that an inclusive school is a school that has teaching strategies, resources and partnership with the community.

5. 2. 12. Management of the teams

In this EMDC, the DBST is divided into four MFTs. Each MFT has a leader and they report on standards to top management. There is a discrepancy in the reported meeting times of MFTs. Because members have different responsibilities and job descriptions, the MFTs are supposed to share the work for the emerging projects in the department, but they cannot find a mutually agreed time to meet.

5. 2. 13. Recommendations from EMDC officials

The recommendations that are described in this section are the responses from EMDC officials. These recommendations prove that more support and assistance are required from the EMDC to support LSEN.

There should be extra time and support given to learners in Inclusive Education. They recommend the appointment of more teachers. That is: the proper training of teachers before a new idea is implemented. This response is made with regard to the inclusion policy, which was implemented before teachers were trained. Welch (2000) agrees that for collaboration to be successful, other professionals and parents should be informed about the changes in the system of education, whereas in practice, teachers were not informed about the inclusion policy changes.

The suggestion is that there should be collaboration amongst MFTs, such as with the curriculum and SLES personnel. There is evidence that the collaboration between curriculum advisors and SLES is unsatisfactory. One official demanded that officials from provincial level should come and address the problems.

SGB suggestions to support LSEN / or learners with disabilities include greater parental involvement and the recruitment of outside human resources. Refer to 4. 4. 2. 3. There should be human resources and employment of another LSE. However, one parent reported sufficient support because the SGB has been formed recently.

5. 3. Limitations of the study

The study had various limitations in its design - these are discussed below:

- Generalisability is limited in this study due to the sampling procedure. Purposive sampling rather than random sampling was used. Hence the views and attitudes of the DBST, SBST and SGB are a sample, and should not be generalised to other SBST, DBST and SGB populations. However, what has been found in this study can be used for further development in other contexts.

- The small sample also limited the generalisability of the findings. The limitations in terms of sample size related to the following problems:
    - For various reasons, not all participants who filled in questionnaires had a follow-up individual interview. All SBST participants took part in taped interviews because they were available. For the DBST the distribution of the questionnaires was delayed due to some renovations at the EMDC at that particular time and also some officials could not be reached because they were working from home. Again, it seemed that the officials who were selected to participate in the study were always busy with the fieldwork, so it was not easy to reach them. This situation also contributed to a delay in collecting data and affected the time frame for the completion of this study.
    - Another factor that contributed towards the delay in collecting data was that SGB have their meetings once in a month unless there is an emergency. A long time passed before I met with them. One of their meetings that I was supposed to attend was postponed. In addition to that, as a researcher, I also took it for granted that SGB members would understand English, but discovered later that I had to find a person who would translate the questionnaires into Xhosa, which

extended the delay. However, with the help of the principal, she organised a special meeting with them so that I could collect data.

- The study was conducted in a school in the Western Cape, in a Xhosa-speaking area. The researcher is a Sotho-speaking person. The participants and the researcher could not understand each other's language. Questionnaires for parents had to be translated into Xhosa; their responses were then translated and transcribed into English. The translation might have missed some of the important information or intended meaning required by the researcher. Moreover, the other questionnaires and interviews for SBST and DBST were conducted in English, which is not the mother tongue of either the participants or the researcher. Both sides might have not expressed themselves clearly.

- Even though the study investigated collaboration between the SBST, DBST and the parents from the SGB, the questions put to the DBST were not specific to that particular school, whose SBST members were interviewed; but also included other schools as well. If DBST had answered questions that were specific to the school under study only, there would have been a truer picture of the collaboration between the three bodies. The responses from some EMDC officials generalised the collaboration to all the schools in that region. However this method offered the advantage of knowing what the collaboration is like in the whole EMDC.

5. 4. Recommendations

From the discussions and conclusions above, the following recommendations are offered to improve Education Support Services in South Africa:

- There should be developmental workshops at EMDC level focusing on the different roles each branch should follow. Proper planning at the beginning of each year should be made to avoid differing views amongst the EMDC officials with regard to both the different roles in MFTs and within each pillar of support.

- The Department of Education together with the higher institutions of learning should work together towards professional development to overcome the

problem of the shortage of human resources, in particular School Psychologists, Social Workers and Learning Support Advisors. The Department of Education should create more posts for human resources considering their placement. For example: In the Western Cape there are three official spoken languages, therefore these languages should be represented. If there are enough education personnel, the language barrier would not be experienced.

If there are enough human resources, there will be constant support, and the DBST would keep contact with schools, arrange follow-ups, do regular school visits and EMDC officials could be available.

- The Department of Education should employ more teachers to address the problem of overcrowded classrooms.

- There need to be more workshops at school level focusing on the early identification of barriers to learning, development and participation as well as intervention to equip teachers to deal with the problems in their classes. This would help to eliminate the problem of teachers who tend to refer learners too readily.

- There should be more developmental workshops focusing on the importance of filling in the referral forms, teamwork, being punctual at all times – this is in order to counteract the issues of inattendance and excuses of teachers.

- EMDC officials should always provide schools with strategies to deal with LSEN.

- SBST members should be dedicated to their work by having respect for other members, by being punctual at the meetings and by respecting the allocated time for their meetings.

- Communication between the SBST, DBST and the SGB should be improved so that the implementation of an Inclusive Education policy could be effective.

- The school should create more activities, which will involve parents and make them feel that their involvement and contribution to the education of their children is highly appreciated.

- The Department of Education should increase the number of government vehicles to enable DBST members to work efficiently.

- There should be extra time and support to deal with Inclusive Education issues in order to prepare for the training of teachers. Therefore in future there should be proper training of teachers before a new idea is implemented.

5. 5. Implications for future research

The research conducted focused in one school in the Western Cape and SLES as a component of the DBST within the EMDC. The study raised other aspects that need attention. For further research on this topic I recommend that:

- All components of the MFT should be involved in the study to provide a true picture of collaboration and problem solving within the DBST.
- Questions to the DBST should also be specific to a particular school under study.
- The research should include the role of leadership at various levels and the role in promoting collaboration and problem solving.
- The research should focus on a case study of one learner in collaboration within and between the teams.
- This study can be used in larger samples. For example, a numbers of case studies of different districts in different provinces for findings to be generalised.

