HOW ARE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE SUPPORTED STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS EXPERIENCING EDUCATION IN REGULAR CLASSROOM SETTINGS IN THE TOWN SCHOOLS IN WESTERN PROVINCE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA? A CASE STUDY APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

The study considers special needs students' education development in the context of the Papua New Guinea (PNG) education system. In particular, it examines the experiences, perceptions and expectations of three groups involved, which are teachers, parents and special needs students themselves in relation to inclusive practices in mainstream school settings. While some research has been done in other areas of inclusive education in PNG, none has included the point of view of special needs students attaining education in regular class settings. The study aimed at discovering the extent to which the inclusive education (IE) policy and IE practices are enacted in regular schools in Daru, in PNG. IE practices can be found in schools in PNG, but many are not effective. In particular, we know very little about the special needs students' experiences, perceptions and expectations of IE in regular class environments, as their voices are not often heard.

The study undertaken used a qualitative research approach case study to gather data about IE practices in selected schools in Daru Island of Western Province, Papua New Guinea. The research design used was an embedded "single-case" format that strived to explore the reality of the SN students' experiences in regular classes through talking to them and the adults in their immediate environment. The case study approach used exploratory, descriptive and explanatory methodologies. In the exploratory part, a research framework was set within the context of the research question. In the descriptive part, the research described the concept of inclusive education and its development towards including SN students in PNG society, and in the explanatory part, it focused on the reasons and result of inclusive practices within the context of the children, teachers and adults who care for them. Specifically, interviews were conducted with four teachers, three parents and a focus group consisting of three special needs students. A mini non-participatory class observation was conducted for supplementary information. Data gathered were analysed using a thematic analysis approach.

The findings reveal that special needs students are very interested in attaining education to fulfil their dreams. Their parents' continuous support towards their SN children's personal livelihood development was helpful to their SN children. However, a number of social justice issues greatly impacted on how inclusive education for the SN students concerned was being practiced in regular classrooms. Issues included: lack of access to facilities, unbalanced curriculum, teacher-centred teaching rather than SN student-centred teaching and learning practices, limited resources, negative stereotypical behaviour by non-disabled people and social exclusion. This study concludes that more advocacy programmes and a change of people's mindset towards dealing with SN students in the schools and community are necessary to combat existing discriminatory attitudes and social segregation of special needs students within regular schools and their community.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

In the last century, ideological shifts in the educational, economic, and political sectors have brought many changes in the socio-economic development of many developing countries including Papua New Guinea (Fägerlind and Saha (1983). Education, economy and politics are three elements that rely on each other within the human and social development. Fägerlind and Saha (1983) single out education as the key element that plays an important role in all three developmental processes. Education has three roles in shaping and molding a person. The three roles are the developing the uniqueness of a person, assisting the process of differentiating and appreciating individual differences, and the integration of an individual's indigenous cultures, values and beliefs (Abosi & Koay, 2008). Yala, Kavanamur and Clements (2003) assert that historically, educated people enhanced changes to the socio-economic development of the country and education was a key variable that contributed to the wellbeing of a person's social life. Acemoglu, Johnson, Robinson and Yared (2005) point out that education also promotes democracy–in a culture of democracy–which enables development, thus leading "to greater prosperity, which is also thought to [be the] cause [of] political development" (p. 1).

This research sees that attainment of education as key to full participation of all citizens of PNG in assisting the continued growth and development of our country. This study affirms the right of people with disabilities/special needs to be fully educated so to become active participants on this developmental pathway.

1.1 Chapter outline

In Section 1.2 of this chapter, I share my personal experience of work with special needs (SN) students, teachers and family members. Section 1.3 focuses on the aim of the study. Empowering children with disabilities to experience their full potential through education is included in Section 1.4. The focus,

rationale, significance and scope of the study are covered in Sections 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8 respectively. The chapter concludes with Section 1.9, with the thesis overview.

1.2 Personal experience

I come from a teaching background with nine years (2006-2014) work experience as an inclusive education teacher with the inclusive education resource centres (IERC) in Papua New Guinea. My interest in working with disabled people and helping them to become self-reliant developed when I was at college. It all began during my first year at college when we were offered optional disability courses in addition to our normal teacher training studies. What motivated me most about these courses were the out-of-school activities, including the visits on Thursdays to the nearby schools and communities to conduct general awareness of people living with disabilities as well as their rights and responsibilities. The visits to these different environments were a relief from my stressful study moments. At the same time, my interest for working with people with disabilities started to grow. In my second year of college education, my interest towards working with children with disabilities became stronger. After graduating in 2005, I was employed by Callan Services, an non-government organisation (NGO) group providing goods and services for people living with disabilities around Papua New Guinea (PNG). I worked with them for nine years, before pursuing further studies in Master of Disability and Inclusion Studies at the University of Waikato in New Zealand.

My passion for working with the SN students developed with enthusiasm when I was actually working with them in the IERCs and mainstream schools. From personal experience, dealing with this group of children is overwhelming; therefore, a person has to have a kind loving heart to render appropriate services that are meaningful and that can bring great changes to the lives of these students with special needs. In addition, time, patience and resources are also needed to carry out the tasks successfully.

Initially, I was trained as a primary school teacher; however, when I joined the inclusive education sector, I found that being an inclusive education teacher was challenging, because there are many students with different abilities to deal with and to assist students with learning dilemmas become successful. My duty was to try to work closely with teachers, peers and parents as much as possible to meet the specific learning needs of each individual SN student. Developing their literacy, numeracy and daily life skills were my aims and objectives in all my planned programs. I have also conducted trainings for all stakeholders involved: elementary and primary teachers, parents of SN students and different NGO groups. Teachers were trained on the ways and the strategies needed to assist SN students as much as possible in the classroom situations. Parents and the NGO groups were trained on the rights of SN students and how everyone in the society should take care of SN students.

My profession, as an inclusive education teacher working for the disabled, especially for SN students' school, was amazing. I was delighted to see SN students learn the basic literacy and numeracy skills little-by-little and progressing on to the next education level. Their learning progress could be equated to watching a baby taking his/her first steps. From the SN student's point of view, I would say that a big learning difference margin does not matter to them, but it is their ability to attain the necessary knowledge and skills required to sustain their life and to become self-reliant after school that matters. The teaching and learning process can be repeated many times for the SN student to master the knowledge and skills they wish to acquire. My teaching programs specifically looked at catering for SN students. The same concept was taught several times in my lessons. Evaluations were carried out to monitor students' progress in learning and to identify their learning gaps. This helped to better focus on their special needs and get them through the coaching programs.

Research undertaken in this area later by Torombe in 2013 found that classroom teachers need to examine their knowledge, content, maturity and ability in implementing the National Special Education Policy, utilising the available

resources and getting assistance from IERC where necessary to help cater for SN students. In light of these findings, I aim to take the results of Torombe's (2013) study further, and to find out more about exactly what kind of support will enable SN students to better achieve their full potential just as would any abled-student within the classroom and the school as a whole in PNG. The points raised above show my burning desire to understand more about how each individual SN student experiences education in a regular classroom, and how their treatment and the quality of teaching and learning affects their lives.

1.3 The aim of the study

The study aims to explore how the effectiveness of inclusive education policy in regular schools may have affected the learning styles of IERC supported SN students in the town schools of Daru Island in PNG. It further explores the experiences of SN students attaining education in regular classes and those of people involved in the contribution of educational development for SN students such as the parents, teachers, peers and the community. The aim of the study is to ensure that the relevant national educational goals of PNG cater for SN students by considering its effectiveness for SN students. The indicators of a successful inclusive education are of education such as "access, participation and progress … achievement, attainment of SN students and appropriate curriculum [including] … climate, classrooms and diversity in education institutions" (U.S Department of Education, 1993, p. ii). The PNG inclusive education policy also recommends for SN students to be included in regular classes and their class teachers to receive training on how to teach SN students (Department of Education, 1993, as cited in Torombe, 2013). The study intends to examine the full experiences of IERC supported SN students in regular class settings.

1.4 Empowering students with disabilities

In empowering students with disabilities, educators should aim for such students to be socially accepted and included in all classroom situations (Lin, Lake, & Rice, 2008). James, Nadarajah and Karen (2012) assert that education "empowers individuals and communities by stimulating reflective citizenship and active

participation in cultural, political, and economic life, and by enabling people and communities to negotiate the increasing challenges and changes of their lifeworlds" (p. 342). Empowerment can be possible through an ongoing awareness of individuals SN students, communities and groups and advocating for the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities (James et al., 2012). Young SN teenagers should be given the opportunities to voice their rights to participate freely in any decision making of the community. This reduces the negative stereotypical behaviour, segregation and prejudices in a society.

Socio-political developments within human rights organisations advocate for all children to access basic primary education without discrimination, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, religion or other circumstances (Ajuwon, 2008; Ahmmed & Mullick, 2014; UNESCO, 1994). This research initiative asserts that SN students can become useful members of a community when they are educated and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for self-reliance and sustainability of their lives (Bartel & Lichtenberg, 1987). As a result, they can contribute meaningfully towards the development of their country, province, district or community, and become self-reliant. One of the areas lacking in teachers, schools and other contributors to inclusive education is seeing SN students as having their own voice, rather than looking at them in relation to specific areas of disability needs (Lewis, 2010). For instance, Papua New Guinea inclusive schools that cater for SN students do not give the chance for SN students have any voice in the class (Rooney, Papoutsaki, & Pamba, 2004). From personal experience, SN students are always shy, fearful, and ashamed to start a dialogue with the teacher and peers, including dialoguing during class activities. They are always the silent minority. Abosi and Koay (2008) state that one of the factors that contribute to these experiences that deprives SN students from having any voice is ignorance of the people in society. Attitudes of society, government, and individuals also create negative perceptions and degrade persons with disabilities (Fakolade, Adeniyi, & Tella, 2009). To overcome misunderstanding and prejudices for disabled people, education is a way forward

in combating "ignorance … oppression and domination in order [for SN students] to take active part in the wider society" (Avalos, 1993, p. 276).

1.5 The focus of the study

This study focuses on the experiences of SERCs' SN students in mainstream education, and teachers' perceptions, attitudes and contributions towards SN students' progress in education. The focus is placed on SN students, because it is their social interaction and engagement in the class and with the surrounding community which liberates them from discrimination and segregation (Bray, Noyes, Edwards, & Harris, 2014). SN students can experience many educational challenges. These challenges encompass experiences of violence or trauma, low academic outcomes, isolation and lack of respect for family members with disabilities (Dockett, Perry, Kearney, 2011). Teachers' social interaction and engagement with the SN students and family members and the surrounding community are influential in terms of overcoming these challenges. Negative stereotypical behaviours towards SN students both inside and outside of the school can deprive SN students from gaining access to learning basic literacy, numeracy and social skills (Mel, 2007), while positive behaviour towards SN students can make a significant difference in their academic progress.

The study further delves into the challenges commented on by Torombe (2013) in her thesis on policy and practices in SN education in schools in PNG. Her research found that each classroom teacher needs to examine their knowledge, content, maturity and ability in implementing the National Special Education Policy, utilising the available resources and getting assistance from SERCs where necessary to help cater for students with special needs (Torombe, 2013). The goal of this research is to take Torombe's findings further and to find out what types of support will enable SN students to experience their full potential, like abled-children in the class and in school do. It is crucial for teachers to build rapport and enhance relationships with and among all their students, including SN students and their family members. This leads to the establishment of good relationships between teachers and students, making teaching enjoyable and

creating a conducive environment for the individual with disabilities (Reid & Green, 2005). However, promoting inclusive education in mainstream schools is not solely the role of the teacher, but rather it involves collaborative work between teachers, students and family members. This study also seeks to examine this point more fully.

1.6 Rationale

The motive of this study is to further explore the experiences of SN students integrated into the mainstream schools from an IERC. Many SN students receive little educational support from their teachers, peers and parents, both in school and at home throughout PNG (Le Fanu, 2010; Torombe, 2013). There is a myriad of factors that hinder the smooth practice of inclusive education throughout the society and deny SN students the opportunity to experience full educational attainment. For instance, one of the factors that affect SN students' ability to access full inclusive education are native cultural belief systems and the upbringing of the family in the wider community (Rombo, 2007). Another factor is having a disabled child in the PNG context brings shame and guilt to the family. The society considers this particular SN child as unproductive, problematic, and cumbersome and therefore will not contribute anything resourceful to the community (Rombo, 2007). Parents prefer their abled child/ren, and their needs are met more often than those of their SN child/ren. The other factor that contributes to the delay in the SN student's inclusive education development is that teachers are faced with multiple complexities such as languages problem during bridging grades, less teaching and learning curriculum materials and the physical geographical location of the schools is not easy to access (Winis, 2013). Therefore, the constraints involved in these aspects make it difficult for SN students to gain better educational experiences. One of the ways to examine these factors that hinder SN students' capacity to fully enjoy the benefits of the inclusive education policy is to implement the inclusive education policy more effectively in every school setting. In order to implement the policy effectively, a study has to be conducted in this area to figure out the advantages and

disadvantages and the possible resolutions to the change of inclusive education practices in the schools.

1.7 Significance of the study

The information gathered on SN students' educational experiences in a regular school setting is very important to the educational transitional stage PNG is currently experiencing. The concept of this research study is to enhance SN students, in all classroom contexts, to have a voice. This is to ensure that there is equality being practiced in all the classrooms, and that the teaching and learning facilities are accessible by all students. This will enable the SN students to identify their own potential progress in their education system and become productive citizens in the community. Failure to cater for the needs of the SN students may lead to poor human development for people living with disabilities in Papua New Guinea.

Through its findings, this study may enable the Department of Education to more effectively implement the inclusive education policy to cater for SN students. From the findings provided, the education department can also formulate policies, modify teaching and learning curriculums and emphasise teachers' performance in the classroom. Recent studies have indicated that many SN students did not have their educational needs met in many classroom situations in PNG (Rombo, 2007; Torombe, 2013; Winis, 2013). Therefore, the practice of inclusive education in the classroom context by teachers will help alleviate the segregation and stereotypical behaviour of non-disabled people in communities throughout PNG. The other stakeholders in the community can also help promote inclusive practice outside of the classroom context, such as involving SN students in their daily social activities and allowing SN students to actively participate and make group decisions. This will result in SN students having high self-esteem and ensure their work in the school will also progress well.

1.8 Scope of the study

The research was undertaken in three schools selected on the island of Daru, in the Western Province in Papua New Guinea. The research concentrated on SN students' educational attainment and experiences in the classroom and school context. The SN students used in the study were ones identified by the IERC teacher for integration into mainstream schools. The study captured the approaches that teachers, peers and parents take to assist SN students to experience social reality in the classroom and school. The observations will give additional information about SN students' social interaction in the classroom.

In the case study approach, the data collecting instruments were semi-structured interviews and mini class observations. Data triangulation processes were done to keep the authenticity of data for reliability and to keep validity of the findings.

1.9 Outline of the thesis

This thesis has a total of five chapters. The introduction encapsulated an overview of the context of the study in the PNG primary school system. I introduced the topic of special needs education and the aim of the study: to understand the perception, experiences and expectation from teachers, peers and parents that contribute to the SN students' education development in the classroom and school. I briefly explained the development of the PNG education system in an international and national context to show their relationships. The second chapter focuses on the literature review of the research topic–how other researchers thought about the topic, and the developmental changes the modern education system had brought to SN students in PNG. Of particular importance, the literature review examines educational development, especially in relation to the inclusive education policy, and how the policy has treated SN students in the classroom and schools. It also discusses the medical and social model aspects of the different cultures inside of a contemporary disability studies framework. Chapter 3 focuses on the research design paradigms and the methods used to carry out the study. This chapter looked at the necessary research processes such as recruiting participants, ethical considerations and

how data was analysed. Chapter 4 looks at the research findings and how the findings are fitted into themes and ideas as a result of the study process. Chapter 5 is the discussion of the findings and their relationship with the literature in the area of my study. It will also feature a conclusion that sums up the research findings, further implications of the study, and the suggestions for further research to enable the practice of full and inclusive SN education in PNG society.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Special needs (SN) students in many countries, especially in developing countries, are not given the same education as non-special needs students in mainstream education (Ahsan & Burnip, 2007). As Ahsan and Burnip (2007) further argue, some of them are even denied formal education. Currently there is a global mandate from international organisations such as the United Nations (UN), UNESCO and United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) to ensure education for all (Hendricks, 2007; UNESCO, 1994). Hillel (2015) asserts that the intensity and the commitment to provide for the educational needs of SN students is as vital as providing educational needs for non-SN students. The setting up of an inclusive education policy in 1994 by the Papua New Guinea (PNG) National Department of Education in accordance with the Salamanca Statement 1994 on the principles, policy and practise in special needs (O'Donoghue, 1993; Torombe, 2013) follows this idea. This statement affirms that:

- "every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning,
- every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs,
- education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs,
- those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs" (UNESCO, 1994, p.viii).

Actioning these points in PNG means that all educational institutions and educators are to practice inclusive education in all classroom situations throughout the country (Deruage, 2007; Le Fanu, 2013a).

2.1 Chapter outline

This chapter will discuss key points from academic literature that are useful for this study about SN students from the inclusive education resource centre (IERC) and their experiences when being integrated into mainstream town schools. An examination of research about teachers' involvement with SN students and their families to promote inclusive education in a broader sense will also be included. This chapter is divided into ten sections that focus on international and PNG based inclusive education development and policy, inclusive practices and community involvement of SN students. The sections are as follows.

Section 2.2 outlines the research context, providing general information on the country including its demography and geographical features. It further explains the socio-political impact that has caused the development of inclusive education.

Section 2.3 includes an overview of education development in PNG as the focus of this study and the research context through an explanation of the role of inclusive education policies internationally and nationally on education for SN students.

Section 2.4 defines inclusive education (IE) and its role in the education system. It discusses teachers' involvement in IE development in the classroom context. Comparisons between PNG's IE development with other comparable countries in an international context are made.

Section 2.5 defines disability and how disability is viewed by different cultures inside of a contemporary disability studies framework. It briefly explores the theoretical aspect of how people in different cultural contexts relate to the word "disability" and examines the approaches taken by these people and cultures to viewing "disability" as either an individual or a social construct.