5. 6. Conclusion

Although there was much evidence of collaboration within and between the various levels of support, it was not always effective. Many challenges that could hinder successful collaboration, were encountered. There were also some discrepancies in the reporting by the DBST, SBST and SGB members. The DBST and SBST both reported many challenges in working together to provide adequate support to the school. Nevertheless it is hoped that the recommendations above will be noted so as to improve the collaborative teamwork between the Education Support Services at this school. Although some of the results are inconclusive, I do hope that this research will lead to improved provision and cooperation in the Education Support Services.

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APPENDICES

University of the Western Cape
Faculty of Education
Private Bag X 17
Bellville
7535

22 October 2004

The Research Director
Western Cape Education Department
P.O. Box 9114
Cape Town

Dear Dr Cornelissen

<u>Re: Permission to conduct a Research Study</u>

I am a registered M. Ed student in the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape. I am currently doing a Masters Degree in Education Support Services under the supervision and guidance of Ms Lilian Lomofsky. This research will be written up as a mini-thesis as a requirement for this degree. The title of my thesis is "An investigation of collaboration between District Based Support Team, School Based Support Team and the parents in one school in the Western Cape".

I hereby request your permission to conduct the research with EMDC East and one school namely Impendulo Primary School. I intend to interview the Principal and four teachers at the school, parents from the School Governing Body (SGB) and five officials from the EMDC to get their views about the collaboration between them. I can assure them that the discussion in the interviews will remain confidential and that all participants will remain anonymous.

I am prepared to share my findings with you and your department if you so wish and give feedback to the participants. I would appreciate a reply to this request by letter or telephone at your earliest convenience so that I can begin with the research process. The questions are attached.

Many thanks

Yours Sincerely

Mamathealira Irene Tau
Student No 2112460

Lilian Lomofsky
Senior Lecturer

APPENDIX II

University of the Western Cape
Education Faculty
Private Bag X 17
Bellville
7535

20 September 2004

The Principal
Impendulo Primary School

Dear Madam

RE: <u>The Research Project</u>

I am a Masters student in the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape. I would like to conduct the research at your school, which focuses on the collaboration between District Based Support Team (DBST), School Based Support Team (SBST) and School Governing Body (SGB) as parents' representatives. The aim of the research is to investigate how the above bodies work collaboratively to support and assist learners experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation. The title of my research is: "An investigation of collaboration between District Based Support Team, School Based Support Team and the parents in one school in the Western Cape".

A selected sample of five teachers from the TST and five parents from the SGB will be required to complete a questionnaire. The information that will be gathered will benefit the school as the recommendations on how to improve Education Support Services will be reported. I also promise that the same information gathered will be confidential and individuals will not be identified when writing the mini-thesis.

I will highly appreciate your cooperation.

Yours faithfully
Mamathealira Irene Tau

Supervisor
Lilian Lomofsky

APPENDIX III

University of the Western Cape
Education Faculty
Private Bag X 17
Bellville
7535

12 May 2005

To the members of the School Governing Body.
Impendulo Primary school

RE: <u>**The Research Project**</u>

I am a Masters student in the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape. I am currently involved in a study that seeks to investigate the collaboration between District Based Support Team (DBST), School Based Support Team (SBST) and parents in providing support and assistance for learners experiencing barriers to learning, development and participation. The title of my research is: "An investigation of collaboration between District Based Support Team, School Based Support Team and parents in one school in the Western Cape".

I am granted permission to conduct this research from the Director of research from the Western Cape Education Department, which I will share my findings with and also give feedback to the participants. I would like to ask you to assist me in completing a questionnaire. I also promise that the responses from the questionnaire will be treated in the strictest confidence and individuals will not be identified when writing the mini-thesis.

Please be informed that there will also be a follow up interview for some individuals in order to clarify the questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation and valuable time.

Yours faithfully
Mamathealira Irene Tau
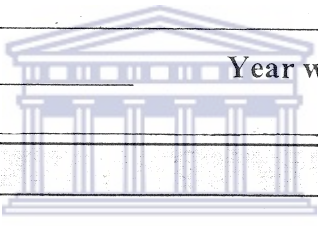
Navrae
Enquiries   Dr R.S. Cornelissen
Imibuzo
Telefoon
Telephone   021 - 467 2286
Ifoni
Faks
Fax   021 - 425-7445
Ifeksi
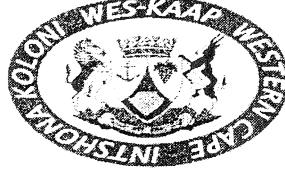
Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHIN THE WESTERN CAPE

Applicant Detail

Title: _____   Surname: _____

First Name(s): _____   Gender: _____

Name of Organisation (Directorate if WCED): _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____   Postal Code: _____

Telephone number: _____ Cell number: _____

Fax number:_____ E-mail address:_____

Name of Institution: _____

Student Number: _____ Degree/ Diploma: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____ Tel no. of Supervisor:_____

Year of Registration: _____ Year when Completing: _____

Specialization:_____ Faculty:_____

Title of Research: _____

_____

Research Question: _____

_____

_____

_____

Respondents:_____

Name(s) of Education Institution(s):_____

_____

_____

_____

Research Period in Education Institutions:

Start Date: _____   End Date: _____

Signature:_____   Date:_____

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Date Approved:_____ Approved By:_____

Reference number:_____

APPENDIX V

Navrae
Enquiries   Dr RS Cornelissen
IMibuzo

Telefoon
Telephone   (021) 467-2286
IFoni

Faks
Fax   (021) 425-7445
IFeksi

Verwysing
Reference   20041214-0003
ISalathiso
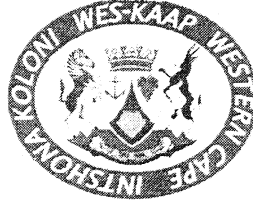
Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni
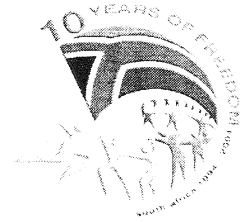
Ms Mamathealira Tau
Faculty of Education
University of the Western Cape
Private Bag X17
BELLVILLE
7535

Dear Ms M. Tau

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: AN INVESTIGATION OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN DISTRICT BASED SUPPORT TEAM, SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT TEAM AND THE PARENTS IN ONE SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN CAPE.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1.   Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2.   Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3.   You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4.   Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5.   The Study is to be conducted from **19th January 2005 to 24th March 2005.**
6.   No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December 2005).
7.   Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8.   A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the Principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9.   Your research will be limited to the following school: **Impendulo Primary School.**
10.   A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Education Research.
11.   The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
    The Director: Education Research
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Ronald S. Cornelissen
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 14th December 2004

MELD ASSEBLIEF VERWYSINGSNOMMERS IN ALLE KORRESPONDENSIE / PLEASE QUOTE REFERENCE NUMBERS IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE / NCEDA UBHALE IINOMBOLO ZESALATHISO KUYO YONKE IMBALELWANO

GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LAER-PARLEMENTSTRAAT, PRIVAATSAK X9114, KAAPSTAD 8000
GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LOWER PARLIAMENT STREET, PRIVATE BAG X9114, CAPE TOWN 8000

WEB: http://wced.wcape.gov.za

School Based Support Team questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

NAME OF SCHOOL: ....

GRADE: ....

DATE: ....

QUESTIONNAIRE TO SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT TEAM

1. How do you feel when you have a learner with a barrier to learning or disability in your class?

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2. Describe the kinds of learners with barriers that are in your class.

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3. What do you do when a learner has difficulty?

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4. Explain how you identify Learners with Special Educational Needs and then describe the procedure you follow.

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5. How do you collaborate with other class teachers in your school?

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6. Describe how you think SBST can assist you in your teaching.

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7. Is it helpful to have SBST in your school? Explain.
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8.   How often does the team meet?
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9. Describe the problems that you encounter in classrooms.
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10. Explain how you think you can work with other teachers to help learners with special educational needs?
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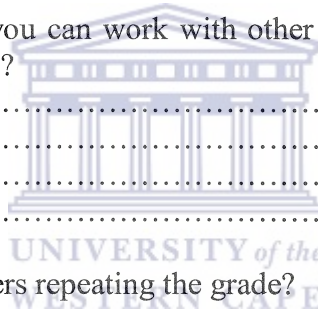
11. Do you have many learners repeating the grade?
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11. (a) If yes, how do you address this problem?
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12. Do you have many learners dropping out of school?
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12. (a) If yes, how do you address this problem?
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13. Describe the kind of support you get from the school clinic?
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14. Describe the kind of support you get from parents.
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15. Rank the areas of special need experienced at your school. (Beginning with the most serious).
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16. Explain how you would address diverse learning needs.
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17. How do you think Education Support Services could collaborate to help Learners with Special Educational Needs?
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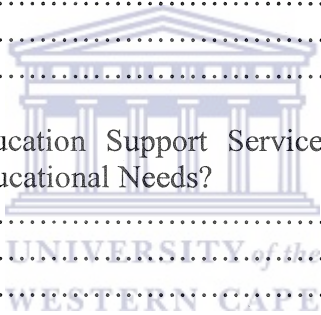
18. What kind of collaboration exists between the SBST and DBST?
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19. How is the SBST managed?
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20. Discuss the strengths of working together as a SBST.
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21. Discuss the strengths of working together as SBST and DBST.

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22. Describe a successful collaboration that you experienced.

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23. Discuss the weaknesses of working together as a SBST

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24. Discuss the weaknesses of working together as SBST and DBST.

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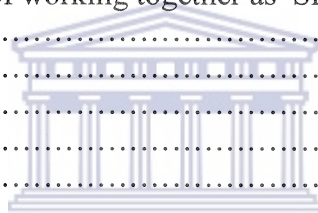
25. Does the DBST organise workshops for the SBST members?

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26. If yes, explain how.

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27. Do you think there is enough support from DBST?   Yes……   No ……

25. (a) If no, explain what you think can be done?

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……………………………………………………………………………………………………
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26. How often do DBST members visit your school?

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27. Do you think the education offered is responsive to learner diversity? Explain.

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28. Does the collaboration ensure that all learners have the best possible opportunities to learn?

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29. What are the challenges facing the team?

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Bio-demographical questionnaire to SBST

Make a tick or write on the line next to the appropriate figure/answer.

Gender   : M...... F......

Marital status : married..., divorced..., separated...., widow/widower, single....

Age   : 20-24....
       25-29....
       30-34....
       35-39....
       40-44....
       45-49....
       50-54....
       Other....

Years of teaching experience: ....

Qualifications   :..

Area of specialisation:..............Phase:...............Learning area........................

First language   :...................................Second Language:..................

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

APPENDIX VII

Sample of School Based Support Team questionnaire transcript

TB

1. How do you feel when you have a learner with a barrier to learning or disability in your class?	
I feel happy because I know how to handle the child with a learning barrier	Feelings and Positive attitude
2. Describe kinds of learning barriers that are in your class.	
Learning and physical disabilities	Description of barriers to learning
3. What do you do when a learner has difficulty?	
I speak to TST members about the difficulty.	Procedure
4. Explain how you identify Learners with Special Educational Needs and then describe the procedure you follow.	
I identify by paying attention to him, may be the learner cannot write and read. I contact TST members.	Identifying barriers to learning
5. How do you collaborate with other class teachers in your school?	
By talking to them and explaining problems in class.	Collaboration with teachers
6. Describe how you think SBST can assist you in your teaching.	
They assist us with social workers, psychologists, psychometrics and special needs.	Assistance Benefits
7. Is it helpful to have SBST in your school? Explain.	
Because of helping learners with learning disabilities and physical disabilities.	Assistance
8. How often does the team meet?	
Not answered	
9. Describe the problems that you encounter in classrooms?	
Problems of learners with disabilities.	