Section 2.6 delves into the ideas involved in social and medical models of disability, defining each disability model in the context of inclusive education and discussing the aspects of the disability model in developing inclusive practice for SN students. These models are used as they have informed the international policies such as the UNCRPD (2007) that countries around the world are using to promote inclusive practices. Barriers to inclusive practices of the medical and social models of disability in a developing country will also be included. This section will also briefly examine the concept of ableism, which is perceived by people with disabilities themselves as the most significant barrier in the society to the practice of full inclusion. These ideas are significant, as the voices of disabled people themselves have been influential in how international policies have been written.

Section 2.7 will focus on the early development of the Papua New Guinea's education system practices for SN students in regular schools. The Salamanca Statement 1994 was an impetus to inclusive education in Papua New Guinea. This opened the floodgates and made it possible for SN students to be recognised as having rights to education and other services. Also covered is the impact the education reform system has on the development of inclusive education and the development that has been happening in the global southern regions, especially Papua New Guinea (PNG). Research from PNG will be drawn on in this section.

Section 2.8 concentrates on the implementation of inclusive education policy in regular class and general school settings in the international and PNG context. It covers the practices of how inclusive education is to be practically applied in the regular class and school settings and on the flaws encountered when trying to put policy ideas into practice. It investigates specifically the perceptions of teachers, SN students, parents and wider community on what they think about the policy.

Section 2.9 includes the researcher's own point of view towards SN students' attainment of education in mainstream classes. It covers the ways in which we can increase the SN student's full potential in attaining educational benefits in a regular class. This section is followed by Section 2.10, which will look at the barriers associated with "disabling" inclusive practices in classes, schools and the communities. Suggestions from the literature about how to overcome the barriers are included.

2.2 The research context

Papua New Guinea is the second-largest island nation in the world and is located in the Southern Hemisphere in the Pacific Ocean. Its neighbouring countries are Indonesia, Australia and the Solomon Islands. Papua New Guinea is an independent state that gained its independence in 1975 (Waiko, 1993). Its capital city is Port Moresby, and it has approximately 26 provinces and a total landmass of 462,860 km2 (Iatau & Williamson, 1997; Le Fanu, 2013a; Torombe, 2013; Winis, 2013). The country has a rapidly growing population of 7 million people and a total of 800 plus native languages. The main languages used as a medium of business communication are English and Pidgin (Tok Pisin). PNG is situated in the tropics and has rugged mountains, swamps, lakes, rivers and seas. This sometimes makes service delivery very difficult for all government sectors (Winis, 2013). For instance, the complicated geographical features of the country and the modes of transport used in delivering quality education to many school-age children, including the SN students in the rural areas of Papua New Guinea, are sometimes inaccessible (James, Nadarajah, Haive, & Stead, 2012; Winis, 2013).

The majority of the population lives in the rural areas and sustains life by doing subsistence farming, whilst the minority of the population lives in the urban centres depending on the formal employment (Iatau & Williamson, 1997; Jenkin, Campain, Wilson, Murfitt & Clarke, 2015).

Yala, Kavanamur and Clements (2003) state that "Papua New Guinea is a member of the changing global community" (p. 222); therefore, PNG's education

system should embrace all factors in the development process. In 1993, the Papua New Guinea education system was working with the national constitution of Papua New Guinea to develop directive principles and goals for the education of its people, and developed the National Special Education Policies, which were implemented in 1994 (May, 2009; Torombe, 2013; University of South Pacific, 2016). The government's motive in the push for inclusive education was because they saw that there was a need for SN students to be taught in basic literacy, numeracy and daily life skills (Winis, 3013). The development of the Salamanca Statement in 1994 also coincided with these developments that further pushed for this enactment to be carried out immediately in different classroom situations (UNESCO, 1994). Prior to this push for inclusive education, there were only three special education schools established in main centres–Port Moresby, Lae and Goroka–to cater for students with special needs. For instance, according to Winis (2013), the Christian Brothers of the Catholic Church established the first IERC for the blind in Goroka in 1983. At that time, this was the only school that catered for blind students around Papua New Guinea, with the mainstream schools concentrating on non-disabled students. The fact that there was only one school catering for a specific disability inspired the Christian Brothers to lobby the government through the National Education Board Committee meetings for the integration of special education in the national education system in the early 1990s.

In 1993, the government included special education as a subject in the mainstream curriculum, and announced that special education was a compulsory course to be taught to student teachers in all teachers colleges, including the University of Goroka. Plans, policy and guidelines for special education were developed and introduced to all sectors (Department of Education, 1993, as cited in Rombo, 2007). In 1994, the government allocated funding for the establishment of a Special Education Unit within the education department's teacher and staff division to cater for matters concerning special education. In 1995, St. Benedict's and Holy Trinity teachers colleges took on board the special education courses, to be taught to the student teachers by lecturers from abroad.

Degree level courses are now offered at the University of Goroka and Divine Word University, while the master's program is obtained overseas. Every year, teachers colleges and universities have many new teachers graduating, and one of the courses they study is special education. Although teachers are trained in these areas, there is still much negligence and ignorance from mainstream teachers towards SN students and the needs of SN students. This results in many SN students being left out or leaving school early. Teachers in the mainstream schools closer to the IERCs refer SN students to the IERCs for further assessment and assistance. The government's push for inclusive education through the education department for the last two decades is for teachers to practice inclusive education knowledge and skills as much as possible in all classroom situations. However, more positive attitudes, concepts and perceptions towards the social and medical model of disability will open the way for full inclusion.

To begin this study, I outline a brief chronology of education development in PNG.

2.3 Chronology of education development in PNG

Prior to the formation of the formal education system in the early 1970s, an education system brought in by the early missionaries in the 1870s already existed within the territories of British Papua and German New Guinea (Avalos, 1993; Bray, 1985; James et al., 2012; May, 2009; Yala et al., 2003). The missions ran most of the institutions during that time, while only a few were run by the government. The primary purpose of creating these institutions was to change the indigenous lifestyle completely and introduce the Western culture and lifestyle in accordance with the national developmental goals of PNG (Avalos, 1993; Crossley, 1990). Arguably, James et al. (2012) assert that the mission training schools were teaching both customary and modern learning to maintain people's identity and at the same time to equip the natives for life and employment opportunities. This showed that the native and Western cultures needed each other in the socio-economic development process.

The Western education system has brought many great improvements to the lives of the people, communities, and provinces in PNG societies. James et al. (2012) assert that people value modern education as an essential good. For instance, a person with high qualification in education is well respected in a community and is expected to improve the standard of living within his/her society, thus contributing to the development of the community as a whole (James et al., 2012). However, the Western education system also brought negative impacts to the traditional education system. For example, the natives were taught to practise the teaching of the new doctrine of the modern church, and dispose of their traditional beliefs, customs and taboos. From the disability perspective, modern education broke the barriers in the indigenous negative concepts and beliefs about people with disabilities.

The curriculum of the formal education system of the 1970s in Papua New Guinea adapted most of its ideologies from the Australian education system (Cobern, 1996; Waiko, 1993). In the period 1994-2014, the Papua New Guinea education system dramatically experienced major shifts and changes through the national education reform process (Le Fanu, 2013a; Mel, 2007; Torombe, 2013). The curriculum taught in primary schools is focused on the views of the society, basically concentrating on the political and economic development of the country (Lātūkefu, 1989). The curriculum is developed in consultation with the Papua New Guinea National Constitutional goals such as the Eight-Point Improvement Plan and its directive principles (Avalos, 1993; Dickson, 2003; University of South Pacific, 2016). The initial concepts of the reform in the education system are related to the constitutional declaration on Equality, Participation, Self-reliance, Papua New Guinea Ways and Integral Human Development, which are stated in the Ministerial Report on a Philosophy of Education for Papua New Guinea–also known as the Matane Report (1986) (Actnow for better Papua New Guinea, 2016; Avalos, 1993). The education reform motivated the National Department of Education (NDOE) to develop a new curriculum, teaching approaches and intervention strategies towards helping SN students (Avalos, 1993). Despite the reform, teachers experienced

difficulties in implementing the new curriculum in schools, especially in inclusive education (Schmidt & Čagran, 2006). Many teachers did not have sound knowledge and skills in teaching the SN students (Hillel, 2015). It is argued that since the inception of the education system, some of the curriculum blended well with the native cultures while other aspects did not (Avalos, 1993). This socio-political development in the education system resulted in many teachers being confused with the pedagogical approaches to teaching SN students, resulting in them ignoring the SN students' specific needs. For instance, Mel (2007) argued that between 2000-2005, the number of IERC SN students retained by inclusive schools has progressively declined across the grades each year. Le Fanu (2013a) suggested that, "the new curriculum [also] recommends that [special needs] students should be provided with differentiated learning opportunities … and different learning styles" (p. 141). However, research also suggests that SN children's access to inclusive education may be jeopardised because some teachers lack the pedagogical skills to practise complex instructions, the literacy skills to comprehend often jargon-dense curriculum documents, and the cultural and linguistic knowledge to embed educational programs in the local context (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2013; Berg & Schneider, 2012; Fawcett, 2016).

2.4 Definition of inclusive education

Inclusive education was introduced into the education system with the concept that students with disabilities were excluded from receiving regular education due to their disabled condition and misunderstandings about what a disabling condition meant in terms of learning ability from a classroom context (Ainscow & César, 2006). In the last three decades, a significant shift in how disability is defined has taken place. How this shift has taken place is discussed later on in the chapter; however, it has influenced how disability is defined for this research initiative. In this thesis, disability refers to the historical, social, cultural, economic and political limitations imposed on people with different learning abilities, which make it hard for members of this group to "take part in the normal life of the community … due to physical and social barriers" encountered

in the community (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2013, p. 442). In the inclusive education context, this does not consider any difference a student may have as the primary reason why they should be denied educational opportunities.

Inclusive education is a term that describes the practice of valuing the diversity of including special needs students in general classroom settings (Ajuwon, 2008; Florian, 2014). The concept of inclusive education is simply defined by the Centre of Excellence for Research in Inclusive Education (2013) as an "education system for all to participate and achieve based on the notions of human rights, respect and equity" (p. 40). Inclusive education's intention is to break the negative barriers surrounding the idea of disability as a problem and to accept all students with disability in the mainstream classes as much as possible, so that SN students can benefit fully in the regular education system (Ajuwon, 2008). Inclusive education for SN students in regular classrooms includes a number of provisions, as follows: accepting SN students into the educational community without any discrimination; creating a conducive learning environment; giving teachers the necessary knowledge and skills to teach students with diverse needs; and building good relationships with SN students and their parents. To achieve this goal, teachers and pupils also have to develop positive "social skills, ethical values and empathic abilities among peers" in mainstream classrooms to eradicate negative attitudes of able people towards disabled people (Schmidt & Čagran, 2006, p. 361).

Research has found that teachers, pupils, parents, and community lack the skill in building good relationships in order to make inclusive practices work well; therefore, a number of class teachers, IERC teachers and the schools are put in difficult positions (Hillel, 2015). Hillel (2015) argues that some of the facilities and services are inaccessible. For instance, many school buildings are not able to be accessed by physically disabled students, due to existing architectural structures and design that cannot accommodate them (Hitchcock, Meyer, Rose, & Jackson, 2002). Many schools and teachers overlook the need for an SN student to access physical school facilities (Hemmingson & Borell, 2002; Pivik, McComas, &

Laflamme, 2002). Hemmingson and Borell (2002) further argue that when services providers fail "to provide adequate environmental adjustments, [this] results in [SN children being] restricted [from] participation or exclusion from some of the activities in class" (p. 57). For instance, an SN student using a wheelchair might not be able to go through the door of the classroom due to the size of it. That makes the classroom inaccessible. This results in the SN student withdrawing from school activities because it is not the child's choice being socially isolated from class activities (Hemmingson & Borell, 2002). Booth (1992) adds that "a [physically disabled] student using a wheelchair may be independent within a properly accessible environment, but may need full time assistance" for buildings that have steps (p. 227). Therefore, Ahmmed and Mullick (2014) recommend that prior to accepting the SN student into the class, taking into consideration the barriers and proper assessments of SN student's environmental needs towards full inclusion is of paramount importance. Further, teachers lack the necessary pedagogical skills and approaches to dealing with the SN students in the school (Pivik, McComas, & Laflamme, 2002). Class teachers themselves–both in terms of attitudes and behaviours–can be the barrier for inclusion of SN students by concentrating on the general class' intellectual development, while ignoring the extra learning support needed by some students with disabilities (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Therefore, Ahmmed and Mullick (2014) suggest that teachers, peers, parents, schools, and the community have to actively involve themselves in every school activity to help alleviate the misconceptions amongst the people involved. However, to attain this goal, a number of difficulties must be overcome.

The current education reform system in PNG is designed to encourage teachers to practise Inclusive Education (IE) as much as possible in all school settings. However, a recent study has revealed that this is not happening (Torombe, 2013). Deruage (2007), who also investigated this point, found that teachers in PNG experience many challenges in this area. Teachers juggle many responsibilities in their teaching job, so it is hard for them to focus on one SN student and try to meet all their needs (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). For instance, preparing

individualised education plans (IEP) and attending to the SN students during class time can be overwhelming, as the teacher also needs to provide the educational needs of other non-SN students. This difficulty can be found elsewhere. In an international context, Goodley, Hughes, Davis and Lennard (2012) have noted that prior to the teachers receiving SN students, teachers have to be taught about a number of SN related issues. These include: the types of disabilities, SN students' different learning abilities, the required skills necessary to identify SN students, and how to modify teaching and learning strategies to cater for the SN students in their classrooms (Goodley et al., 2012). These comments apply to what teachers in PNG need to do to support all SN students in their classes. Even though they are trained in the basics of special education in teacher training colleges, teachers have to look at different aspects that affect the inclusive development of SN students in mainstream school (Winis, 2013). Biggs (2011) suggests that such aspects as building student-teacher relationships, modifying teaching and learning strategies, and creating conducive learning environments are crucial for the better learning of all students. Harris, Graham and Mason (2003) also argue that concerns around the ecological variables such as educational setting, cultural differences and community networking are some contributing factors to be noted.

2.5 Medical and social model of disability

The recognition and implementation of inclusive education was greatly enhanced by the formation of the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) in the 1970s (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2013). This organisation, started in the United Kingdom, was formed with the motive of advocating and disseminating new ideas to eradicate the common "disabling" barriers that hinder disabled people from accessing basic public services such as education and health (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2013; Oliver, 2013; Shakespeare, 2014). Many in this organisation were people with disabilities themselves. The ideas this organisation formed have been hugely influential, and the concept of inclusive practices in every society across the globe has evolved from these ideas, also known as the medical and social models of disability (Shakespeare, 2006).

2.5.1 Medical model of disability

Traditionally, the medical model of disability was seen as an approach that excluded people with disability from full participation in the life of their society (North Yorkshire County Council, 2013). The medical model of disability defines disability in a person with limited bodily functions, which limits the ability of the individual to live as a person would in a society if they were not disabled (Griffo, 2014). Therefore, disability in the medical model context is referred to as the ideas and beliefs that take their reference from a person's physical and intellectual condition (Goodley et al., 213). For instance, an SN student using a wheelchair who is having difficulty accessing the classrooms is viewed from his/her physical stature. The student's intellectual capability may be no different to that of their non-disabled peer, but it is the body's functional difference seen in the physical condition that creates a disability to the non-disabled people (Narayanan, 2015). The medical model tends to look for a cure of the disability rather than devising intervention strategies that can help alleviate the social participation barriers (Anastasiou, Kauffman, & Michail, 2016). Thus, the medical model of disability is centred on the old images and stereotypical beliefs about disability with the concept of the rehabilitating process of fixing the disability (Goodley et al., 2013; Prince, 2004).

In an education setting, as Shakespeare (2006) argues, the medical model of disability in the context of inclusive education is concerned with the improvement of bodily functions. If a physically disabled child lacks regular physiotherapy exercise to improve their mobility skills, then the child remains unable to walk independently to school (Narayanan, 2015). This becomes a barrier to integration of the SN student into the mainstream education system.

The medical model of disability is still very influential in respect of inclusive education developments in the global southern regions, and Papua New Guinea is no exception. The application of this model in rural PNG is linked with traditional cultural belief systems, and this makes it difficult for every disabled

child to access basic education and other vital services. For instance, the concept of disability in many cultures throughout PNG is strongly influenced by people's traditional beliefs and customs, which results in students with disabilities often being marginalised and excluded from normal social activities (Sharma, Loreman, & Macanawai, 2016). This makes it hard for students with disabilities to have a voice as well. In the traditional education system of Papua New Guinea, many parents did not know about the education system; therefore, they were reluctant to send their children to school because they were scared of the international influence dominating their culture and traditions (Klaus, 2003; Waiko, 1993). During that time, teachers were expatriates or were from other parts of the country, and communication was a barrier because of the many languages spoken around the country (Klaus, 2003). This led to a lack of understanding between teachers and parents (Klaus, 2003). However, after many changes in the education system resulting from the education reform, parents became aware of the importance of education and started sending their children to school, including the SN children (Klaus, 2003; Le Fanu, 2013a).

Many teachers, peers and parents and wider community members in PNG still have the medical model mindset, because they look upon the disability as "immovable" and create barriers for themselves towards inclusive practices (Brisenden, 1986). This often leads to stigmatisation and discrimination, which result in SN students withdrawing from the classes and other school-organised activities (Uba & Nwoga, 2016). Therefore, many SN students in developing countries become a victim of the medical model view (Sandall, Smith, Mclean, & Ramsey, 2002).

As mentioned above, SN students in developing countries are being constructed based on their disability, which is linked to the traditional belief system that is rooted in the society. However, the disabled people's movement in recent years has advocated for an "inclusive society" approach; this means there are no boundaries set between disabled and non-disabled persons (Goodley et al., 2012).

2.5.2 Social model of disability

The introduction of a social model of disability challenged the dominance of the medical model ideas outlined above about disability and inclusion and paved the way for the recognition of people with disabilities as equal members in society (Walmsley, 2001). The social model of disability is defined as the idea that overcoming the social and environmental barriers to social participation and learning for disabled people in the community will result in full inclusion of all disabled people in community life (Ainscow, 2005). As the above example shows, the word disability in the social model context does not concern bodily pathology; however, it is society's misunderstanding and the misrepresentation of disabled people and the lack of rendering appropriate services which are of concern for disabled people in society (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2013). Disability is naturally seen as part of the human diversity without social construction and discrimination (Anastasiou et al., 2016).

Simplican, Leader, Kosciulek and Leahy (2015) explain that this definition is interchangeable with the concept of "social integration, social network, community participation and social capital" (2015, p. 19). In this view, a simple definition of the social model of disability in the context of inclusion of SN students in mainstream schools could be referred to as identifying the social barriers that hinder the educational attainment of SN students, and eliminating the social barriers to create a learning environment that is as conducive as possible for all learners (Uba & Nwoga, 2016). For instance, the class has to make it a habit to include awareness of disabled students during morning assembly before lesson time. Teachers' advocacy for inclusive education every morning before lessons start will instil inclusive practice ideology in the non-SN students, and they will tend to respect their colleagues who have special needs.

A social model of disability provides an interesting and useful perspective, as it locates the cause of disability within the environment and assists inclusion as much as possible by identifying solutions to all the barriers that disabled people

are experiencing in education and the community. This approach to disability studies is an essential foundational idea of the disability movement and has driven the implementation of social policies across the globe (Shakespeare, 2006). The motive of the disabled movement was to provide quality services to enhance the lives of people with disability by increasing their opportunity "to participate fully in social, cultural, and economic life" (Warren & Manderson, 2013, p. 1). Oliver (2013), a key proponent of this model, argues that the primary notion of the social model is to give people with disabilities a better chance to explore and experience improved lives without any form of domination or oppression, and this aspect of Oliver's (2013) point is important for inclusive education practice. The value of it as a means to implement change is that the social model is not a theory but rather a tool to identify social barriers, with the view of eradicating the conditions of social disableism for persons with disability in education and community settings (Colin, 2015; Oliver, 2013).

However, as mentioned in the example above (Sharma et al., 2016), teachers in regular schools continue to focus on the student's impairment and create a disability that jeopardises the normal activities of the disabled child, like attending a regular school. People's attitudes, knowledge and concept of the social model of disability for SN students in developing countries continue to be a great challenge to the adoption of inclusive practices (Prince, 2004). Having negative perceptions about SN students often results in SN students being segregated from participating in normal social activities of the community (Hastings et al., 2005). For instance, a class teacher's negative attitudes and perception of a disabled child may lead to the SN student's full withdrawal from attending school. Ignorance of this understanding about the social-political cultures of people with disabilities by able people creates the barriers for inclusion, which is the cause of social exclusion in schools (Armstrong, Armstrong, & Spandagou, 2011).

Social inclusion for SN students in the mainstream setting is now an essential element to inclusive practices in society and is the fundamental concept of the

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities Act and the
UNESCO Education for All (EFA) policy (Armstrong et al., 2011; Simplican et al.,
2015). Recent disability developments have also made it possible for the voices
of the disabled to be heard in social community settings through the
international and national movements of the disabled persons (Goodley et al.,
2012; Oliver, 2013; UNICEF, 2007). The inclusive education policy is one of the
focuses towards these developments that allow SN students to access regular
school systems (Shakespeare, 2014; UNICEF, 2007).

2.5.3 Barriers to inclusive practices

While the ideas related to social model ways of thinking about disability have
been influential at policy levels, it has been argued by researchers that the
common barriers encountered by disabled persons are social exclusion,
oppression and discrimination, which remain difficult to eradicate (Fawcett, 2016;
Goodley et al., 2012; Shakespeare, 2006). Disability is embedded in our cultures,
and disabled people are a part of the society, yet overcoming barriers, both
material and attitudinal, has been a challenge for major international and
national organisations that are involved in policy making and providing services
for people with disabilities (Shakespeare, 2006).

North Yorkshire County Council (2013) categorises these barriers into three main
areas. The first issue is environmental. This concerns the access to buildings and
services. This can mean, in an education context, that an SN student using a
wheelchair has difficulty accessing the classroom because there are no ramps.
The second is the attitudes of the society towards disabled people.
Discrimination, prejudices and oppression are attitudes of certain societies
towards persons with disabilities (Colin, 2015). For example, in Papua New
Guinea, this means that the struggle for inclusion of students with disabilities in
mainstream schools is indisputable. Further, these attitudes could continue
unless non-disabled people's interest and attitude is changed to cater for SN
students in their communities. Finally, the organisation of cultural, economic or
political systems has inflexible policies, practices and procedures for including

persons with disabilities (North Yorkshire County Council, 2013). For instance, in developing countries such as PNG, there are no job opportunities for people living with disabilities. These barriers also include accessing public services such as health and education.

Storey (2007) argues that mainstream schools can practice inclusive education policy by advocating and accepting all pupils into their schools; however, Dee (2006) asserts that class teachers, peers and the school administration often overlook the requirements of this policy, and SN students miss out in the essential part of their life training process. Change here could be achieved by involving teachers, peers, parents and relevant stakeholders to directly involve SN students where possible in all of the schools' organised activities (Dee, 2006). Through a social model view, another way to reduce the negative stereotypical behaviour and prejudice could be by making time to raise awareness; non-abled people who take part actively in any simulated activities regarding people having a disability could see that simple environment changes make inclusion possible (Ainscow, 2005; Storey, 2007). Booth (1992) summarises that the removal of social barriers leads to SN students' participation in education; this is where young people can develop positive social attitudes towards other people, with the latter being the current practice of inequality in education that leads to bias against SN students. Teachers, peers and family members playing their roles towards inclusive education development will see a new binary of bodies and minds being created in the community, which is an inclusive-minded approach to living in the community (Goodley et al., 2013).

2.5.4 The concept of ableism

Ableism is defined as a set of beliefs, processes and practices that ensure that non-disabled people are able to engage in the life of the community without any barriers or problems arising and ensures that their presence in the community will not raise questions in any circumstance (Adams, Bell, & Griffin 2007; Campbell, 2001; Goodley et al., 2012; Storey, 2007). For example, within ableism, daily activities like walking and talking rather than using a wheelchair or sign

language are seen as usual ways of behaving that all people can engage in, not as specific skills that are encouraged and valued by society. Storey (2007) asserts that ableism ensures that participating in society becomes a normal, taken-for-granted, perfect or flawless process for non-disabled people. Therefore, if a disabled person wants to experience the same life as the non-disabled person, it may be unachievable in developing countries.

The concept of ableism is socially, culturally and economically constructed (Wolbring, 2008) and underpins actions taken to "eliminate" disability, by the segregation of disabled people from the life of their community. For instance, a non-disabled person will claim that their life is going well without the need for any assistance, without being able to see how social, cultural and economic factors are geared towards "assisting" a non-disabled person to succeed (Goodley et al., 2012). The cultural and social hierarchical structure of society has had great impact on service delivery (Hodge & Runswick-Cole, 2013; Wolbring, 2008).

Ableism is a set of ideas that can assist non-disabled people to understand what the barriers are for people with disability in our society (Campbell, 2001). The concept of ableism in disability studies has had a great impact on people living with disabilities (Wolbring, 2008). However, recognising that ableism exists in modern society has brought new challenges, both positive and negative, for the people living with disabilities (Goodley et al., 2012). Positive challenges include the successful rehabilitation process–for example prosthetic legs, and cochlear implants–to make the disabled person experience real life as if they were an "abled" person (Ministry of Education, 2010). The negative challenges are that the shamefulness of the state of disability is magnified by the culture, and disabled people and their bodies are devalued (Campbell, 2008). Campbell (2001) argues that the ableist perspective in modern society has classified disability as "uncivilized" and draws a line between non-disabled and disabled people. In this respect, ableism works in a similar way to the medical perspective of disabled

people. What abelism shows is how the concept of shame about being an "imperfect body" can make it very difficult for disabled people to feel included.

2.3.4.1 How ableism affects SN children

SN students are affected by ableism. They often feel marginalised and segregated due to these perceptions of surrounding community members, even when they are "included." If people who are challenging ableist views in society are not careful, talking about the effects of ableism could make it even harder for disabled students to feel accepted. As indicated earlier, SN students can be excluded from general classroom practices. In the hierarchy system of the classroom, able-bodied teachers are perceived by students as authoritative persons delivering knowledge (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 2007). The general hierarchy structures in the school make SN students feel different and incompetent–they have no disabled teacher models to look up to (Centre of Excellence for Research in Inclusive Education, 2013). This can result in many SN students becoming the victim of both the process of institutionalisation and devaluation of their learning abilities in the classroom (Adams et al., 2007).

2.6 Policies

World organisations and governments create policies because there is a need for change, in particular in the social, economic and political settings, to satisfy the general public. International policies are often implemented without linking to the needs of the native society. The knowledge, principles and practices of how these policies could be implemented in each country's context can vary from the international context. The sociocultural, political, historical and economic situations of a country shape the way governments develop and implement their inclusive education policies in their own context, with compliance with international conventions and declarations (Smyth et al., 2014, p. 343). The convention on the rights of students with disabilities, and the launching of national disability rights legislation, both in 2005, have been some significant developments towards full inclusion in PNG society.

2.6.1 International

Policies developed at the international level have become the major goal of the national action plan for every country which is a member of the UN, to ensure basic primary education for every student without discrimination related to disability, gender, ethnicity or religion (Ahmmed & Mullick, 2014; Ruso, 2011; UNICEF, 2007). UN declarations [e.g., UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)] form the basis for UNICEF's (2007) argument that the major task of "international agencies and their national partners is to ensure that persons with disabilities are automatically, but explicitly included in the initial objectives, targets and monitoring indicators of all development programmes," such as education and other basic services (p. iv). Currently there is a global mandate from international organisations such as the United Nations (UN), UNESCO and United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) to practice inclusive education in all regular school settings (Hendricks, 2007; UNESCO, 1994). The UN's concept of human rights towards the development of inclusive education became obvious after the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) and the development of the Salamanca Statement 1994, which paved the way for SN students to access regular schools (Department of Education, 2003). Further developments of the policies in the UN Convention on the Human Rights, which included rights for the disabled, inspired disabled people to advocate in public, expressing their rights for a place in society (Russo, 2011). It is disputed that the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities may not be effective in third world countries. For example, in Papua New Guinea, there are no ramps in the public buildings for wheelchair users.

2.6.2 National policy

The PNG national special education policy was formulated in 1993, after research was carried out in regular schools around the country about SN students accessing regular schools (Tamarua, 2012). Prior to the development of the policy, UNESCO was too vocal in pushing for developing countries to focus on developing their capacities in policy making and systems management to support inclusive education and to bring forward the concerns of people with disabilities,

as well as other marginalised groups, on the wider educational agenda and on the agendas of international development organisations. The inception of the Salamanca Statement in 1994 added more meaning to the development of the PNG policy. The policy was incorporated within the existing PNG national constitution to ensure that students with disabilities are given the opportunity to access education in all regular schools around the country and at the same time adhering to the principle of integral human development (Torombe, 2013).

2.7 Inclusive education and its development in Papua New Guinea

The notion of inclusive education is a Western concept that was developed in the early nineteenth century (Christou & Sears, 2010; Florian, 1998b). Prior to the introduction of inclusive education in the Papua New Guinea education system, the early education system excluded SN students from regular schools (Le Fanu, 2013a). SN students were not given equal opportunity as other non-SN students were to receive any form of education (Florian, 1998a). Ainscow (2005) argues that the current changes in the contemporary disability studies across the globe have opened the floodgates for all students with disabilities to access basic education. The influence from this in the developed world affects many developing countries in that the inclusive education policy has now become a "big challenge facing school system[s] across the globe" (Ainscow, 2005, p. 109). The motive of inclusive education introduced into the current education system was to look closely at how SN students are accessing basic education (McCulloch, 2013; UNESCO, 1994). The primary concern for all these developments towards inclusive education was to make sure that students with disabilities are accepted in the community and they live an independent life in any given situation in society (Abosi & Koay, 2008; Miles & Singal, 2010; UNESCO, 1994).

The inclusive education policy in PNG was planned and developed during the education reform in 1993 and executed in 1994 (Koro, 2007; Le Fanu, 2013a; Tamarua, 2012; Torombe, 2013). The global demand for recognising children with disabilities in regular schools was focused on the UN's Universal Basic

Education (UBE) for all students (Miles & Singal, 2010; Richards & Vining, 2015; UNESCO, 1994). The UBE directive goals are:

> [for] all children to access basic education, the retention of children's schooling levels, acquire basic literacy both in vernacular and English, basic numeracy and appropriate cultural and community life skills, and provide equal opportunity for all children, regardless of their gender, race, religion, geographical location and economic status. (Koro, 2007, p. 25)

The inclusive education policy was developed after the national survey was done in 1991 by the National Education Board regarding the educational services received by people living with disabilities (Tamarua, 2012). The Salamanca Statement also coincided with this in 1994 and opened the door for every SN child to fully access basic education services (Torombe, 2013; UNESCO, 1994). The inclusive education policy and the national policy on disability launched in 2005 gave an impetus to students with disability to attend regular school (Ahmmed, Sharma, & Deppeler, 2012; Jenkin, Campain, Wilson, Murfitt, & Clarke, 2015). This development ensures that SN students' needs are met specifically, regardless of their "physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions" (Ahmmed et al., 2012, p. 132). This enables students with disabilities in regular schools to feel accepted in the school culture of society (Le Fanu, 2013a).

Jenkin et al. (2015), however, argue that although there have been changes happening in the education systems, many students with disabilities in PNG experience social barriers to inclusion. Therefore, these educational developments in the education system of PNG need to encourage more ground-work in activities such as awareness about people with disabilities and to dismantle the social barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating fully in the social and economic environments (Jenkin et al., 2015).

The discourse of inclusive education is still a burning issue debated in developed and developing countries around the world, and Papua New Guinea is no exception (Ajuwon, Lechtenberger, Griffin-Shirley, Sokolosky, Zhou, & Mullins, 2012; Fakolade et al., 2009). The education system of Papua New Guinea constantly accepts special needs students into the mainstream schools (Le Fanu, 2013a). However, there are some schools which are incapable of meeting the specific academic needs of SN students equally with other non-disabled students (Deruage, 2007; Le Fanu, 2013b). For instance, Rudy (2010) argues that due to the pressure from the top, schools are just accepting SN students into their schools without the school having proper plans, programs and facilities in place to cater for this group of students. Further, the negative behaviour of teachers and pupils towards SN students remains (Ainscow, 2005). The inclusive practices should focus on "the participation and learning" of SN students in mainstream schools rather than on the disability of SN children, "to support and provide necessary needs required" (Ainscow, 2005, p. 112). For example, Goodley et al. (2012) argue that inclusive practices in the classroom settings should create a conducive learning environment for the SN students, with the teachers trained in all aspects of disability, and providing supportive services where necessary according to the individual needs. The concept of inclusion is not about placement of SN students in regular schools but rather is about involving SN students in full participation in the curriculum and social life of the school setting (Smith, 2014).

The above-mentioned issues related to including SN students in mainstream schools have jeopardised many SN students' ability to attain the necessary knowledge and skills for future self-reliance in PNG (Emmer & Stough, 2001; Hart, 2013; Le Fanu, 2013b). Although the school administrators, their administrations and other relevant authorities may say that inclusion is being practiced effectively, there are also a myriad of factors that could have influenced the effectiveness of the process (Miles & Singal, 2010; Soodak, 2003; UNICEF, 2007). The readiness of the students, families, schools and communities is one of the examples (Dockett, Perry, Kearney, 2011). Attitudinal and material barriers are

still present within the education environments (Miles & Singal, 2010). These are such as teachers lacking the teaching pedagogies for helping SN students, the teaching approach is teacher-centred, and lack of resource materials (Le Fanu, 2013b; Soodak, 2003).

Therefore, effective and sufficient service can be provided for the needy students if we carefully explore, understand and digest what an inclusive education policy is within the inclusive education context by building our concepts around this whole phenomenon (Booth, 1992; Manly, Kim, Rogosch, & Cicchetti, 2001). A close-up examination could be explored into the relationships between disability and the contemporary postcolonial studies (Barker & Murray, 2010). This would give us an overview of an inclusive education and its developments. Smith (2014) asserts that for the concept of inclusive education to progress in society, it needs to make stronger communication links within the social, political and economic institutions. Smith (2014) argues that this will enable the society to practice equality in services, in which currently disabled people are socially segregated, and there is a mutual respect and understanding between the non-disabled and disabled societies.

2.7.1 Salamanca Statement

Prior to the development of the Salamanca Statement and its framework, the notion of recognising and including people with disabilities in the education, socio-economic, cultural and political realms started with the inception of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights in 1948 (Schuelka & Johnstone, 2011). The UN Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons issued in 1975 also shed a light for these movements towards recognising disabled people in society (Schuelka & Johnstone, 2011). The UN's education policy, through Education for All (EFA), formulated in 1990, encapsulates the fundamental rights of education for all people (Schuelka & Johnstone, 2011). Recognising SN students with dignity in every classroom situation is an important aspect of providing educational support (Soodak, 2003). This aspect is supported by the UN declaration "on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, which urges states to

ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the education system" (UNESCO, 1994, p. vii).

The Salamanca Statement (1994) and the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) were an impetus for a change in the education system across the globe, especially on inclusive education policy (Juma & Lehtomäki, 2016; Schuelka & Johnstone, 2011; UNESCO, 1994). The Salamanca Statement is an approved objective agreed on by the UN bodies to specifically reiterate the EFA policy to enable schools to accept and teach all students, including the SN students (Miles & Singal, 2010; UNESCO, 1994). The purpose of formulating the document was to follow up on the UN's ultimate goal on EFA policy and to ensure that SN students are included in the mainstream schools (UNESCO, 1994).

The statement reiterated the UN's education policy on EFA, taking into consideration "the need and importance" (Winis, 2013, p. 13) for all special needs students to be included in the regular education system. Armstrong, Armstrong and Spandagou (2011) argue that promotion of inclusive education practices in the mainstream schools as suggested in the Salamanca Statement is the only way to advocate for discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Moreover, the education system provides "effective education to the majority of students and improve[s] the efficiency and ultimately the cost effectiveness of the entire education system" (Armstrong et al., 2011, p. 3).