	Barriers to learning
10. Explain how you think you can work with other teachers to help Learners with Special Educational Needs?	
By teaching them how to help learners with disabilities	Support Collaboration
11. Do you have many learners repeating the grade?	
Yes	
11(a) If yes, how do you address this problem?	Addressing issues of repeaters
Straggle with her name	
12. Do you have learners dropping out of school	
no	
12a If yes, how do you address this problem?	
no	
13. Describe the kind of support from the school clinic or parents?	
I get a lot of support by getting a social worker	Support
14. Describe the kinds of support you get from the parents.	
Parents are helping by coming to school if the learner has a problem.	Parental support
15. Rank the areas of special need experienced at your school. (Beginning with the most serious).	
Writing, reading	Ranking barriers to learning
16. Explain how you would address diverse learning needs.	
I explain by teaching teachers by diverse learning needs.	Collaboration Coordination
17. How are Education Support Services linked to help Learners with Special Educational Needs?	
Yes, by building a community school.	Collaboration Suggestion
18. What kind of collaboration exists between the SBST and DBST?	
TST has a collaboration with DBST if the child has a problem, that child is referred to the SBST.	Collaboration within SBST
19. How is the SBST managed?	

By referring learners to psychologist, social worker and doctors.	Collaboration with the DBST
20. Discuss the strengths of working together as a SBST?	
To help and improve learners with learning disabilities.	Benefits of collaboration
21. Describe the strengths of working together as SBST and DBST?	
To work hand in hand help us to bring brighter future to the learner.	Benefits of collaboration
22. Describe a successful collaboration that you experienced.	
Help of learner from mainstream school to special school..	Successful collaboration
23. Discuss the weaknesses of working together as a SBST?	
They work hand in hand, no weaknesses.	Collaboration within the SBST
24. Discuss the weaknesses of working together as SBST and DBST.	
They work hand in hand	Collaboration of SBST and DBST
25. Does DBST organise workshops for the SBST members?	
Yes, they organise workshops	Collaboration of SBST and DBST
26. If yes, explain how	
They come to school to train us how to form TST members and how it works.	Support, collaboration benefits
27. Do you think there is enough support from DBST? **Yes….**No….	
28. If no, explain what you think can be done?	
29. How often do DBST members visit your school?	
Many times they come	
	DBST visits frequency

30. Do you think education offered is responsive to learner diversity? Explain. *Yes, it is because of inclusive education that is helping learners with disabilities.* 31. Does the collaboration ensure that all learners have the best possible opportunities to learn? *Yes all the learners have the best opportunities.* 32. What are the challenges facing the team? *Learning and physical disabilities. Learners who cannot write and read.*	Education responsiveness Benefits of collaboration Challenges Barriers to learning

APPENDIX VIII

District Based Support Team questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

NAME OF EMDC:...

DATE: ....

QUESTIONNAIRES TO DISTRICT BASED SUPPORT TEAM

1. How are Education Support Services linked to help Learners with Special Educational Needs?
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2. How is the DST managed?
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3. What kind of collaboration exists between the TST and DST?
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4. Discuss the strengths of working together as teams (DST & TST).
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6 Discuss the strengths of working together within the DST.
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7. Describe what you understand by a successful collaboration.
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8. Discuss the challenges of working together as teams DST & TST?

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9. Discuss the challenges of working together within the DST.

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10. What have you experienced as barriers to effective support provision to schools?

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11. What support do you give to schools about Learners with Special Educational Needs?

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12. Describe the problems you encounter when working with schools?

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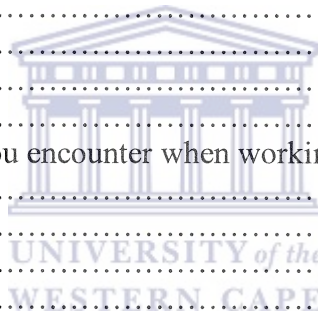
13. How often do you visit schools?

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14. What seems to hinder success on your collaboration?

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15. What improvement do you think can be done so far to help Learners with Special Educational Needs?

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16. Explain your area of specialisation.

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17. Are there other challenges facing the team?

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18. What do you think can be done to overcome those challenges?

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Bio demographical questionnaire to DBST

Make a tick or write on the line next to the appropriate figure/answer.

Gender   : ....

Marital status   : married..., divorced..., separated...., widow/widower, single....

Age   : 20-24....
                      25-29....
                      30-34....
                      35-39....
                      40-44....
                      45-49....
                      50-54....
                      Other....

Years of experience : ....

Qualifications   : ....

Area of specialisation:.............

First language   : ....

Second language   : ....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

District Based Support Team questionnaire transcript

OA

1 How are Education Support Services linked to help Learners with Special Educational Needs? *Each DST member e.g. social worker, psychologist has different role within the support networks/ the principals of the schools are notified about the job description and field of expertise of each of the DST members. Sometimes overlapping may occur. e.g. HIV work, then members will organise among themselves how the case will be managed.*	Coordination Collaboration
2 How is DST managed? *We have meetings every two weeks. Our responsibilities and job descriptions are made available to all members. New projects are also discussed and each person's role identified. e.g. behaviour modification. Often other pillars e.g. IMI or curriculum are also drawn into the project e.g. Career expo.*	Meeting frequency DBST management
3 What kind of collaboration exists between the TST and DST? *It differs from school to school. DST members are responsible for the establishment of TSTs in schools. Workshops for training TST members in specific skills are also done by DST member when more information or help is needed. TSTs provide DST members with vital information; they understand and manage the case correctly. TSTs refer learners experiencing barriers to DST members.*	Collaboration between the DBST and SBST
4 Discuss the strengths or working together as teams (DST & TST). *Better understanding of specific case. Can set up prevention plans. Shared knowledge. Ongoing support is made possible. Assistance to each other. Shared workload. Brings hope.*	Benefits of collaboration between the DBST and SBST
5 Discuss the strengths of working together within the DST. *Better understanding of each others field of expertise,*	Benefits of collaboration within the DBST