The Salamanca Statement is the only document among other international documents that fully supports inclusion of SN students in mainstream schools (Ainscow & César, 2006). Therefore, taking into consideration the Salamanca Statement and its framework in mainstream school systems is "the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all" (UNESCO, 1994, p. iv).

Furthermore, the statement suggests that inclusive schools can "provide an effective education for the majority of students and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system" (UNESCO, 1994, p. iv). Over the last two decades, after the inception of the Salamanca Statement, the education system of Papua New Guinea has shown a considerable effort trying to implement the policy and practice in a more inclusively oriented way (Le Fanu, 2013a). However, the inclusive practices for SN students are a minority in rural areas compared to urban centres (Jenkin et al., 2015; Winis, 2007). The Department of Education (2002) affirms that the PNG education reform "aims to develop in all students the full potential of their talents and abilities. This education reform aims to promote self-confidence, optimism and self-esteem" (Department of Education, 2002, p. 4). This goal varies across different countries and settings. For instance, New Zealand's Ministry of Education's goal for special education is "success for all" (Ministry of Education, 2012, n.p.). The objective of this goal is to render and promote an education system that is appropriate for students with disability to be involved within the community, and their self-worth is recognised (Ministry of Education, 2012). These aims, plans and visions could be difficult for students with diverse learning needs in terms of coping with the necessary knowledge, skills and resources (Soodak, 2003). Therefore, the Ministry of Education (2010) asserts that it is better to include all people and stakeholders that come in contact with the SN students in all inclusive education training to alleviate prejudice and segregation.

2.7.2 Contemporary changes to inclusive education in an international context.

Florian (1998b) argues that on an international level, the teaching and learning curriculum has to be reformed, in order for SN students to be fully included in all learning. Inclusive approaches should be taken, rather than working around the SN student's area of needs (Florian, 2012; Skovlund, 2014). Sahlberg (2006) adds that the "education reform system [is] focused on increasing inclusion education for SN students … through inspections, assessments [and evaluation] that [lead] to an increase of regulations in schools and decreased autonomy of teachers" (p.

260). The education reform process means to be flexible; SN students are given the freedom of choice for education (Sahlberg, 2006). However, Soodak (2003) argues that when SN students are in a class, teachers and other students regard SN students as vulnerable students and are catered for with special attention in every classroom situation. This results in SN students becoming the minority group every time (Artiles & Trent, 1994). Another aspect that shows teachers being incapable of practicing inclusion is when SN students are referred to nearby inclusive education resource centres (IERC) for simple assistance in teaching pedagogies which a class teacher could perform (Rombo, 2007). Therefore, teachers and non-SN children's mindset of giving special treatment to SN students needs to be changed in mainstream school settings to encourage more social interaction (Gutshall, 2013). These changes are similar to those taking place in PNG.

2.7.3 Papua New Guinea's national policy on education

The national education policy in PNG is an essential element in the planning and development of education within the Department of Education (Le Fanu, 2013a). The policy was developed from Matane's philosophy of education principle that expounded the "village-based education traditional and argued that education should promote integral human development, involving socialisation, participation, liberation and equality" (Le Fanu, 2013a, p. 7). The development of the policy encompasses the whole saga of the education systems where issues are analysed, policies generated, implemented, assessed and redesigned (Le Fanu, 2013a) and covers a number of aspects in the socio-economic and political context: demographic, cultural and other issues (Le Fanu, 2013b). Therefore, the inclusive education policy has now become part and parcel of the education policy. The education policies and practices developed are designed to "promote integration, self-reliance and self-management" (Nichol, 2011, p. 5), yet policies are developed to respond to a problem that also needs proper addressing in the society at large (Edwards Jr, Libreros, & Martin, 2015).

2.7.4 The influence of Western education systems in Papua New Guinea's culture

The modern education system has had the most transformative impact in every culture of society (Hooks, 2003). Inclusive education practice in the education system of PNG is a borrowed Western construct; however, it has had a great impact on the lives of people living with disabilities (Le Fanu, 2013a). The implementation of an inclusive education policy could be meaningful if the policies are constructed based on PNG's native education context (Le Fanu, 2010), as there are still misunderstandings and prejudices with indigenous people, and they have little or no interest in assisting the SN student (Fakolade, Adeniyi, & Tella, 2009). Many natives believe that the Western culture is dominating the natives' cultures through the Westernised education system today (Knowles, 2012; Le Fanu, 2013a). To address this issue, and to increase native's educational experience, the inclusive education policy should be collaborating with the indigenous knowledge in any associated traditional rights that can permit indigenous voice and establish a continuity of education (Owens, 2015a). Nichol (2011) further asserts that native's involvement in the current education system will progress if relevant pedagogies and educational practices are integrated with the traditional education system. For example, Papua New Guinea has many cultures, and in order for this context to work out well, the teachers appointed to schools are from the local area or should have fair knowledge on the local cultures of their school (Koro, 2007; Waiko, 1993; Winis, 2013).

In doing so, the teachers of the schools will be able to recognise and attend to SN students if there is injustice, racism, and the impact of cultural influence, as they are part of the community's culture (Owens, 2015b). Transition is part of the changing process, and every disabled student enrolled in regular schools has to learn about the context of the new learning environmental settings. Dee (2006) argues that it can be challenging for SN students experiencing the transitional stage. There should be a guide provided to teachers to help teach the SN students learn, between the modern and native cultures, to take risks, solve

problems and to adjust themselves to the situations and the environment (Dee, 2006; Lim & Renshaw, 2001; Sporre, 2010). This collaborative work often leads to both teachers and communities working together to decolonise the negative thoughts, attitudes and behaviours towards SN students (Banks, 2015; Lim & Renshaw, 2001; Sporre, 2010).

2.7.5 Indigenous education perspectives on SN students

Papua New Guinea attained its independence from the Australian administration in 1975, and "education was seen as a key factor in establishing a national identity and purpose" (Nichol, 2011, p. xviii). The inclusive education policy in Papua New Guinea is a new concept introduced into the education system in 1994 (Torombe, 2013, Winis, 2013). Prior to the introduction of the policies, the native community's involvement of SN students in the public schools was very limited (Brady, 1995). Yet the current education system is often seen by "parents and communities as being differentiating and alienating" (Nichol, 2011, p. xv). The motive of the inclusive education policy is to include SN students in mainstream school so that they are educated as other non-SN students are (Smith, 2014). The government of Papua New Guinea is now emphasising the policy to be implemented in all schools throughout the country (Le Fanu, 2013a; Jenkin et al., 2015).

With the demand from the government level, the towns' mainstream schools are now accepting SN students into their schools (Winis, 2013). However, Koro (2007) argues that many schools, both in urban and rural areas, still cater for fewer numbers of SN students. Owens (2015a) asserts that there are diverse factors that contribute to the delay in the implementation of the inclusive education policy. Banks (2015) clarifies these aspects as being the readiness of each school, teachers equipped with the content knowledge of teaching SN students, knowing the native education system and cultures, and how well the schools have built relationships with the community and the parents of the SN students.

For the SN students to participate wholly in PNG schools, the inclusive education policy implementation has to fairly share its resources and political decision making with the natives for independence and voice (Banks, 2015; Ewing, 2005). Respecting the cultural values and patterns within the schools therefore "expresses equal respect for all participants and ensures equal opportunity for achieving social esteem'' (Fraser, 2010, as cited in Owens, 2015b, p. 57). In PNG's traditional education system, SN students were left out of any school programs (Le Fanu, 2013a; Weeks, 1993). However, with the acculturation of the modern education system, SN students in PNG are now accepted into the regular school society (Winis, 2013). There are also many IERCs currently established throughout the town centres of the country to assist SN students, teachers and parents, to help improve SN students' educational experience (Winis, 2013).

2.8 Flaws encountered in the implementation of the inclusive education policy in the classroom approaches in Papua New Guinea.

Due to many cultural differences in PNG, many SN students receive less assistance to access education, even though the inclusive education policy is part of the education system (Jenkin et al., 2015). Sen and Yurtsever (2007) argue that due to the cultural bonds and reputation in the community, shame and guilt are two things that cause parents of SN students to exclude them from enrolling in schools. SN students also experience "trauma of abuse or neglect, the disruption of frequent placement moves and school transfers, and the lack of adequate monitoring, advocacy, and support too often result in" low academic performance and poor socialisation skills (Zetlin, 2006, p. 161).

The policy for inclusive education already exists in the education system of Papua New Guinea (Le Fanu, 2013a; Rombo, 2007; Tamarua, 2012; Winis, 2013). Inclusive education development in every classroom situation throughout Papua New Guinea has become a great concern for parents and teachers of SN students when enrolling their SN students (Le Fanu, 2013b). Parents are concerned with the social and educational development of their SN child (Centre of Excellence for Research in Inclusive Education, 2013). Parents in rural areas are faced with

funding deficits, which is another dilemma when enrolling SN students into mainstream classes (Winis, 2013). According to Fanu (2013b), the teachers are incapable of synthesising the curriculum and they also lacked the expertise in assisting the SN students. Teachers have difficulty teaching the SN students due to lack of teaching and learning resources (Ajuwon, 2008; Fanu, 2013b). Zetlin (2006) argues that mainstream school administration lacks sufficient knowledge, skills and resources needed to supplement the appropriate educational programs required to assist SN students. The present scenario is teachers lack the knowledge and skills to attend to SN students, and a general teaching approach is applied by teachers when having SN students (Winis, 2013).

Zetlin (2006) asserts that there is no individualised education plan (IEP) prepared to teach the SN students. IEP meetings are also not being conducted by relevant implementers of the policy to discuss the kind of service that an SN student may be entitled to and the array of special education placement options (Abosi & Koay, 2008). Therefore, Le Fanu (2013b) points out that the class teacher and parents have to figure out the barriers and plan effectively, covering all aspects to meet the needs of the SN students. According to Elder, Damiani and Okongo (2016), by,

> identifying barriers to educational access for [SN students], prioritizing the needs within their local context, and determining a plan of action [through the drawn-on IEPs] to address these needs by drawing on existing community resources and gaining access to new resources [could elevate exclusion of SN students]. (p. 866)

Many schools in PNG are new to this concept and most of them are not equipped with the necessary resources to cater for SN students (Abosi & Koay, 2008; Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Jenkin et al., 2015). As mentioned earlier about the weaknesses of teachers (see Fanu, 2013b), teachers have to be innovative in preparing their classrooms to cater for SN students.

2.8.1 The impact of policy on teachers' perceptions, attitudes and contribution towards SN students

The amendment of policies in the education system of PNG saw that teachers had to work harder to fulfil these policies (Avalos, 1993). The education reform in the 1990s also brought with it some challenges, and one of the main issues that affected teachers and schools was how to implement the Education for All (EAF) policy at the lower level schools and to broaden and diversify educational experiences and create opportunities for SN students as they progress through the education levels (Avalos, 1993; Le Fanu, 2013b; Miles & Singal, 2010). The motives of the inclusive education reform were to prepare teachers to understand better the content of what they have to teach and to be more skilful in identifying SN students (Avalos, 1993; UNICEF, 2007). The inclusive education reform enhances teachers with great confidence in attending to the SN students, and teachers less obediently rely on the previous education system (de Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011; Fakolade et al., 2009). This change in the education system represents a shift in the philosophy of the education system. This time, a new paradigm has been set for the teachers to take a new approach in dealing with SN students (Fanu, 2013a). Teachers have to be equipped with the knowledge and skill of inclusive education to tackle this issue, and the new special education curriculum is currently taught as a separate course in teacher training institutions throughout Papua New Guinea (Deruage, 2007; Fanu, 2013a; Jenkin et al., 2015). The Inclusive Education Resource Centres established around the country are also assisting teachers towards helping SN students in their educational development.

According to Ahmmed and Mullick (2014), Le Fanu (2013b) and Jenkin et al. (2015), the four groups of key players in the education reform towards the practice of inclusive education policy to be effectively implemented in mainstream schools are teachers, students, parents and members of the community, who need to constantly involve themselves in any school-organised activities. Better conditions of service for the teachers are essential and this maintains the teachers' interest in helping SN students in class. For instance, a

good salary, accommodation and good team-work within the communities thus encourage teachers of SN students to support their students in schooling (Avalos, 1993). Carroll, Forlin and Jobling (2003) add that regular training for teachers will maintain their interest in educating the SN students.

Despite the inclusive education policy developments in the PNG education system, many teachers "have less than positive attitudes toward [SN students] and their inclusion in general classrooms" (Carroll et al., 2003, p. 65). Some teachers are reluctant to practice this policy in the classrooms, even though they know the policy of inclusive education (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Winis (2013) points out that due to the ignorance of the teachers attending to SN students, their attitude has a significant impact on the implementation of the inclusive program and the academic development of SN students. Teachers having a more positive mindset in the inclusive education development encourages physical integration of SN students, which leads to more social participation of the SN child in class.

2.8.2 Experiences and challenges faced by special needs students in regular class

Many SN students in developing countries are not attending regular school because they feel insecure (Farmer, Wike, Alexander, Rodkin, & Mehtaji, 2015; Mishna, 2003;). The major problem SN students experience in their school is shame and guilt (Walmsley, 2001). Farmer et al. (2015) argue that SN students are always the focus for bullying and stereotypical behaviour by able students. The inclusive education policy of Papua New Guinea states that every student is unique and has diverse learning needs (Department of Education, 2002). Therefore, all the learning outcomes in the education system should be designed to cater for students with diverse learning needs (Department of Education, 2003, as cited in Torombe, 2013). The policy advocates for full inclusion, and according to the UN convention on the Rights of Child, all SN students regardless of culture, gender, race or the type of special need, must be treated the same (Brendtro & Shahbazian, 2004; UNICEF, 2007). People live in communities and they

communicate with each other to share ideas and knowledge; therefore, teachers, peers and the parents of SN students could be encouraged to participate in all school activities to help break the fear within the SN student and improve his/her social skills (Brendtro & Shahbazian, 2004; Goodley et al., 2012). This will reduce the misunderstanding of SN students and develop a better understanding of the disability and supportive attitudes and behaviours by parents, teachers and peers, creating an environment and moral social programs conducive to learning and engagement of parents in all aspects of SN students' learning (Ensher & Clark, 2011). These problems can only be solved if theory and research paradigms are working in parallel (Ensher & Clark, 2011), for instance, by allowing the SN students to participate in all activities both in the school and at home to have self-confidence, increase their morale and boost their self-esteem to help them to come out of their fear and negative stereotypes around their disability (Berger, 2008). In regular schools, Ahmmed, Sharma and Deppeler (2012) state that many teachers still have the concept of SN students instilled in their mindsets, and this results in many SN students being left out of regular activities which they are able to take part in. Zetlin (2006) asserts that this often leads to a range of inhibited behaviours in students such as aggressiveness, being demanding, immature, attention-seeking and withdrawing from school.

2.8.3 The impact of policy on parents' perceptions, attitudes and contribution towards SN students.

The parents are the primary caregivers for all SN students in any given situation (Berger, 2008). Many parents of SN students are "socially excluded" and "in particular are isolated from the information and assistance that enables effective parenting" (Gillies, 2005, p. 70). Gillies (2005) further argues that lack of advice and guidance on child rearing often leads to parents having no concern for their child's education. Although the policy emphasises full cooperation from everyone to support disadvantaged or socially excluded families to closely monitor their SN student's education progress, this is not happening for the parents of SN students in the developing countries (Gillies, 2005). For example, in Papua New Guinea, when a student is identified by a class teacher as having

special learning needs, parents are not briefed about their children's learning problem; instead, the class teacher just teaches them as other non-SN students (Morley, Bailey, Tan, & Cooke, 2005). SN students also place heavy demand on parents for their care needs (Hooper, 2004). This causes many parents of SN students, especially mothers, to be overwhelmed because of the family obligations mothers have to cope with to successfully include their SN children in regular class (Ainbinder et al., 1998). In the PNG context, it is quite difficult for parents of SN students to accept and adjust to their children's disability due to the misconception and influence from the traditional belief system towards disability (Jenkin et al., 2015).

Therefore, parents are the key variables in the educational change of the SN students, and awareness in child rearing is crucial for parents who do not know about the inclusive education policy (Ahmmed & Mullick, 2014). Gillies (2005) further argues for awareness of the policy for the "government, society and its citizens [to] prioritize the welfare of [SN] students" by ensuring that their educational development is not deprived. One of the policies of inclusive education is that parents should be involved in every matter relating to their SN children accessing primary education (Avalos, 1993): for instance, attending to the IEPs meetings conducted by the IERC teachers.

2.8.4 The impact of policy on the community's perceptions, attitudes and contribution towards SN students.

In the developing countries, the impact of policy on the community's perceptions, attitudes and contributions towards SN students is less influential in the communities (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000). The perception and attitudes of people towards disability and disabled people's lives are categorised into three models by Grewal et al. (2002). The first model is how media shapes the beliefs about disability, disabled people and their lives in the community (Happer & Philo, 2013). The second model is the traditional belief system that is linked to the socio-cultural context of the parents, family members and the community (Goodley et al., 2012). The last is the individual disabled person's ability to achieve self-awareness with confidence in the community. Grewal et al. (2002)

further argue that "people's attitudes about disabled people, their lives and their capabilities are underpinned by these belief systems" (p. 60). To disassemble these belief systems and create an inclusive environment in the school, all stakeholders (parents, learners, other educators, inclusive education resource centres and community-based organisations) must collaborate and have the cultural competence and leadership capacity to facilitate change, engage SN students, and transform learning contexts (Avalos, 1993; Verhoef, 2005).

2.9 What research says about what disabled students want from their education.

It has been argued by researchers that students with special learning needs are at high risk of low development in academic work and low behavioural and emotional development, which are essential aspects of child development in any school setting (Agrawal, Shah, Zebracki, Sanabria, Kohrman, & Kohrman, 2012; Gyovai, Cartledge, Kourea, Yurick, & Gibson, 2009; Rademaker, 2015; Uba & Nwoga, 2016). The developments can often be seen through the characteristics displayed by SN students in the classroom, which "include increased absenteeism, increased dropout rates, cognitive deficits, emotional and social challenges, and health and safety issues" (Uba & Nwoga, 2016, p. 142). These problems could be reduced if the school administration and their teachers take into account these students during their initial planning and programming period, identifying the specific needs of the SN students rather than needlessly referring them to the inclusive education resource centre (Rademaker, 2015). Ahmmed and Mullick (2014) assert that to lessen "the challenges to implementing [inclusive education] reform policies into classroom level practices, education systems need to apply strategies which are contextually useful" (p. 167).

2.9.1 Research from global southern countries

Many students, including the SN in developing countries, are not given the opportunity to attend regular schools (Bellang, 1999, as cited in Ainscow, 2005). The non-disabled society perceives SN students as unworthy, unproductive in the community, and is not giving them opportunity to be enrolled in schools (UNICEF,

2007). The concept of inclusive education perceived by some countries is often seen as an approach to dealing with students with disabilities; however, internationally, it is regarded as a shift of the educational paradigm, as, in a broader view, it involves helping students with diverse learning needs (Ainscow, 2005). Stigmatisation is one of the major barriers encountered by SN students when accessing inclusive education (Uba & Nwoga, 2016). Generally, students "with disabilities and their families [in every community are believed to be frequently experiencing] barriers to the enjoyment of their basic human rights and to their inclusion in society" (UNICEF, 2007, p. iv). It is argued that students with special needs experience some sort of discrimination and exclusion not only in the school environment but across all sectors of society: economic, political, religious and cultural settings (UNICEF, 2007). Even though inclusive education policy and the curriculum are being developed for implementation in schools, this policy will only become effective depending on the four key contributors of inclusive education development mentioned elsewhere above, and how serious we concentrate on delivering such service.

2.9.2 Creating an inclusive atmosphere for SN students in regular classes

The inclusive education policy is the hottest topic debated at the highest levels of organisations in delivering quality education to all students (Ajuwon, 2008). Therefore, in the context of inclusive education, creating a friendly and welcoming inclusive environment for all the students is also another aspect to consider in quality learning of students (Ajuwon, 2008; Centre of Excellence for Research in Inclusive Education, 2013). When accepting students with disabilities into regular schools, the schools should make sure that the environment is the least restrictive, and the setting of the class should meet the needs of the SN student (Gargiulo, 2014). This means that the general classroom environment is made available to the SN students according to their educational needs (Le Fanu, 2010). For instance, preparation of visual aids for hearing impaired students is crucial for the hearing-impaired students' learning during class time. Creating social institutions in regular classes, which develop understanding of respect and dignity for each individual in the class by everyone, is of paramount importance

for a full inclusion strategy (Ahmmed & Mullick, 2014; Avramidis et al., 2000). A good learning environment for SN students could mean thoughtful preparation is required; however, in developing countries, the scarce availability of resources could handicap the implementation of inclusive practices (Hart, 2013).

2.9.3 Enabling SN students to experience inclusive education and to realise their full potential

The notion of assisting students with disabilities to experience full inclusion in the public education system was a UN mandate declared in 1981 towards the education for all policy (Jenkinson, 1997). This legislation paved a way for students with disabilities to access public education; it also prepared them to be active, involved participants in classes based on the concept of equality and social justice (Centre of Excellence for Research in Inclusive Education, 2013). Davis and Watson (2001) argue that more students with disabilities were enrolled in the mainstream after the declaration. However, Torombe (2013) disputes that inclusive education policy has been newly introduced in developing countries like Papua New Guinea, and many students with disabilities experience less inclusive educational practice or none. The contributing factors such as diverse cultural background, different native belief systems and the locations of schools in the difficult rural geographical structures are the barriers (Rombo 2007).

2.10 Barriers associated with inclusive education

The philosophy of teaching SN students in mainstream education "is a relatively new concept [for teachers] within the education system in" Papua New Guinea (Ahmmed et al., 2012, p. 132). The education reform of the inclusive education in Papua New Guinea was introduced a decade ago (Deruage, 2007; Torombe, 2013). Papua New Guinea is a signatory to several international declarations, including the Salamanca Statement 1994 and its Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, the Dakar Framework for Action 2000 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006 that advocate for education for all

students in the mainstream education system, regardless of the differences in abilities of every individual child (Ahmmed et al., 2012).

At the national level, the PNG government enacted its inclusive education policy entitled National Special Education Policy, Plans and Guidelines (NSEPPG) in 1993 (Torombe, 2013). Researchers argued that the development of the inclusive education policies articulates in establishing quality education and provides equal education opportunities for all learners and resources needed, in providing for all students, including students with disabilities (Ministry of Education, 2010).

The advantage of inclusive education is that it recognises students with disabilities being enrolled in regular schools and gaining access to the full educational program; however, teachers are also faced with multiple challenges in the implementation of the policy (Le Fanu, 2013a). For example, Avalos (1993) argues that the constraints teachers are faced with are:

> availability of schools and teachers; distance of rural schools to the places where the children live; conditions of service of teachers that hinder their wish to work, especially in remote rural areas; parental commitment to education; fee structure and other hidden costs to parents; and staggered intake of some rural schools. (p. 281)

Teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards providing education needs for SN students may greatly vary from country to country around the globe (Torombe, 2013). For instance, in Papua New Guinea, a native teacher may be reluctant to accept and teach the SN student, as this might not be part of their cultural obligations. Johnstone and Chapman (2009) argue that when teachers show positive attitudes, there is progress in inclusive education, while negative attitudes are a regression in achieving inclusive practices. Teachers' roles in the classroom are also another factor which affects their pupils' learning (Florian, 2008, as cited in Torombe, 2013), for instance, poor performance in their daily

duties such as planning, teaching, evaluating and developing strategies to help improve their pupils' learning (Torombe, 2013).

All negative contributing factors such as stigma, discrimination, ignorance and stereotypical behaviour from outside of the school can have great impact on the student's learning (De Giacomo & Fombonne, 1998; Thornicroft, Rose, Kassam, & Sartorius, 2007). For instance, parents' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about their SN students' educational performance can deter their SN children from receiving a quality educational experience (Danseco, 1997). The possible cause could be due to lack of awareness and motivation for parents to involve themselves in their child's educational development (Bailey Jr, Skinner, Rodriguez, Gut, & Correa, 1999; Danseco, 1997; McCabe, 2007). Therefore, when class teachers suspect that a student has special needs, they should seek assistance from the inclusive resource centres to provide the necessary information and training for them as well as the parents of the SN students.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter in general has included three parts of a literature review for the current study. The first part has focused on the topic of the literature and the definition of inclusive education. It has described the contemporary developments in inclusive education progress and what is the role of new education system towards overcoming the barriers of inclusion. The second section has elaborated on the concepts of the social model of disability, defining the concepts of the social model of disability and explaining its roles in the society, while discussing ableism. The third section highlighted the barriers associated with inclusive education, factors that affect special needs students from receiving quality education in mainstream school. Factors include looking at ways to improve the pedagogical skills to improve the educational experience of special needs students and discussion about all people contributing towards the educational development of the SN student.

This research project seeks to understand how inclusive education policy is practised in PNG's education system. It focuses on the inclusive education resource centre supported students with special needs who are experiencing education in regular class settings. Chapter 3 outlines the research design used for this action research project.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

3.0 Introduction

Many studies have been conducted by researchers focusing on improving people's educational and social lives. This is done by carrying out research in the specific area of needs and designing new "teaching and learning systems [to build on the existing knowledge] and practices for the betterment of all concerned [citizens] and society at large" (Mutch, 2013, p. 24). It has been argued that researchers, especially teachers undertaking educational research, are curious to explore the educational phenomenon in depth to understand better educational issues and related issues affecting the school society (Menter, Eliot, Hulme, Lewin, & Lowden, 2011; Mutch, 2013). Teachers are also keen to reflect on their research and evaluate teaching and learning methods practised that may also guide them to alternative teaching approaches that they may want to use (Menter et al., 2011). The purpose of this research is to address the research question "How are inclusive education resource centre (IERC) supported students with special needs (SN) experiencing regular classroom settings in the town schools in Western Province of Papua New Guinea?" The qualitative research method applied in this study is to gather primary evidence to broaden our understanding of real-life situations and reflect the multiple realities faced by individual students with disabilities in regular school settings on the island of Daru and around Papua New Guinea (Burns, 2000). A case study approach, which has used a qualitative research study that is focused on providing detailed and sufficient information within the study context, has been used (Mutch, 2013).

3.1 Chapter outline

This chapter has five main sections. Section 3.2 outlines the conceptual framework used to develop the methodology and the method employed for gathering data for this study. This section focuses on the theoretical aspect of qualitative inquiry as the methodical approach to the study. The social constructivist/interpretive research method used and the motive for the chosen

study is briefly explored. Section 3.3 delves into the method and outlines the skills applied in collecting data. Section 3.4 considers the ethical application in every respect throughout the study. Section 3.5 looks at the research processes involved in the fieldwork and the generation of data for this study.

3.2 Methodology

Research is a term "used liberally for any kind of investigation that is intended to uncover interesting or new facts" and develop new conclusions for change in a given social context (William, 2011, p. 1). According to Best and Kahn (2006), research is a "systematic activity that is directed towards discovery and development of an organised body of knowledge" (p. 18). In the context of educational research, Menter et al. (2011) define this process as a "systematic enquiry in [an] educational setting carried out by someone working in that setting and the findings are shared with other practitioners" to provide better education (p. 3). Researchers seek information and carry out assigned tasks in a systematic manner to share their findings and compare these with the pre-existing concept and build on it (Menter et al., 2011). Menter et al. (2011) argue that researchers have three characters in common when doing research. The first part is the enquiry of research. The researcher develops a hypothesis to investigate the research topic so to develop new knowledge and understanding. The second part is the systematic order into which the enquiry is located. The researcher ensure that the nature of research, the terms of engagement with the research hypothesis and ensuring capturing, explaining and defending its rationale are organised. The final part allows the researcher to capture how data are gathered and disseminated of the researched outcomes to the audience will be managed, which includes sharing of findings with people who are of significance to the study.

3.2.1 Qualitative inquiry as a methodological approach to research

Qualitative research could be specifically concern with the approach to which research is primarily concerned with studying the nature, quality, and meaning of human experience (Menter, Eliot, Hulme, Lewin, & Lowden, 2011). Qualitative

inquiry does not focus on objective knowledge but rather subjective knowledge, so as to "seek the perspective provided by the whole picture and assert that values and politics are important in [the] research" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 6). Qualitative research delves into the detail of the research topic, in order to grasp and unpack the complexities involved in the lived situations and interactions of individuals, relating to the social reality in a given context (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Mutch, 2013).

During the research process, the qualitative researchers take into consideration the richness, texture, and feeling of raw data that affect every aspect of the topic studied (Neuman, 2006). The qualitative research style is flexible, and it encourages the researchers to focus on the topic throughout the study (Neuman, 2006). Qualitative researchers use inductive reasoning to gather primary information and emphasise the developing ideas and hypothesis from data generated from different sources (Cohen et al., 2011; Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010; Mutch, 2013; Neuman, 2006). As Patton (2005) indicates, in qualitative research, the researcher analyses data directly from "fieldwork observations, in-depth, open-ended interviews, and written documents" (p. 1). Inductive reasoning is used by the researcher as a "bottom-up" approach, in which the research builds on observation and exploration of the nature of the phenomenon in social reality (Lodico et al., 2010). Qualitative researchers believe that "there are multiple perspectives to be uncovered in their research" (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 142). Therefore, this makes it necessary that a qualitative researcher becomes knowledgeable about the social phenomena and includes action on the demands that participants have a voice in the study (Lodico et al., 2010).

Qualitative research "is based on the beliefs that knowledge is derived from the social setting and that understanding social knowledge is a legitimate scientific process" (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 142). The qualitative research process provides for an inductive analysis that helps the researcher to analyse information gathered into patterns and themes and present the information in an

interlocking detail that provides sufficient texture of study that makes it real to the readers (Neuman, 2006; Patton, 2005). Qualitative researchers can use a selection of data collection tools, and they stay close to the people or events they study (Lodico et al., 2010; Neuman, 2006). This helps the qualitative researchers to have personal insight and a better understanding of the nature of the study. In the case of this research, inductive analysis and coding structures helped me to easily understand the interview and focus group data gathered for this study (Hammond & Wellington, 2013).

3.2.2 Social constructivism as the theoretical framework of the research

Social constructivism has been used as the guiding concept for this research undertaking, as this idea maintains the significance of culture and context of the research, in looking at the development of understanding about what is happening in the environment and gaining knowledge about local processes used in the context of the research topic (Burr, 2015; Kim, 2001). Research influenced by social constructivism can contribute meaningfully to inclusive education studies, both theoretically and in practice (Risse, 2004). Theoretically, the study helps us to understand the social construct of inclusive education ideology that focuses on the knowledge and skills required to assist SN students in a classroom context. As a practical concept, the social construct is the methodology and the methodical process of catering for SN students to experience the full educational experience. Therefore, the study wishes to examine the SN students' lived educational experiences regarding their social associations with the inclusive education system existing in Papua New Guinea.

The study had focused on three main aspects of social constructivism. The first concept is reality. Social constructivist researchers believe that reality is constructed through human activity and contend that field experiences provide "valid, reliable and objective interpretation" for the study (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 8) of this reality. For instance, the current barriers faced by SN students to accessing inclusive schools in PNG are created by the reality of people's ignorance and misconceptions. Maxwell (2012) states that researchers do come

into contact with participants, therefore establishing a relationship that shapes the context of the study. The relationships built between the researcher and the participants have great influence in the data findings. Therefore, researchers should take directly into account the local cultural "beliefs, values and disposition they bring to the study" prior to the research (Maxwell, 2012, p. 97). The second concept is knowledge. Knowledge is a human's conception of the scientific/mathematical/musical/historical knowledge principles that have meaning in a given society (Kim, 2001). This meaning is created through the social interaction of people that live within the community. Finally, a constructivist approach includes the learning process. Every person is a social being and they acquire knowledge and skills through communal social interactions, either by participating or observing in an activity (Kukuk, 1992). Teachers apply social constructivist concepts in their teaching and learning process in a classroom; this results in children learning through socially interactive class activities. By doing this, non-SN students will mingle more with their SN friends and come to understand the needs of SN students, and will try to have dignity and respect for SN students. Applying this concept to this research initiative means that there is social interaction and learning is taking place within the pupils in the classroom and outside the classroom.

3.2.2.1 Interpretive-constructivist paradigm

An interpretive-constructivist paradigm is one of the research tools used for the research framework of the study. Interpretive-constructivism is an approach used in generating knowledge within the study and practice of the research discipline (Thorne, 2016). The interpretive-constructivist points out that knowledge is a human construct that arises from human social interactional experiences (Kim, 2001). However, this framework is not always easy to use. The interpretive-constructivist researchers gather data through inductive reasoning to create themes that can have meanings relating to the research process (Maxwell, 2012; Thorne, 2016). Thorne (2016) argues that interpreting and understanding a complex phenomenon requires confidence "as to which claims [the researcher chooses] to represent individual subjective truth … which might

be more shared or common in nature" (p. 235). However, taking into consideration the sensitivity of the nature of the research context within the research process is important (Thorne, 2016). For instance, I have to take note of how the local cultural belief system works and how it affects the education system in the local community context. People are social beings and any information gathered and shared about the knowledge and skills in this manner is a social construction that is "likely to be shared by others in the field even by those we attempt to study" (Thorne, 2016, p. 239). The best way to collect information on a particular group in the social setting is by involving the participants (Dietze & Knowles, 2016). This idea formed the basis for how the methodology of this research initiative was set up. The construction of this initiative was also made possible by the researcher having "insider" knowledge of the customs and culture of the community under study.

3.2.2.2 Case study as research enquiry

As a research method, the case study approach is another form of qualitative research that investigates in detail a particular contemporary phenomenon which contributes meaning to our understanding of individual people, groups or situations, and other related issues (Lodico et al., 2010; Menter, Eliot, Hulme, Lewin, & Lowden, 2011; Yin, 2009). Case study research is different from other forms of qualitative research, as it concentrates specifically on a particular phenomenon of the research. Since case study focuses on a single subject, the number of participants from which information is gathered is also reduced, using a qualitative type of enquiry through multiple research methods such as interviews and direct observation to gather the required information and other related issues (Lodico et al., 2010; Menter et al., 2011). This allowed me to do comparison of the "findings, and most importantly in this context the investigation of particular phenomenon in diverse settings'' (Oliver, 2004, p. 298). Case study "methods allow investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events, such as individual life cycle, small group behaviour and school performance" (Yin, 2009, p. 4). Tomal and Hastert (2010) further argue that the primary purpose for case study is to further understand

people's social lives and their perception of how the surrounding environment is treating them.

There are two common things I did in this case study approach. Firstly, I focused on a particular phenomenon to investigate further to collect first-hand information about the case within a given situation of the society (Merriam, 1998). Secondly, I used the multiple data collected to triangulate and present the information using the themes developed in the study (Hammond & Wellington, 2013). I also followed certain formal procedures to ensure that the quality of the data collected has construct validity and reliability, thereby becoming worthy of further analysis in the future (Yin, 2014).

3.2.2.3 Why this approach was chosen for this study

Case study is the approach taken in this study, as a qualitative research method was used because of my interest in "realistic" accounts of the current challenges faced by SN students in education in PNG society (Maxwell, 2012). I wanted to isolate and comment on what the effects of social structures and social networks were that influence SN students' interactions in regular schools. I wished to study further the challenges that SN students face in relation to the social, economic and political context of their education, especially what was happening for SN children in the classroom settings. The case study explores in depth to understand how SN students are experiencing the inclusion policy in regular schools, so as to propose suggestions for improvements in the future.

3.3 Methods

The study undertaken is qualitative research and is carried out using a case study as the research approach to collect data in the selected schools in Daru Island of Western Province, Papua New Guinea. The research design I used is an embedded "single-case" format that strives to explore the close-up view of the reality of the SN students' experiences in the regular class and that of the adults in their immediate environment (Manion & Morrison, 2011). The case study approach used exploratory, descriptive and explanatory methodologies. In the

exploratory part of the study, a research framework was set within the context of the research question. The study aimed at discovering whether the inclusive education policy and its practices do exist in the regular schools of the education system in PNG. From previous studies, research suggested that many SN students in PNG are the most recognisable in regular classes, but their voices are not often heard (Torombe, 2013; Winis, 2007). In the descriptive part of the study, the research described the concept of inclusive education and its development towards including SN students in PNG society, and in the explanatory part, it focused on the cause and effect of inclusive practices within the contextual factors on the students, teachers and adults who care for them. Further explanation on the methods used in the process of collecting data is discussed in the following sections below.