shared workload, moral support, knowledge gained.	
6 Describe what you understand by a successful collaboration.	
When all members walk away feeling they have been able to make a contribution and that they have gained from intervention. Most <u>importantly</u> when you can witness a difference in your client.	Successful collaboration Benefits of collaboration
7 Discuss the challenges of working together as DST and TST.	
Time constraints. Not enough time to get together as often as needed. One party not doing its share. Blushing points of views.	Challenges of collaboration between DBST and SBST
8 Discuss the challenges of working together within the DST.	
Time constraints. Members not showing up on cases. Not completing tasks.	Challenges of working together within DBST
9 What have you experienced as barriers to effective support provision to schools?	
Language. I am Afrikaans speaking and have to use an interpreter to do interventions in Khayelitsha.	Challenges of collaboration and support
10 What support do you give to schools about Learners with Special Educational Needs?	
Identifying the barriers- assessment. Therapy, parents consultations and guidance, staff development, HIV/ AIDS management, staff support via therapeutic interventions, referrals to NGOs and other DST members + specialised educational settings, workshops, management strategies of learners experiencing barriers to learning – poverty and HIV/AIDS.	Support to schools
11 Describe problems you encounter when working with the schools?	
Parents not showing up for appointments, language, rape, language delays, visual motor problems, witnesses of violence, intellectual disabilities, visual, hearing, divorce, suicidal thoughts, violence at school being the perpetuator, depression, conduct disorder, behaviour.	Challenges of collaboration Barriers to learning Factors to barriers to learning
12 How often do you visit the school?	

When they send referrals I contact then immediately and set up an appointment. Feedbacks also. If there are no referrals generally twice a term.	DBST visits frequency to schools
13 What seems to hinder success on your collaboration?	
Not all parties being present, not receiving referrals soon enough, time constraints, being overwhelmed by workload. DST members not being debriefed.	Challenges of collaboration
14 What improvements do you think can be done to help Learners with Special Educational Needs?	
More educators, smaller classes, all this consultation + expert advise is wasted when educators are overworked and have 58 learners (often many experiencing poverty as barrier) in one class. Better training of educators before a new idea is implemented. There was an inclusion policy being 'implemented' before teachers were trained. This led to negative attitudes and feelings of being disempowered.	Suggestion to overcome challenges to collaboration Challenges
15 Explain your area of specialisation.	
Psychology- educational psychologist, identifying the barriers- assessment, therapy. parents consultations and guidance, staff development, HIV/ AIDS management, staff support via therapeutic interventions, referrals to NGOs and other DST members + specialised educational settings.	Area of specialisation
16 Are there any other challenges facing the team?	
Transport or lack thereof. Multiple meetings arranged on same day.	Challenges
17 What do you think can be done to overcome those challenges?	
See above answers. Especially 15	Suggestions

APPENDIX X

School Governing Body English questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

NAME OF SCHOOL: ....

DATE: ....

QUESTIONNAIRE TO PARENTS (School Governing Body)

1. What support do you provide to the school to help Learners with Special Educational Needs or with disability?
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2. How often do you meet?
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3. How do you collaborate with the school community?
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4. Are there any obstacles that may at times prevent collaboration with teachers? If yes, list them.
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5. How do you share information about learners?
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6. Tick your position in the School Governing Body. Parent…, educator…., non teaching staff……..

7. How do you help other parents who have Learners with Special Educational Needs or disabilities?
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8. Discuss the strengths of working together in the SGB.
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9. Describe a successful collaboration that you have experienced.
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10. Discuss the challenges of working together as teams.
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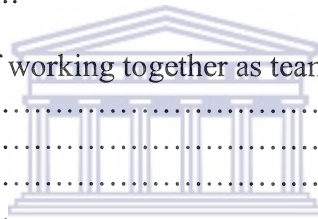
11. What are the challenges facing the team?
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12. Do you think there is enough support provided to Learners with Special Educational Needs?
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13. If no, what would you suggest?
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Bio-demographical questionnaire to SGB

Make a tick or write on the line next to the appropriate figure/answer.

Gender   : M……   F……

Marital status   : married…, divorced…, separated…., widow/widower, single….

Age   : 20-24….
                      25-29….
                      30-34….
                      35-39….
                      40-44….
                      45-49….
                      50-54….
                      Other….

Qualifications   :……………………………

Position in SGB   :…………………………..

First language   :……………………………

Second language   :……………………………

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

School Governing Body Xhosa questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

IGAMA LESIKOLO: ……………………………………….

UMHLA: ……………………………………………………...

IMIBUSO EYA EBAZELINI

1. Yiyiphi inkxaso oyinika isikolo ukunceda abantwana abakhubazekileyo nabaneengxaki?

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2. Nihlangana kangaphi?

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3. Unxibelelana njani nesikolo?

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4. Ingaba ikhona imiqolo ethintela ukuba ungakwazi ukusebenzisana nootitshala. Ukuba impendulo ngu EWE, yidwelisa.

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5. Nabelana njani ngolwazi olumalunga nabantwana?

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6. Chonga isikhundla sakho kwi SGB: Umzali….., utitshala……, ilungu elingafundisiyo………

7. Ubanceda njani abonye abazali abanabontwana abakhubozekileyo nebaneengxaki zokufunda?

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8. Chaza iziphumo ezihle ezidalwa kukusebenzisana kwi SGB.

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9. Chaza impumelelo obenayo ngenxa yentsebenziswano.

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10. Chaza imiceli-mingeni yokusebenza njengamaqela.

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11. Yiyiphi emiceli-mngeni ehlongabezana nayo eli qela?

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12. Ucinga ukuba yanele inkxeso enikwa abantwana abaneengxaki ekufundeni?