3.3.1 A case study approach

Prior to exploring the case, the researcher begins with a literature review to get a glimpse of what has been talked about by early scholars and "the careful and thoughtful posing of the research question" (Yin, 2009, p. 3). In every study conducted, there are advantages and disadvantages faced in any inquiry set, and case study is no exception (Yin, 2009). My purpose of doing a case study is to collect, present and evaluate data and build on existing situations (Yin, 2009). Case studies are presented in many different ways using contextual or non-contextual forms (Yin, 2014). For instance, in non-contextual form, the data could be represented in graphs and tables in PowerPoint presentations. In this case study, data triangulation from international and contemporary PNG studies helped me to develop data collected from multiple sources and to focus on the themes created for the study (Yin, 2014). This data triangulation also helped me to gather data, and analyse and address the burning issues encountered by SN students in the classroom and school environment. This case study approach has used interview and observation methods as its data collection instruments in the study. The principal technique used for this study to collect data is the interview, while the observation method was used to collect supplementary information. Therefore, both the interview and observation collaborate side-by-side to

provide greater in-depth accounts of the study than either one could have done alone (Maxwell, 2012).

3.3.1.1 Semi-structured interview

The data collection process using a semi-structured interview requires the researcher to go to the environment of the interviewees and conduct a face-to-face interview to collect as much as possible the information required for the study (Menter et al., 2011; Rombo, 2007; Tomal & Hastert, 2010). My intention was to collect first-hand information and investigate by myself what is going on in the participant's mind (Zohrabi, 2013). The reason is that I cannot report on the observed emotional behaviours such as feelings and thinking; therefore, interviewing only will allow my participants to verbally express how they perceive and relate to the surrounding environment (Zohrabi, 2013). Prior to asking for their involvement in the interview session, I explained to the participant/s about the background of the study and what is expected from the study (Tomal & Hastert, 2010). The consent was gained from the teachers of the participating schools and IERC, SN students, and the parents of SN students. The class teachers of SN students were interviewed in a room that they were comfortable with in their respective schools. The parents of SN students and the focus group were interviewed in the deaf unit classroom, allocated by the inclusive education resource centre school on different days and times. The semi-structured interview was conducted in a flexible manner to allow the interviewees to freely express their opinion in depth regarding the questions asked (Tomal & Hastert, 2010). During the interview process, probing questions were also asked to allow the participants to clarify and elaborate further on the ideas that became unclear. In the focus group interview, the asking of questions was directed straight to the individual participant, and time was given to them answer the question. This is to avoid possible confusion in the interpreting of transcripts. I also made sure that there was no discomfort in the interviewing process. The interview process aimed at generating data which "is not meant to provide generalizable findings but rather to enhance understanding of social actions and process" (Menter et al., 2013, p. 127).

In this study, the interview questions constructed were focused around SN students, SN students' educational attainment and their experiences about what it is like to be an SN student in a regular class. How do they see their learning abilities compared with other non-SN students? What do they think of the social influences that affect their educational lives? What can teachers do more of in order to help them achieve their full potential? Two groups of people were interviewed using a semi-structured interview technique. The first group is the focus group, and they are the identified SN students in the selected inclusive schools. The second group is the non-focus group. They are the parents of SN students, an IERC teacher and the class teachers of the SN students who were interviewed separately at different locations.

3.3.1.2 Focus group

The interviewing of a focus group "is one that consists of asking questions to two or more people who have gathered for the session" (Tomal & Hastert, 2010, p. 48). It is important for the interviewer to note that the interviewees selected are "people who can make contribution to the interview session" (Tomal & Hastert, 2010, p. 48). Prior to the focus group interview, consent for SN students was obtained from their parents. The questions were also sent to the SN students a few days prior the interview session through their class teacher to the parents to explain to their child. The focus group consists of three SN students and an internal facilitator. The internal facilitator from the IERC participated in the session to help SN students with the interpretation of questions according to their level of understanding when required (Tomal & Hastert, 2010). Due to the special needs required by the SN students, the focus group was interviewed in a comfortable environment that was pleasing to participants and was accessible by all. The interviewer was less dominant throughout the discussion but recorded the responses of the interviewees who shared their feelings and perceptions by using an audio tape. Equal participation by all members was encouraged throughout the study, considering individual unique needs and respecting their cultural background as well. Tomal and Hastert (2010) assert that a focus group

interview operates well when the participants are allowed to speak freely and it is "responsible for eliciting responses from everyone within their group" (2010, p. 51).

3.3.1.3 Non-participant observation

Non-participant observation is a less structured observation that focuses on obtaining real-life accounts of teacher-student interactions in the classroom situation when teachers teach the class (Rombo, 2007). According to Maxwell (2012), observation is another way of understanding theory-in-use as well as obtaining additional information about SN students who are unable to respond to interview. Using direct observation gives the researcher the opportunity to collect first-hand information regarding the topic of the study (Tomal & Hastert, 2010). The researcher will rely on the real-life data obtained rather than secondary information based on reports or third-party individuals (Tomal & Hastert, 2010). However, it is argued that the researcher has to take into consideration the factors that may hinder and distort collection of authentic data (Rombo, 2007; Tomal & Hastert, 2010). My purpose in using a non-participant observation research strategy was to gather further information about SN students' lived social experiences in the class, which they may not express in our discussion. The non-participant observation research provided a direct and powerful way of learning about people's behaviour in a real-life context (Maxwell, 2012). The visual notes taken provided additional information to my research, which deepened my understanding of the context of the data gathered during the observatory class. The data generated and analysed was openly shared with the class teacher after the observation for their awareness towards helping the SN student.

3.3.1.4 Reliability

Reliability in this study refers to the "consistency, dependency and replicability" of data obtained from the case study research conducted (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 259). Maintaining reliability and consistency of data and findings will become an issue for me, if I have no preplanned activities set prior to obtaining

the data and after data collection. Therefore, in my proposal, I have explained "explicitly the different process[es] and phases of the inquiry" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 259). I also explained in detail about the "rational[e] of study, design of study and the subjects" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 259). In doing so, I understood clearly the concept and easily carried out the research without having much difficulty. Another method I used in the research was to maintain reliability and replication of the data through a data triangulation process. In this, I used procedures such as questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation to collect the data. The data sources were obtained from class teachers of SN students, parents of SN students, SN students and IERC teachers. Collecting multiple sources of data enhanced consistency, dependability and replicability. I also took into consideration all aspects such as how the study was conducted, the process involved in analysing the data, and how the data is organised logically to obtain the results. Therefore, in order for me to retain reliability and replicate data similar to the original study, I have to observe all the research procedures, and this is the key to obtaining better results.

3.3.1.5 Validity

Validity in this research context refers to how accurately the study represents participants' accounts of the social reality under enquiry and considers the outcome of the data as credible (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Researchers argue that in qualitative research, the validity of data in the research has "confidence in the trustworthiness or credibility of description and interpretation: that is, the legitimacy of the knowledge produced" (Newton, Shaw, Lagrange, & Robinson, 2014, p. 4). Prior to the research, I initially visited the research site and established a good relationship with the participants and familiarised myself with the surrounding environment. The purpose of the study and how the study was conducted were explained to the participants, and I distributed invitation letters with the background information. These preliminary methodological data analyses enabled me to elicit more data and interpretation.

The raw data are the first and immediate recordings in a real-life situation. "Without this kind of record data it would be difficult to make sense of anything but the simplest phenomenon and [be] able to communicate" to share this significant information with relevant people and service providers to provide appropriately (Walliman, 2011, p. 70). My aim was to preserve the authenticity and assurance of high quality data. In doing so, it gives voice to the issue that my research aims to address and the findings as well. In the nature of qualitative research, it is "fairly demanding and difficult" to duplicate identical results (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 259).

Determining and maintaining validity in educational research depends on the nature of the research paradigms that researchers select to use to shape the validation process (Memua, 2011; Zohrabi, 2013). The researcher has used the interpretive-constructivist paradigm, which sets the scene of the research framework, and the inductive reasoning method was used to collate the data. A data triangulation method ensured that the findings are congruent with the research phenomenon. Multiple data collection tools such as interviews, questionnaires and classroom observations were used to collect data, which allowed me to authenticate and validate the quality of the data for consistency (Rombo, 2007). In order to strengthen validity of evaluation data and findings, a triangulation process was used to help me analyse data and maintain consistency of data for accuracy (Newton et al., 2014; Zohrabi, 2013). In the qualitative research context, the research methods were designed and data triangulation process was used to incorporate appropriate methodological strategies to ensure there is trustworthiness in the findings (Noble & Smith, 2015). In this study, the validity of the findings found in the schools of the Island of Daru may not be generalised, as there are no current samples, but the data presented may resemble the experiences of SN students in other schools throughout Papua New Guinea (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

3.4 Ethical consideration

In any research conducted, whether educational or scientific, ethics is the fundamental element that is required to avoid any consequences in the research process (Memua, 2011; Panter & Sterba, 2011). Ethics is considered to be the core to all aspects of the research process; this includes the research design, implementation and evaluation of the research, due to the nature of sensitivity in dealing with the participants, ethnical cultural background and the issues associated with environment (Panter & Sterba, 2011). Panter and Sterba (2011) argue that there is great potential that ethical consideration in the research process can bring advantages and disadvantages to the community (Panter & Sterba, 2011.) Therefore, in this research, ethics is considered throughout my research process to avoid ethical issues that may arise to cause obscurity of the data and findings presented. The purpose of ethical consideration is to ensure that there is trust and respect for the participants, the research context and the data gathered (Menter et al., 2011; Rombo, 2007). Therefore, it is my responsibility to ensure that the participants' identities and their interests are protected to maintain complete anonymity and confidentiality in the research conducted. The confidence in maintaining quality and validity of the research data also depends on how effectively ethical values are observed by the researcher throughout the study.

3.4.1 Access to participants

The parents and teachers of the SN students chosen for the focus group were contacted and invited to become part of the study as my first step in the fieldwork (see Appendix 9 and 10). Schools who are being asked to take part in the research were also contacted through my letter to the principal (see Appendix 7 and 8). The principals of the inclusive schools that the SN students are enrolled are the ones I liaised with each time I wanted to get information across to the participants. Accompanying the principal's letter was the information sheets that supplied more information about the purpose of the study (see Appendix 7)

The principal distributed the information sheet, the invitation to participate and the interview questionnaires for adults a week prior to participation (see Appendix 7, 9, 10 and 18). A follow up was made to the teachers and parents with the consent forms to seek their consent for the interview (see Appendix 12 and 13). The decisions to take part in the interviews were voluntary. When they consented to participate in the study, I arranged a date, time and place for the interview.

I interviewed teachers of the SN students as the third aspect of the data gathering process. Prior to this interview, their consent was gained. The teachers also signed the observation form (see Appendix 12), which allowed me to observe the SN student in their class during class time. The class teacher agreed to the observation prior to the interview. The interview with the class teacher took place after the observation period. The information collected from the observation was shared with the class teacher.

The parents of SN students were visited after the distribution of the invitation and information sheet with the SN students' form to seek their consent for their child to be involved in the interview session (see Appendix 7, 10 and 14). Prior to that, I explained to the parents the details around what consent involved. The parents' decision in signing the consent was to be made voluntarily. The parents were assured that their children's safety would always be priority throughout the interview process. The information discussed in the interview would be confidential and kept anonymous.

3.4.2 Procedure for recruiting participants

The study has involved 10 participants. The participants were: three SN students (who were supported by a person from the Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC), three class teachers of the SN students, an IERC teacher (who became the liaison person and mentor for the focus group) and three parents (one for each of the SN student). The data was gathered using a focus group interview, interviews with support personnel (teachers and parents) and a small period of observation in the classroom during class time in the morning.

3.4.1.1 IERC personnel

The target groups for my research study are SN students, and parents and class teachers of SN students. The IERC became my background source of information about how to source these participants, and this organisation had supported me throughout my study. I did not obtain any sample data from the IERC personnel, but they had an active role as my initial point of liaison with all the participant groups and as support for the SN students during the focus group session. The role of the SNRC in relation to the focus group is explained below.

3.4.1.2 Parents of SN students, and teachers

The parents and teachers of the SN students chosen for the focus group were contacted and invited to become part of the study, and this was the first step in my fieldwork. Schools who are being asked to take part in the research were contacted through a letter to the principal. The principals of the inclusive schools that the SN students are enrolled in are the ones I liaised with each time I wanted to get the information across to participants. Accompanied the principal's letter was the information sheet that supplied detailed information about the purpose of the study. The principal distributed the information sheet, invitation to participate and the interview questionnaires for adults a week prior to participation. A follow up was made to the teachers and parents with the consent forms to seek their consent for the interviews. The participants were told that the signing of the consent forms was voluntary.

The SN teachers were interviewed as the third aspect of the data gathering process. Prior to this interview, their consent was gained. The teachers also signed the observation form which allowed me to observe the SN student in their class during class time for approximately 15-20 minutes. The interview with the class teacher took place after the observation period. The information collected from the observation was shared with the class teacher. The class teacher agreed to the observation prior to the interview.

3.4.1.3 SN children cohort for the focus group

The SN students attended lower primary school level. The SN students' ages were ranging from seven to eleven years. I have considerable experience from working in special education centres in PNG and am aware that SN students are more likely to be open to talking with their teachers present than their parents. However, members of this group were chosen by the IERC staff, because the IERC teacher was thought to be the best person to know who is most likely to be confident about talking about their experiences with a person who is not known to them. The IERC teacher had sound knowledge of the SN students involved and was their ex-teacher. I come from the same cultural background as the participants. An IERC teacher was present in the focus group interview to support the group members and me from time-to-time when assistance was needed. The IERC teacher signed a confidentiality form prior to him being involved in the interview. Consent for SN students to take part in the group was gained from their parents. Parents were interviewed prior to them signing the consent form for their SN child; therefore, the parents would have gained sufficient information about me, the purpose of my study, and how I can guarantee the safety of their SN child and make the interview process enjoyable.

3.4.1.4 Selecting participants

The participants selected are the ones who provided me with the necessary information regarding SN students' educational attainment and their experiences in a regular class. The participants are: SN students, the class teachers of SN students, parents of SN students and the IERC teacher. The participants were asked formally in a written document to participate in my research. They also agreed to participate in the research by signing the consent forms. Their involvement in the research was also kept confidential and nobody in the school or community knew about it.

3.4.3 Informed consent

In order for me to carry out the research in the schools, approval letters from each school were obtained. Also, the consent of each the individual participants

was gained before the actual interview. Teachers and parents consented during my follow-up visits after the distribution of background sheets and invitation letters (see Appendix 12 and 13). The consent for SN students was obtained from the parents/legal guardians (see Appendix 14). I thoroughly explained the consent forms and allowed the parents to digest and decide whether they wished for their child to participate. The participants were assured that the research conducted was trustworthy and credible (Mutch, 2013; Panter & Sterba, 2011). All the decisions made by the participants were to be voluntary. Should they wished to withdraw any time before and during the course of study, questions would not be asked why. During the research process, a mutual understanding was established between us through conversation that every decision made by the focus group participants or the one-to-one interviewees was respected at all times. Considering all ethical aspects in the research is crucial; for instance, during the research, I became aware of the cultural, ethnic customs and other ethical aspects in the process of the interview.

3.4.4 Confidentiality and anonymity

All the participants remained anonymous throughout the research project, and appropriate pseudonyms were used. All information was kept confidential and would not be shared with known participants outside the research environment. I transcribed audio recordings from the teachers and parents. There was no transcriber needed for SN students and other participants. The IERC teacher signed a confidentiality agreement form to avoid the information being divulged to others. The audio tape and transcription were stored away safely over the study period in a locked drawer at my home. I was an insider because I come from the same culture as the participants; some of the SN students were my ex-SN students. The relationship does not allow me to discuss any information about the participants out of the interview room with the parents, teacher or even the supervisor. All information was kept secret during and after research.

3.4.5 Potential harm to participants

All the comments and feedback, including the other data collected, were treated with respect at all times throughout the research. The potential harm that could have arisen was the unconscious sharing of the personal information and sharing of facts in the report that may devalue the participant's integrity. Therefore, it was my duty to keep what was being said confidential. The information obtained from the participants is used for the research purpose only; otherwise, it may be misleading information that is not ethically accepted. The participants had every right, should they wish, to add or remove any comments that are misquoted in the transcripts. My contact details were provided to the participants in the invitation letter for them to contact me anytime if they wished to withdraw from the study.

3.5 Research process

The interview of the focus group, teachers of SN students, and parents of SN students concentrated on the educational attainment and their experiences of what it is like in a regular class. Before and during the interview process, safety measures were taken into account from the interviewee and interviewer's perspective. Consent forms, anonymity and the interview protocols were followed, as they are the ethical procedures and requirements in conducting educational research.

Further, I assured the parents that their child's safety was always a priority throughout the interview and observation process. They were told that what was discussed in the interview would be kept anonymous. The parents were informed that an IERC person would be present as extra support for the SN students concerned and this person signed a confidentiality agreement. Finally, the parents were interviewed before the focus group interview. This was to make it clear for the parents exactly what would be happening with their SN children during the interview.

3.5.1 Access to institutions

The institutions were accessible after an ethics application was submitted to the National Department of Education in PNG and the Provincial Education Advisor of Western Province for their approval to carry out the research in the selected primary schools on the Island of Daru, Western Province. The principal's letter, requesting the schools to take part in the research, was distributed to the selected inclusive schools. Accompanying the principal's letter were the consent approval letters from the Department of Education in PNG, the Provincial Education Advisor of Western Province, and the information sheet that supplied detailed information about the purpose of the study (see Appendix 3, 5 and 7). The principals of each school conducted a staff meeting for their teaching staff to introduce me and the purpose of undertaking the study, and the class teachers of the SN students were urged to cooperate with me so the study could be conducted well. The principals of the inclusive schools that the SN students are enrolled in are the ones I liaised with each time I wanted to get the information across to participants. The principal distributed the information sheet, invitation to participate and the interview questionnaires for adults a week prior to participation. A follow up was made to the teachers and parents with the consent forms to seek their consent for the interviews. The signing of the consent forms was voluntary.

3.5.2 Selecting participants

The focus of the study was to collect data that relate to the SN students' educational attainment and their experiences in a regular class. Therefore, the participants are: SN students, class teachers of SN students, parents of SN students and the IERC teacher. The SN students are the ones integrated from the IERC, and they were selected with the assistance of the IERC teacher, since the SN students were the IERC teacher's ex-SN students at the IERC. SN students selected were the ones that can freely speak about the experiences they are currently facing in the school. The class teachers of SN students and the parents of SN students automatically became part of the study, and the IERC teacher was

chosen for providing support with the background experiences in dealing with these students.

3.5.3 Conducting non-focus group interviews

The principal liaised by distributing the information sheet, invitation to participate and the interview questionnaires for the adults a week prior to participation. The class teachers of SN students and parents of SN students were interviewed individually, at different times and locations. The consent was gained from the participants before the actual session. The teachers were interviewed after the non-participant observation in a room that they felt comfortable with. The parents were interviewed in a deaf classroom allocated by the IERC to carry out my interviews. All the interviews conducted were voluntary. After the interview, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and given back to the participants for feedback. The participants were given 10 working days to give their feedback on the transcript. All information gathered was secretly stored away out of everyone's reach.

3.5.4 Conducting focus group interviews

Prior to the focus group interview, consent for the SN students to participate in the study was obtained from their parents. I explained the consent form at the level of understanding of the parents; they were given time to discuss any matter that arose from the consent form and to make a decision about whether they wished to let their children take part in the study. The focus group interview was conducted in the deaf classroom at the IERC, in the presence of the IERC teacher for the comfort of the SN students in the interview room atmosphere. As mentioned earlier, SN students are more comfortable speaking with their educators than their parents, and the IERC representative helped me when there was a need for the SN students during the session.

3.5.5 Non-participation observation

Observation was another method used to collect supplementary data in a real-life context on the educational experiences of SN students in the classroom.

Zohrabi (2013) argues that "observation is a preplanned research tool which is carried out purposefully to serve research questions and objectives" (p. 257). For the purpose of this study, non-participant observations were conducted in different classrooms of the selected schools.

Observation consent was obtained from the class teacher before the observation. Notice about this activity was also given to other non-SN students to give to their parents. The purpose of classroom observations was to collect first-hand information regarding the experiences of SN students in regular classrooms that they may not have expressed during the interview. The visits to these classrooms were done on the agreed day and time, and the observation lasted for 15-20 minutes. The class teacher allocated a seat to me at the back of the classroom. The information gathered was shared with the class teacher after the observation.

I was a complete observer throughout the research process. I did not come into contact with the participants during my observation. Prior to observation, consent to do observation was obtained from the class teacher. This allowed me to carry out my observation in the class. Observation notices were given to all the non-SN students in the class to distribute to their parents, and the purpose of my observation was also made known to the class by the class teacher when I showed up in the class for the observation (see Appendix 16). Every classroom visited welcomed me, and this gave me the confidence to carry out my observation. Anecdotal notes were taken using the checklist drawn on, and the focus areas to be observed on SN students were followed during my observation (see Appendix 17). The information collected was shared with the class teacher after the observation

3.5.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Collecting and analysing data is part of the research process that researchers undertake in quantitative and qualitative research (Menter et al., 2011; Mutch, 2013). In this process, researchers use selected interventions to collect and

analyse data and report on their findings with possible suggestions for improvement (Tomal & Hastert, 2010). In the context of this study, the goal of collecting data was to understand the educational experiences of SN students in a general classroom situation and to look at ways in how we could improve their experiences towards promoting inclusive education in the school.

The qualitative data analysis was based on inductive and interpretative philosophy of the study (Menter et al., 2011). The specific research methods used in generating raw qualitative data are semi-structured interview and non-participant observation. The raw data were generated through audio recordings for semi-structured interviews and anecdotal notes for observations respectively. There are different strategies used in analysing raw data (Mutch, 2013; Yin, 2014). For this study, I had used the thematic approach to analyse my raw data. Analysing raw data using a thematic approach allowed me to shift from different sources of data, to identify similarities and their relationships (Mutch, 2013; Rombo, 2007; Yin, 2014). The initial focus of raw qualitative data analysis was to transform data collected into new knowledge that can be communicated in an ethnographic settings with others who have similar professional roles, to share professional responsibilities and concepts so as to deliver service appropriately to SN students (Burns, 2000; Memua, 2011). In the coding system, I used different colours to represent the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data. The main themes of the data analysed are communication, perception and attitudes, education system, inclusive practices, relationships, resources and barriers.

3.5.7 Data transcriptions and checking of participants

The data collection tools used are the questionnaire and observation checklist. In the interview, an audio recorder was used to record the participants' oral communication. The recorded information was transcribed verbatim. There was no transcriber used in the transcription as the participants knew how to read and write. The transcription was given back to the participants for feedback. A maximum of 10 working days was given to the participants to return the

transcript with their feedback. Data gathered for the observation was only shared with the class teacher of the SN students. The soft copies of the audio recording are kept in a locked computer, while the hard copies of the audio recording are locked in the drawer in my room. All the information gathered is stored in a locked place and nobody has access to them.

3.6 Conclusion

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first section explains the theoretical concept of the research methodology. This part of the study included qualitative inquiry as the methodological approach to the research, and social constructivism and an interpretive-constructivist paradigm are the theoretical framework of the study. The qualitative inquiry is focused on the nature of the research context, texture and feeling of raw data that affected every aspect of human life, especially the educational experiences of SN students in the school and classroom environment context. The study focused on the three different aspects of social constructivism. The first concept is that reality is created through human social interaction. Secondly, the knowledge poses human moral principles that create meaning in the lives of people in the community, and finally the knowledge concept is acquired through communal social interaction. Therefore, by using a social constructivist approach, the educational attainment and the social interaction of SN students in the classroom and school is determined by the cultural context they are in and how it is interpreted and applied in real life.

The second part of the chapter explains the actual methodology and methods used for the study to collect data and the analytical process. A case study approach has encompassed the data collection process. The data were gathered through interview and non-participant observation. The issues relating to validity and reliability of data and findings, and the ethical concerns that arose from the study, were treated with great care. Gathering data involved different data gathering methods such as interview and observation, and analysing them using the triangulation process to maintain the authenticity of the data. The next

chapter discusses the data findings analysed from the interviews conducted in

the inclusive schools.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data on the research conducted in the town schools of Daru Island in Western Province of Papua New Guinea (PNG). The data are presented in detail to give a rich, in-depth account of how special needs (SN) students are attaining and experiencing their education in regular classroom settings. Qualitative data that includes information gathered using a focus group interview with students, interviews with support personnel (teachers and parents) and a small period of observation in the classroom during class time in the morning form the data source for this research. The research question initially focused on the experiences of SN students attaining education in regular classes. The data generated are classified under four main themes. The first theme includes attitudes and practices relating to inclusive education development of SN students, including those of teachers, peers and parents, and the implementation of the inclusive education policy by the class teachers and IERC officers in the classroom and school environment. This theme is also viewed from the community's perspective and includes how the attitudes of parents and immediate family members help contribute towards the attainment of education for the SN student. The second theme is the barriers that contribute to the educational development of SN students in the classroom and the school. The third theme that emerged from the data is the promotion of inclusive education development through relationships, including: social interaction of teachers and peers with the SN students in the classroom and the school environment, and the social interaction of SN students with their family and other members of the community. The final theme that emerged from the data is that of constant curriculum reform and changes that are happening in the education system in Papua New Guinea. This theme relates to the necessary knowledge and skills needed for the teachers, and the teaching and learning resources that are available for teachers to use to deliver quality education for the SN students. Within each theme, sub themes are also created to simplify further to present the concept of inclusive education development affecting the SN students, the

cultural issues related to the development of the inclusive school, the experiences of SN students attaining education and the social experiences SN students face in the classroom and school.

In my research, abbreviations are used to represent members of the different groups who participated in the research project. The symbols T1, T2, and T3 are for the three regular class teachers: P1, P2 and P3 for the three parents; SN1, SN2 and SN3 for the three SN students; and T4 is used for the inclusive education resource centre teacher.

4.1 Chapter outline

This chapter has seven main sections that expand on the themes created from the data. Section 4.2 includes a brief overview of participants' demographic information. Section 4.3 discusses the attitudes and practices of inclusive education by teachers, peers and parents towards the development of SN students in mainstream schools, in particular around the issue of acceptance and teaching of SN students in regular classrooms. Here it is noted that the parents showed great interest in helping their children achieve the fully-inclusive educational experience. Section 4.4 isolates the key barriers to inclusion emerging from the data and looks at ways to overcome these barriers so to improve the inclusive educational practices for SN students in the school community as much as possible. Section 4.5 explores the promotion of inclusive education through building positive relationships: the building of relationships by teachers and peers with the SN students in the classroom and the school environment. It also looks at the teachers' social skills with parents and immediate family members that help the SN student to access regular school. Section 4.6 looks at the current curriculum reform in the education system of PNG that affects the educational development of the SN student, the availability of teaching and learning resources and the necessary training required for teachers to cater for the SN students. Section 4.7 advocates for parents and community members to involve themselves in the education programs of the SN students to promote an inclusive society. Lastly there is a conclusion section.

4.2 Demographics of the participants

A total of ten participants took part in the study. The participants are: three SN students (who were supported by a person from the inclusive education resource centre (IERC), three class teachers of the SN students who came from different schools, an IERC teacher (who became the liaison person and mentor for the focus group) and three parents (one for each SN student).

The SN students in the study are those who have been integrated from the IERC and who are able to speak in the focus group. Each of the participants has different learning needs. They have intellectual, physical and speech impairments respectively. They stay with their parents and attend three different schools on the Island.

The IERC teacher is the one who was their teacher at the IERC before the SN students transferred to the local school. The IERC teacher was used as a source of knowledge for collecting background information. This teacher also assisted in the focus group interview session with the needs of the researcher and the participants, to help the SN students feel at ease with the process.

The three teachers of the three different schools are the ones whose classes the SN students are in. They work side-by-side with the resource teachers to bring quality education to the SN students. They attend any training organised by the IERC to equip themselves with the required knowledge and skills to work with SN students in both the class and school. IERC staff also conduct short in-service training for the teachers in the schools. Thus, the teachers concerned are knowledgeable about inclusive practices.

The three parents of the SN students selected in this study provide basic care needs for their SN children. Two of the parents are not working and one is working as a nurse. This parent cohort was interviewed to gain more information about how they assisted the inclusive education development of their SN

children, and what they thought about how their child was coping in a regular education setting.

Table 4.1 Number of participants

Participants	Male	Female
Teachers	1	3
SN students	2	1
Parents	1	2
Total	10	

Together, this group is seen as a particular case-study group of individuals that provided the field experience for this research study, which allowed for the collection, presentation and evaluation of data about the existing situation (Yin, 2009). All participants provided accounts of inclusive practices that have enabled, as much as is possible in a small study, to provide some "valid, reliable and objective interpretation" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 8) of what is going on for SN students in this local area regarding inclusive educational practice.

4.3 Attitudes and practices related to inclusive education

Teachers, students and parents must develop an understanding of attitudes for inclusive education practices for the SN students in the mainstream schools. These actions will influence how the members of the community might bring about social change and help evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive education policy in promoting an inclusive society (Yazbeck, McVilly, & Parmenter, 2004). The attitudes and practices relating to inclusive education by teachers, students and parents are further elaborated in the following sections below.

4.3.1 Attitudes and practices of teachers

The study showed that the teachers concerned accepted SN students into their class. They reported being keen to teach this group of students and stated that SN students blended well with the classroom environment. T4 said that "we live in an ecosystem and I believe everyone depends on each other." T1 explained

that she put her SN students together with the non-SN students in the same group in the sitting arrangements. This allows the SN and non-SN students to mingle and get to know each other, and this strategy has helped the teacher to understand the needs of the SN student. T1 further stated that the non-SN students were helpful to their SN peers during lesson time. T1 commented that "the group he sits with are helpful, they read with him or solve maths problems and other questions, so I closely monitor him in this group."

T2 and T3 emphasised that there was need to respect the dignity of SN students in every classroom situation. They mentioned that the presence of SN students in their classrooms and the advocacy of inclusive education have influenced non-SN students to develop a positive attitude towards the SN students. As T2 commented, "he is a special needs student; therefore, the students tend to accept and respect who he is in the class now." T3 further commented on the usefulness of this for other students:

> There is always a reminder for my students every day in the class that we have special needs students in our classroom and we need to respect their dignity. The students show a lot of respect to these SN students. The children have come to understand the SN students' needs and they help SN students with reading and learning in class. (T3)

When teachers distributed learning resource materials such as textbooks, exercise books, pencils and biros, all students were treated equally. However, consideration was made for SN students due to the extra attention needed to cater for them. For instance, T2 keeps spare exercise books and pencils for SN2 because SN2 has an intellectual impairment, and he often misplaces his exercise books and pencils. T2 commented that "his case will be a special case because he tends to misplace his things at times so we keep extra stationery to give it to him."

Another practice of the class teachers is they also visit the parents of the SN student to discuss the progress and constraints the teachers faced in the educational development of the SN students. For instance, T2 visited the parents of SN2 and explained to them about the take-home work given to their SN child. Since SN2 has an intellectual impairment, T2 follows up with the family members on the task given to SN2 to ensure that he gets assistance with his schoolwork at home, as she commented below:

> When I have reminders, I make it my business to walk over to his house and tell his parents. He has a younger sister attending the same school and she is the person I relate to most of the time when passing information. (T2)

However, this practice was not common in all cases. T3 argued that parents never visit her to discuss the SN student's education needs. As T3 commented:

> To be honest, I have never gone to the community to find their parents. I only sent messages for their parents to come but they have never made an attempt to come and see me. I have not had much contact with the community. (T3)

Teacher's attitudes and practices also play a vital role on the SN student's educational development in the classrooms. In relation to improving teachers' attitudes and practices around inclusive education for SN children, some teachers who took part in the interview expressed that the "inclusive education policy" was a new concept introduced into the education system. However, even with the awareness programs, the teachers did not know that there was an actual policy on inclusive education existing within the education system. For instance, this comment was made by T2 when asked about her understanding of the existence of an inclusive education policy within the current education system. "Honestly, I have not come across it yet. It was part of the curriculum,

but I did not know that there was a policy. I am surprised that there is an inclusive education policy" (T2).

The comment from T2 indicates that no awareness raising of the inclusive policy was carried out in the school. However, T1 and T3 also commented that they know a little about the inclusive education policy. However, T1's comments below indicate that this teacher is familiar with the kinds of practices an inclusive education policy would encourage.

> The inclusive education policy advocates for SN students to be included in any school programs, and the environment has to be less discriminative and welcoming. The teachers can teach the same lesson but the approaches to teaching can be different for the SN students. (T1)

T4 is an inclusive education teacher; therefore, he is in a better position to promote and implement the policy of inclusion in the mainstream schools. He had more to say about policy and implementation, including how to ensure that inclusive education ideas actually could be carried out in schools. T4 commented that one of the motivations that will encourage class teachers to implement the policy effectively is to take inclusive education into consideration during inspections.

> The inspection criteria for all schools must include this aspect of teaching practices. This should guide teachers to provide equal educational opportunity for all the children in the mainstream schools. It is not only the inspection but also a full collaboration from the class teachers and students. What I mean by this is that the class teachers and other students have to show a keen interest in working with the SN students. (T4)

To make the policy work well in the classroom environment, T4 commented that "a well set up school and community will take the value of all students with special needs for inclusion in schools, community and society."

Further, T4 argued that the implementation of any inclusive education policy needs to involve different stakeholders to provide effective inclusive service for the SN students. Stakeholders would include the school board of governors, medical personnel, and divisional heads of the education sector. All should also be invited to involve themselves more fully in the daily activities of SN students in the school and in the community. This will enable them to learn about the needs of the people with disabilities, especially students with disabilities, and will encourage them to provide appropriate resources and other interventions when required by SN students in their schools. However, T4 thought that students, parents and community members are also not aware of the inclusive education policy and the rights of children with disabilities.

4.3.1.1 IERC teacher's role

Inclusive education resource teachers are tasked with providing the appropriate teaching aids and share knowledge and skills with mainstream teachers to help SN students. T4 conducts coaching classes for the SN students and also works with SN students in the mainstream class, where he encourages a "buddy learning system." He commented that, "[a] buddy learning system is essential for the educational development of special needs students. Teachers must work closely with each student and monitor the educational progress of these students."

Regular visits were carried out by T4 in the respective schools of the SN students as scheduled in the term's programs. T4 conducted several individualised education plan meetings for the teachers, parents and school Board of Governors to plan and provide appropriate assistance to implement the policy of inclusive education.

In general, the IERC teacher assisted class teachers in planning the lessons constructively and effectively, especially in relation to the individualised education plans and teaching student-centred lessons that encouraged more

socialisation and assisted children with disabilities. This should result in special needs students being included in all school programs and making use of their abilities and skills. Coaching programs are being conducted on the island and along the coast of mainland PNG. The identified SN students in the schools are being taught in areas in which they needed further assistance, and teachers are involved in assisting the learning of the students. T4 travels to the remote school and runs a two-week coaching program to extend the inclusive education programs. The data show that T4 has four different school programs, and he tries his best to provide sufficient and appropriate educational assistance as much as possible when he is teaching these four different programs. These programmes are welcomed in the schools, as indicated below.

> A good indication is that when parents of the special needs students see me on the road, they greet and call me by my title "teacher." Even the special needs students tell their parents that I am their teacher. I feel proud of that and also I think that maybe I am influencing their student's life through my teaching. (T4)

4.3.1.2 Difficulties faced by teachers while implementing inclusive practices in the classroom

There are several immediate problems faced by teachers of SN students while implementing inclusive education policy in the classroom. The first problem is lack of appropriate teaching and learning resources to use to include SN children in all class activities. This difficulty was evident in the responses given by the teachers. For example, T1 commented that there was a lack of support in terms of resources from the administration: "well, I'm interested in teaching children with special needs, but the administration has to support with teaching materials for them" (T1).