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13. Ukuba impendulo ngu Hayi, ungacebisa ntoni?

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....

....

....

Yenza isingxi/isanqa okanye ubhale ecaleni kwegama ocinga ukuba lelona lifanele impendulo yakho

Isini   uyindoda........   ungumfazi

Utshatile...... wawuke watshoda nawaqawla......umtshato ...... ingaba nisohlukene okwangoku nowakwakho...... ungumhlolo/umhlolokazi.....awutshatanga....

Iminyaka   20-24
                  25-29
                  30-34
                  35-39
                  40-44
                  45-49
                  50-54
                  ....

izigaba zamabanga ngokwemfundo

....

izikhundla osibambileyo

....

ulwimi lwakowenu/lokugala

…………………………………………………………………………………………

olunye ulwimi olaziyo……………………………………………………………..

NDIYABULELA NGE NTSEVENZISWANO YAKHO

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

School Governing Body questionnaire transcript

PD

1 What support do you provide to the school to help Learners with Special Educational Needs or with disability?	
To give them love so that they cannot see themselves isolated from other learners.	Support to LSEN
2 How often do you meet?	
We meet six times.	SGB meeting frequencies
3 How do you collaborate with the school community?	
By standing for parents and our children's rights.	Collaboration with the school
4 Are there any obstacles that may at times prevent collaboration with teachers? If yes, list them.	
No, there are no obstacles that prevent collaboration with teachers	Collaboration
5 How do you share information about learners?	
By having meetings and receiving information from teachers.	Sharing information with the school community
6 Tick your position in the School Governing Body. Parent…, educator…., non teaching staff……..	
Parent (chair person)	Position in the SGB
7 How do you help other parents who have Learners with Special Educational Needs or disabilities?	
We help them by working together and find out what problems they encounter so that we organise social workers.	Support to parents of LSEN

8 Discuss the strengths of working together in the SGB.	
In SGB, we work collaboratively with understanding humanity and trust as a team.	Benefits of collaboration
9 Describe a successful collaboration that you have experienced.	
It is to see the school progressing and seeing the learners develop through education and sport.	Successful collaboration
10 Discuss the challenges of working together as teams.	
We work very excitedly together.	Benefits of collaboration
11 What are the challenges facing the team?	
It is to develop the school, teachers and our children's education. To keep the school neat and tidy inside and outside.	Challenges Suggestions
12 Do you think there is enough support provided to Learners with Special Educational Needs?	
We do have the teacher that helps those learners who are slow but it would be better if another teacher can be added.	Not enough support Support
13 If no, what would you suggest?	
I would suggest that we should not loose hope until we succeed.	suggestion

Sample of SBST interview transcript

This is a transcript of SBST conducted at the school. It was a follow up interview that was done orally for the responses that were not clear after the participants filled in questionnaires. This interview was conducted at the school in LSEN classroom. This was interviewed on audiotape and transcribed.

Greetings were made and participants again were assured of ethical concerns. This includes voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality and feedback.

Some of the questions were repeated even if they were answered in the first questionnaires.

R is used to represent the researcher. While **P** is used to represent the participant.

Participant (B)

R: Described the kinds of learners with barriers that are in your class.

P: Ok, the kinds of barriers that learners experience in my class are: learning barrier, learners that cannot write and cannot read and some of them if they write they leave vowels, and the second one is learners with physical disability,…some of them, some of the learners have physical disability in one arm one hand some on one hand. That is the kind barriers I have in my class.

R: Ok, How do they perform in class besides that disability…that physical disability?

P: Mhh….

R: Their performance?

P: Yah, their performance is very well in the class except that they have…..no problem about that, because they have…….

R: Because the problem is on the disability.

R: Do they come to you as the Learning Support Teacher?

P: Yes, they come to me as LST and they go back to class.

R: Ok, can you explain how you identify learners with special educational needs.

P: I identify learners with special educational needs some of them cannot write may be in grade 1 or 2 they cannot write a vowel they do not recognise 'a', which one is 'e' which one is 'i' which one is 'o' which one is 'u'
And the ones in grades 4 up to 7 they write a name without a vowel because in Xhosa you cannot write without a vowel, they write without a vowel.

P: Ok.

R: Is it only in writing or reading? What about mathematics?

P: Yah, maths, yah like maths if they count… some thing… like writing of numbers from grades 1 up to 2 they just twist the numbers, they do not write the numbers well.

R: If you find such learners, what procedure do you follow?

P: The procedure that I follow is to talk to the class teacher, because I make the cooperative teaching with them in the class so I talk to the class teacher.

R: Ok, you don't have your own class?

P: Yes, I don't have my own class even the class teacher may be she identified that learner, so I give her a referral form so that s/he gives it back to me to refer that learner to the TST.

R: To the TST.

P: Yes.

R: After that, if the problem persists then what should you do?

P: Like if the learner persists to do that I can help them to cut the vowels, the sounds, you know if you write this, you must do this, if you write this, you must do this, if a learner continues to do like that I talk to the class teacher I make an arrangement with the class teacher, and if I am doing particular sound, the class teacher must do it as well. If the learner fails to do both I must try to consult the social worker, or the psychologist to help the learner.

R: So how do you collaborate with other class teachers in the school?

P: Yah....

R: How do you work together with other teachers?

P   The other teachers I work with them like I am making the collaborative teaching in the class, I am going to come in the class with them.

R: Ok, you also go to the classes not only this room?

P: Yahhh, I also go to the classes, work and help them if the learner is like this, you must do this. if it is not helping that learner you must come and send the learner back to me getting the referral form and we plan with them because if the learner is here I will plan with the class teacher if I am making the vowels here the teacher should make the same thing not do something different in the class.

R: Ok, how often does the team meet, ...the TST?

P: Meet fortnightly, on Thursdays

R: On Thursdays, fortnightly?

P: Yes.

R: How do you see your meetings? / ...What issues do you discuss?

P: Yah, the issues we discuss are referral forms and the social problems with the learner like the learner will be abused at home or raped... like other things.

R: Ok.

R: Are there any learners repeating the grades?

P: Yes, they have learners that repeat the grade.

R: Are they many or...

P: Not many but a small number.

R: Ok.

R: Do you think it is because of OBE curriculum that may be a learner has to continue with their studies even if there might be some learning needs that you can notice on that learner or that a learner should not repeat the same phase for several times?

P: Yah, like if the learner is repeating the class like most of them are the ones who are in the LSEN class but not most of them at least one learner that didn't

cope even to do things yah, if it is difficult, it is difficult may be he cannot write may be most in grade one it is difficult even to write but I don't know.

R: Ok.

R: What kind of support do you get from the EMDC?

P: The kind of support I get from the school clinic /EMDC is psychologist from school clinic, social workers I get them.

R: Do they have counsellors?

P: Yes, they have counsellors and NGOs; we have NGOs in Khayelitsha that can help us like….

R: What's the name of that NGO?

P: Empilwene,,,Empilwene, they have social workers to help us, they have psychiatrist.

R: Ok, that means you are not working with only the school clinic?

P: Yahhh, I am not working with the school clinic only, yes, if I don't find help… I phone the school clinic if I don't get quick help I phone the NGOs and I know the one in Nonqeba family in Khayelitsha and AIDS sex in Khayelitsha, we are working together… there are social workers there. They can help us with learners with behavioural problems, …child abuse, some of them are raped, some of them are abused at home, they help us.

R: Is it free of charge for that NGO?

P: Yes, it is free of charge

R: Ok.

R: Ok, what about the support you get from the parents? …Is there any support you get from the parents?

P: Yah, I get the support, I call the parent before the learner can come to my class, the class teacher and me.

R: That is the learner with special educational needs?

P: Yah, I call the parents, I talk to them in order to understand that it is not because the learners comes here because he is a slow learner, because they describe them as slow learners, so I must explain to them if the learner is coming…most of the learners if they are coming to the new teacher may be they did not understand the teacher but if they come to this class ……..they will go back to thier class because they do not stay here for the whole term because most of them she comes here and improves then goes back to class.

R: Ok, if the learner improves she comes back to the class?

P: Yes, I am working hand in hand with the teacher.

R: I noticed that there are areas of special educational needs experienced in this school, according to your observations, can you rank them in order,… which one do you see it as the most serious?… May be writing, reading or numeracy which one do you see as the most serious one?

P: The most serious is writing, because reading has improved very well. Ealier it was reading but it has improved because there is a reading period from ten o'clock up to half past ten, the reading of the teacher of the learner through the intercom, the reading has improved, yah, that is writing like I told you grades 4 up to 7 still leave the vowels because in Xhosa you cannot write any word without a vowel.

R: What about English?

P: Yah, even in English they still omit some letters.

R: Is it the majority of learners or it is just those who come to the LSEN class

P: It is not the majority.

R: So, how do you address the diverse learning needs?... may be one learner has a problem with writing and at the same time with reading and numeracy?

P: As the teacher will come with the referral forms, I will ask them which side a learner has the problem, is it writing? Is it reading? and if it is writing like she is in grade 2 she is going to sing single sound, double sound and triple sound in Xhosa so what I am going to ask if is it single /double sound and then if he is good in single sound, I am going to start double sound , make the other one and say he is good in single and double, so we are going to start with triple sound, so I am going to take all learners with referral forms and I am going to sort them. If they have similar problem like single sound I group them, double sound I group them, triple sound I group them, maths I group them alone like that.

R: Does it happen that the same learner comes here for numeracy and then at the same time for literacy?

P: Yah, they come for numeracy and literacy at the same time.

R: Ok.

R: How do you think that ESS could collaborate to help learners with special educational needs?

P: I think what I am going to do like the department of education helps us ..each school must have its social worker, not only when you have a problem you must phone the social worker and must have its psychologist and we must have ipsychiatrists because one of the learners last year said 'my desire is to die, it is not to leave. so I am going to phone the Groote Schuur to help that learner, so if they are going to help us with that, not with the teachers only but with the social worker, with psychologist, every thing that is going to help the learner when she has a problem.

R: Going back to the response about NGOs, it means that there might be lack of social workers or psychologists, don't you think so?

P: Yes, they have a psychologist, they have psychiatrist, but the psychologist is one and the psychiatrist is also one.

R: Even at the school clinic/ EMDC?

P: Yah.

R: You don't get that support?

P: Yah I don't get support that I need because even in my department now we don't have a social worker. That is why I work hand in hand with that NGO, Empumleni and Noqeba family to help me.

R: So what about the school nurse at the school clinics?

P: We don't have the nurse at the school clinic we get the school nurse in Harare clinic

R: Oh right I see.

R: How is the TST managed?

P: Yah, I am a member of the TST, I am one of the member of the TST but if we have a problem we discuss with TST and if I don't get a solution then to the principal, and the principal writes the letter to the governing body.

R: Is the principal a member of the TST?

P: She is not the member of the TST. We are the members of the TST and we must go to the principal if we want to go to the governing body, and the principal writes a letter so that we meet maybe on Sunday with the governing body.

R: Oh right I see.

R: What are the strengths that you notice of working together within the TST?…the strengths, …the advantages of working together?

P: It is good to work together with the TST because we are having learners with many problems.

R: So what do you do?

P: Yes, we discuss what we are going to do to that learner.

R   Share ideas?

P: Yah yah, and the file the learner which are abused we write a case, if the case starts here I must write that and then send to Noqeba family for counselling until the learner is alright.

R: What about the disadvantages?

P: Mhh…

P: If the meeting starts at twenty past two, may be the other TST members will come late at ten to three.

R: Is it?

P: Mhh

R: Ok, how do you address that problem?

P: Yes, I talk to them.

R: What do they normally say?

P: May be next time they come early, I will make a plan.

R: Do you think there is enough support from the school clinic/EMDC?

P: Yah, it is not enough because I get the psychologist only in the school clinic

R: The psychologist only?

P: Yah, most of the things wait and they don't sort them for us, only psychologist comes here …., I don't know.

R: But after a long time?

P: Yah.

R: What about a leaning support coordinator, a learning support advisor I meant to say?

P: Yah, they say we don't have a social worker,

R: Do you think that the education offered is responsive for learner diversity?

P: Yah, I think it yes because the curriculum that I have now NRCS, if you have a class you must look for every learner in the class and you must group them according to their abilities, if they work slow you must not hurry the learner, you must group them according to their,m…

R: So you group them in their class?

P: Yah, in the class the one who works hard and the other one, and the LSEN learner back and you must give them the different tasks not the same, you must not give the LSEN learner like the one with the first beginning class you must work hand in hand with them.

R: Does working together ensure that a learner has possibilities to learn?
P: Yah, because I have a learner in grade 6 with a …..problem at home, so I discuss with the TST, and then I decided to send to Nonceba family so they make counselling on Wednesdays after school but before that learner didn't work well in books, every thing was wrong, but at least they got…, I think it was the fifth time last week so she was improved.

R: What are challenges facing the team (TST) (fore coming)?
P: Child abuse, behaviour problems but they are not many, but rape cases are many.
R: At home?
P: In the community.
R: In the community?
P: Because the other learner is trapped by the other guy that she didn't know when she was going to the shop.
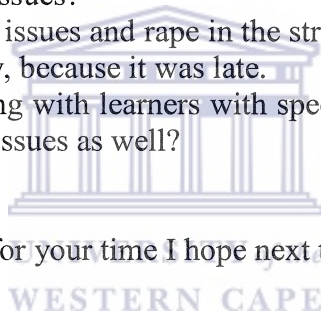R: So you deal with such issues?
P: Yes, we deal with such issues and rape in the streets there, so even that learner cannot identify that guy, because it was late.
R: You are not only dealing with learners with special educational needs you are also dealing with such issues as well?
P: Yes.
R: Ok.
R: Thank you very much for your time I hope next time I will bring the feedback

APPENDIX XIV

Observation criteria for DBST & LSEs

1. Workshop:..
2. Date:..
3. Time started:...
4. Time ended:...
5. Any break during the workshop...
6. Duration of the seminar:...
7. Name of the host EMDC:..
8. Physical location of the school:...
9. Venue of the workshop in the EMDC:...
10. Presence of the officials from the EMDC:.....................................
11. Portfolio of the officials:..
12. Clusters of schools in attendance:...
13. Number of participants:...
14. Language used:...
15. What is the purpose of the workshop?...
16. Is the information transmitted............ audience:.........good/fair/poor
17. Use of verbal communication:.......... gestures,.... facial expression...........
18. Use of latest teaching aids e.g. projectors:......................................
19. Gender balance during the seminar:...
20. The racial group attendance::...
21. Age of participants:...
22. Punctuality of participants:...
23. Speakers:...
24. Activities engaged:..
25. The interaction between team members...
26. Duration of each activity:...
27. The theme of the workshop:..
28. Collaborative problem solving..
29. Arriving at solutions..
30. Did a seminar accomplish its objective?...

Transcription of observations

Observations in EMDC

Day two

Name of the workshop:
Informed Reading Instruction for Trainers and Advisors of Educators for Young, Developing or Struggling Readers

Date: *25 May 2005*

Time started: *08:30*

Time ended: *16:00*

Any break during the seminar: *45 minutes tea break and one hour lunch.*

Duration of the workshop: *Four days*

Name of the host EMDC: *EMDC Metropole East*

Physical location of the EMDC: *Kuilsriver*

Venue of the workshop in the EMDC: *Lecture hall*

Presence of the officials from the EMDC: *Yes*

Portfolio of the officials: *Learning Support Advisors, School Psychologists, Curriculum Advisor, Deputy Chief Education Specialist*

Clusters of schools in attendance: *EMDC East schools*

Number of participants: *59Learning Support Educators (members of the SBST) including officials from the EMDC.*

Other participants present: *Non-participant observer*

Language used: *English*

The purpose of the workshop: *To demonstrate to participants a lesson with the struggling readers.*

Is the information transmitted? *Yes*………. audience:………*good*

Use of verbal communication:…*Yes* gestures,…*Yes*. Facial expression…*Yes*……..

Use of latest teaching aids: *Overhead projector, handouts, and newspapers.*

Gender balance during the seminar: *Two men (one was school psychologist an did not finish the day) and fifty-seven females*

The racial group attendance: *Imbalance, thirty-four coloureds and twenty-five blacks.*

Age of participants: *Ranged between twenty-five and fifty-five.*

Punctuality of participants: *Satisfactory*

Speakers: *One speaker*

Activities engaged:
Activity one: *Demonstration: Eleven learners were invited from the neighbourhood school for an instructor to demonstrate teaching reading to struggling learners with the newspapers. Different activities were provided to learners; learners followed the instructions for looking at the paragraph that they were supposed to look at, and then rose up their hands for answers. Several activities were provided in intervals, one at the time.*

The interaction between team members: *Fine but more coloured teachers in a group, only few were mixed.*

Duration of each activity: *This depended on whether there were many questions after the activity or not.*

The theme of the workshop: *Good mediators and the reading process. A live demonstration with struggling readers.*

Collaborative problem solving: *Yes*

Arriving at solutions: *Good*

Did a seminar accomplish its objective? *Yes*

General comments: *There were a total of eleven learners with reading difficulties; there were three boys and eight girls who aged between ten and thirteen. When these learners entered the Lecture Room were not free, even at the beginning of the lesson, I think learners were not free because the environment was different from their classroom, again they were being observed by other teachers again the person who was teaching them was not familiar to them. As time went on, learners were free as they answered the questions asked. According to me, the lesson went well because learners participated fully to the activities. To an extend that the real teacher commended that she was surprised as she pointed out that one of the learners never answered the questions in the classroom but she was the first one to answer. Learners asked to sing for participants and they did.*

Only two teachers were late and arrived within the first ten minutes of the workshop.