The next immediate problem faced by class teachers was that the time that they could make available for SN children during class was limited. All teachers expressed that they needed to mind other children as well. For instance, T2

expressed that she was overwhelmed by the amount of extra time she needed to allocate for the SN students. "Yes, sometimes it is like, oh my gosh! He is only one and I have spent so much time with him and neglect everyone else" (T2). T3 commented that she was happy to accept SN students into the class and teach them as normal students. However, she also commented that she did not want to take on the role of a special needs teacher, as can be seen in this statement:

> Where I stand as a teacher in the classroom, I am ready to welcome any special need child in my classroom or to teach them as normal students. They are included in all curricular activities, whatever that I plan to do, but not specifically to take up teaching as a special need teacher. (T3)

The data also revealed that SN students were only doing activities which they are interested in, which could also create problems for teachers. For instance, SN1 was not much interested in the social integration with the class members, but was interested in the attainment of education. This created difficulties for the teacher concerned about his social inclusion.

Another immediate problem the teachers faced was the behavioural demands of SN students that impacted the classroom teaching, and teacher and non-SN students' attention during class. T2 and T3 commented that their SN student grows tired sometimes. For instance, T3 explained that one of her SN students would sleep on the floor of the classroom to seek her attention when the task is difficult for him to do or he has nothing to do. However, T4, who is an experienced teacher of SN children, argued that if there was proper planning and enough time given for helping the SN children, SN students would succeed in their studies. T4 said: "I think I would appreciate the fact that if individualised education plans are drawn for SN students, they will succeed in their studies."

This quotation indicates that these problems could be eliminated if teachers carefully planned and analysed the current barriers that hinder SN students from

experiencing full inclusive education. Also, plans may not be effective if the teachers of SN students try to work in isolation.

4.3.2 Attitudes and practices of SN students

Data from the focus group interview revealed that SN students were no different from other non-SN students in terms of their participation in family activities and their aspiration for the future. They all showed great interest in attending regular school and their comments revealed how they wanted to learn in the regular school setting, just like other students. As with the non-SN students, the motives of the SN students in the study attending school were not all the same. However, they all wanted to learn new knowledge and skills, as SN1's comment revealed:
 "I really want to go to school to learn: read, write and spell."

Further, SN1 commented that his motive in attending school regularly was to learn new knowledge and skills to become somebody in the future. When asked about his future, he said "I will become a doctor" (SN1). SN2 stated that he likes playing with other children and sharing common ideas and things.

During the study, it was also noted that some SN students were interested in the specific subject area of learning. For instance, T2 expressed that SN2 was actively participating in maths lessons and while he was not interested in other subjects; SN2 has intellectual problems, therefore, his parents could be motivating his interest in maths to acquire the knowledge and skills in maths to apply in the areas of daily life skills when he becomes an adult in the future.

4.3.3 Attitudes and practices of parents

All parents interviewed showed a great interest towards helping their SN child to attain quality education, particularly for the development of self-reliance in the future. They expressed high expectations of the school for delivering their SN child's educational development. They wanted the integration of their SN child in the regular school. The data indicated that these parents are always supportive of their SN child in their homes. For instance, P1 teaches her son (SN1) basic daily

living skills at home to become self-reliant. One of the activities that has been taught at home is selling cooked food on the side of the road to raise money to help sustain their family. P1 made sure that SN1 was integrated well into the family's daily activities despite his disability. In the interview, P1 stated that she wanted her son to progress in education and learn as much as possible, in order to become self-reliant in education, as indicated in this comment: "You know, we have to help them learn something, so that in future we do not have to help them a lot. They become self-reliant and live on their own" (P1). P1 also mentioned that her SN child receives support from the IERC. The IERC provides SN1 with the learning resources and the coaching programs.

However, what also emerged from comments made by the parents were some concerns about the support their child was receiving for their learning in the regular school setting. Comments made by P2 and P3 indicated that these parents held some concerns about mainstream education. According to P2, the practices of the teachers was one of the difficulties she encountered while her SN child tried to learn in the mainstream class. She stated that "the current problem I am facing is there are some teachers who are able to teach disabled students but are not teaching them." She put this difficulty down to teachers lacking enough expertise in the area of special education, as she argued that "if all the teachers are trained to teach students with disabilities, then they will know how to teach the SN students. They will have special ability to teach these students." This idea also came through in the comments expressed by P3, who talked of his gratitude about the enrolment of his daughter at the inclusive education resource centre. He commented:

> When my daughter was enrolled in Callan [inclusive education resource centre] in 2010, I was very happy because my disabled child was recognised as equal to other non-SN children. I knew that my daughter would be educated by specialist teachers to help her speak English and learn to read and write. (P3)

Reflecting on how his daughter was progressing in a regular school, he remarked, "I was thinking of informing my daughter's ex-teacher from Callan about her academic needs. Maybe they will assist the class teacher in helping her with her schoolwork." P3 also touched on this point, stating that "teachers are trained in special education which they should practice in the classroom."

While parents had great hopes for their SN children to be included in all activities at school just like at home, they were concerned about some contributing factors that could hinder their SN children's learning process. As the data indicated, parents provide much needed support to their SN children in various ways. First of all, the parents provide the basic needs and wants for their SN children and other non-SN children in their family. They clothe, provide food and buy necessary stationery for both their SN and non-SN children. When parents share stationery among their children who are students, it gets equally distributed. However, P2 argued that she spends more money on her SN child than the other non-SN children who are students because of the SN child's condition and needs. Below was P2's comment:

> I buy the same school materials for my children who are attending school at the same time. My son has a short memory and he likes sharing. When he goes to the school he shares his school materials with his friends. When we find out that he has no biro or pencil we buy again these things for him. So, we spend more money on him than for my other abled children. (P2)

Secondly, parents provide basic assistance for their SN child's educational development. Here, parents become the teachers in the homes, sometimes using written instruction from the class teacher. They assist their SN children in completing any given task or to help revise what they have learnt in the school. For instance, P2 always checks her son when he comes back from school. When there is take-home work given, she sits by his side and explains the work to him, as she indicates below:

I follow up on him every day when he returns from school. My child forgets things easily, so I ask him if he has homework and assessable tasks given or any reminders from the teacher or school. When there is homework given, I will sit by his side and explain and assist him as much as possible to do his work. (P2)

P3 explained that they contribute to their SN child's education by attending any school-organised meetings and walking with their SN child to school. Since SN students are vulnerable, the parents I interviewed always walk with their children to school and the older siblings walk with them back home after school. The data also revealed that immediate family members also helped in the inclusive education program of the SN students more than the extended family members.

Finally, SN students are trained in daily life skills. The data has shown that it becomes every family member's responsibility to ensure that the SN student is attaining some of the necessities of life in terms of skills for future survival. As P1 commented, "We have to help them so that they learn something and in future we do not have to help them a lot; they become self-reliant and they live on their own" (P1).

For instance, she has taught her SN child to generate income for the family by selling cooked food on the side of the road. For P2, they allocated duties like the washing of utensils and his own clothes. The parents have shown great support towards their SN child's developmental growth. When parents are not actively involved in their SN child's education then there is less educational achievement by the SN student. For example, the following comment from P3 illustrates this point: "the class teacher just told me two weeks ago that my child is not doing her homework." This was an indication that P3 was not supporting his daughter at home with their school work.

4.3.4 Summary and discussion

This section of the chapter specifically explored theme one: attitudes and practices of stakeholders towards inclusive education. It explored how each participating group responded to the questions regarding the theme. The data reveals that the development of the inclusive education policies and practices in the education system in PNG was not fully understood by classroom teachers. Teachers are informed of inclusive education, but still lack vital knowledge and skills of practising inclusive education in the classroom. The attitudes and practices of inclusive education in the classroom are not just the class teacher's duty but involve every stakeholder such as the class teacher, IERC teacher, students and the parents of the SN students. The parents are the primary caregivers and they should always assist their SN children at home with their schoolwork and prepare them to face reality when they grow up. Parents are taking this responsibility seriously and want their SN child to do well. The data indicated that there was good support by parents towards their SN child's development both in school and life skill areas.

4.4 Barriers to inclusive practices

In a developing country like PNG, teachers often think about SN children as barriers in the classroom. My visits to the school indicated that more SN students are now enrolled in mainstream schools; therefore, their needs have to be addressed properly by all the people that contribute to SN students' education development, and consideration should be given to how to create inclusiveness, since SN students are part of society (Goodley et al., 2012). T4 commented that: "It is the non-disabled people's perception of disability that enslaves SN students from participating freely in class, school or even in the community." Overcoming barriers, both material and attitudinal, has been a challenge for class teachers and parents that are involved in providing education services for students with special needs attending regular schools. This is also the case in other cultures (Shakespeare, 2006). In PNG's context, when students are identified as "special needs students" in the classrooms, they are labelled as disabled students. For the nondisabled people, the term "disabled" automatically denotes that special care

and attention is required for this group of students. This can lead people in PNG to take advantage of the concept of the term, and SN students are sometimes overprotected and deprived of participation. For instance, when a class is involved in a physical education program, SN students with physical disability are often exempted from taking part due to the "disabled" name tag they are bearing, rather than teachers improvising alternative sports that can involve the SN student. Thus, inclusive education barriers are created by abled people focusing on the SN student's needs and not their ability. As T4 commented: "We have to view the special needs students from their ability's perspective rather than their disability; what they are able to do and how they can fully contribute to the community after attaining formal education" (T4).

Further, the practice of overprotection can lead to SN students in PNG not being able to freely participate in activities of the school or what is required of them when at home. This leads to the students isolating themselves from participating in the normal social activities, and can contribute to them appearing to not want assistance with school work. For example, P3 argues that his daughter does not show her work to him, commenting that "the only problem is that when she comes home with homework she does not inform us and also she does not complete her work" (P3).

4.4.1 Lack of motivation and incentives for teachers

The teachers who participated in the study have expressed that they have fair knowledge about the inclusive education policy and practices, but they lack the teaching experience to teach the SN students accordingly to meet their needs. As mentioned in the research conducted by Torombe (2013), the teachers commented that teaching of SN students is an additional workload on top of their already exhausting duties. However, in this study, it is interesting to note that the teachers did not mention these issues. A comment from T4 indicated that he discussed the general view of how the department of education should provide incentives in a broader sense. T4 commented: "Yes, maybe the inclusive education and the national department of education need to provide more

training, funding and positions for each mainstream school-based inclusive education officer based in each school" (T4).

Providing incentives such as pay increments for teachers who perform extra duties to help the SN students will boost the teacher's performance in inclusive education in school.

4.4.2 Lack of support from the district education divisional heads

The data study has revealed that there has been little to no support from the education divisional heads for the SN students attending mainstream schools on the island. I have observed from personal experience that the education department, through the inclusive education division, supports the SN students who are enrolled at the IERC. However, SN students in mainstream schools are supported by teachers from the IERC who extend their services through their inclusive programs out to the mainstream schools. Comments collected by this study show that schools and teachers do not have enough information about what to do in order to access information and resources about inclusive education when encountering SN students in the class. This brought confusion to the teachers, as some participating teachers commented that SN students were overlooked during lesson times. However, the teachers on the island were lucky because they have an IERC established on the Island. However, no teacher was delegated a duty to advocate for the SN students and become a liaison officer dealing with SN students and the authorities from the education division.

4.4.3 Lack of support from the community

Members of the surrounding community that the SN students are in also have a role to play in the process. Supporting the SN students to experience an environment that is less discriminative and providing equal opportunities for SN students to access education promotes inclusive education policy outside of the school context (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002). The following was a comment from P3 of the general view the community that shows the extent of the difficulty related to disability issues within the community: "Other children in the community also

tease her and give different names they use to describe her, and the common one is small legs" (P3). However, it is clear from the data that members of the community need to fully support the parents and teachers and take part in any inclusive programs to combat the discriminatory attitudes and stigmatisation the general population has towards SN students in the community. For instance, disability is existing in the community; therefore, the attitudes and behaviours of the abled community members towards disabled people should involve an inclusive-centred approach. More awareness can be conducted on disabilities in the communities to reinforce a positive behavioural approach and eliminate the negative perceptions of able people towards disabled people. In doing so, able people will create and build more positive mindsets and attitudes towards people living with disabilities in the community. The community members' role in promoting inclusive education will also create a safer and welcoming environment for the SN students to live in.

4.4.4 Summary and discussion

This section briefly summaries section 4.4. The barriers to inclusive education mainly focused on interactions with the teachers, peers, parents and the general community members. Barriers segregated the SN students from participating in in the normal school activities. It was felt that SN students were devalued within their cultures by other community members (Goodley et al., 2012). People have to build their interest and show their support in working with SN students in the community; it is more important for those that primarily come into contact with them, and seeking assistance from reliable sources is additional help for the SN student.

To motivate teachers to continue implementing the inclusive education policy in PNG, relevant authorities should be innovative and provide such things as incentives to reward teachers for their extra duties performed in carrying out the policy in the schools. For instance, the teachers who took part in Torombe's (2013) research commented that incentives such as increment of salary for the teachers who practice inclusive education will encourage more inclusive-oriented

teaching in the future. The incentive is to appreciate the tireless effort teachers put into educating the SN students. In doing so, the teaching and learning development in inclusive education will become effective in the education system, and this will ensure that the purpose of the inclusive education policy is achieved in every school in PNG. As mentioned above, teaching SN students has to be managed on top of to the existing tasks of the class teachers; therefore, absence of proper planning and tokens of appreciation given to the teachers will cause delay in the implementation of the inclusive education policy. It could be advisable that the school inspectors are obliged to check from the principals of the schools downwards to ensure' (i.e., from the upper level down) to ensure that they are performing the inclusive education policy.

4.5 Teachers' relationships with parents and SN students

Understanding teachers' social interactions and beliefs around SN students is helpful for the development and implementation of inclusive education in the mainstream classroom (Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991). Data revealed that teachers talked of positive relationships for the SN students. Building relationships was crucial as teachers identified the learning difficulties of SN students and provided appropriate assistance in the class (Lareau & Horvat, 1999). Class teachers also built good relationships with the parents of SN students. This enabled the teachers to give advice to the parents to continue teaching their SN student in their home. T4 commented that "a well set-up school and community will value all persons with disability for inclusion in schools, community and society." A good relationship amongst teachers, parents, and peers is the key tool for determining the progress and quality of education in SN students. Lack of relationship between teachers, SN students and their parents can lead to SN students having poor performance in their academic and social skills (Claiborne & Drewery, 2010).

4.5.1 Teacher-SN student relationship

Data gathered for this study show that class teachers have established good relationships with the SN students in the classroom. T4 commented that

"building of a relationship is essential." For instance, T1 always interacted with her SN student to see if the SN student understood the work given. She commented that verbal communication built their relationships. By understanding and interacting with SN students during class time, the relationship bond between the teacher and SN student grew stronger. This enabled the SN student to speak freely with the teacher and other students in the class. SN1 commented that "[I] tell stories, share schoolwork and participate in class." The teacher responded well to the specific needs of the SN student and met their needs accordingly. However, teachers could also overlook the SN students' needs during class time. SN2 commented that "when she sees that [I] am doing my work, she just passes by and she would not stop and check to see that [I] am concentrating" (SN2). The comment from SN2 indicates that poor rapport skills of the teacher can lead to a poor relationship and builds barriers. This can lead to the SN student's low performance and behaviour in the class. In return, the SN student may become shy and find it harder to open up to ask for assistance.

4.5.2 Teacher-parent relationship

Teachers' effective dialogue with parents of SN students can build a good relationship, which is essential in an SN student's education development. As indicated in the data, T2 had regular visits to the parents of SN2 to inform them of the progress of SN2's work. This is because parents also contribute to the educational development of the SN student. Good communication and active involvement of parents are essential, as they help reduce the delay in education development of SN student. Building a relationship helps promote parents' interaction with the class teacher to plan activities and deliver quality education services to their SN child. A good communication link established between the two parties enables the SN student to progress effectively in education. T1 and T2 commented that they have a good relationship with the parents of the SN student, as can be seen in this statement below: "I do have time to go and visit them. Some things that parents could do at home, I advise them" (T1).

However, T3 commented that she did not visit any parents to discuss the educational progress. She stated that "I have never gone to the community to find their parents. I only send messages for their parents to come and see me to chat" (T3). However, T3 did not reflect on the reasons why the parents were not making an effort to visit her. Consequently, this can lead to the lack of communication and participation for the development of the SN student, as T3 commented further that "they have never made an attempt to come and see me."

4.5.3 Summary and discussion

The data indicated that good cooperation between teachers, parents and education authorities in promoting the inclusive education policy will enable SN students to have easy access to quality education in mainstream school settings. Having a good relationship with SN students and sparing time for them during lesson time can enable the class teacher to address the needs of the children appropriately and effectively. The class teacher also gets to know the source of any problems and can deliver the service appropriately according to SN student's needs. The data also showed variation in types of relationship between teachers, SN children and parents. A times there was lack of communication between the parents and the teachers. Although the messages were sent to the parents, they did not always bother to visit the class teacher. This has led to not much help being given to the SN students outside the classroom. It is possible that the teacher's attitude is intimidating for the parents, which might have prevented them from coming to the school. Not being in contact diminishes parents' chances of gaining relevant information, appropriate advice and reliable help from the teachers.

4.6 Teacher's preparedness

The data showed that generally teachers were not as prepared as they could be for inclusive practice. SN students are a special group of students who will need extra support all the time in the classroom. The current data have indicated that

SN students are accepted and enrolled into the regular schools on the island. This was due to emphasis on inclusive education by the department of education. This inclusive education program is conducted in the schools and is helped by the IERC personnel. Although SN students were integrated into the mainstream schools, the research showed that many class teachers are not prepared to take on board the SN students and teach them.

T4 argued that the inclusive education division does not have any curriculum materials designed specifically to teach the SN students in the classrooms. T4 commented:

> I would say most probably not but I understand the Department of Education is doing some material production for the children with disability. In the classroom situation, I can also say that the teaching strategies and learning materials are not modified appropriately. (T4)

However, T4 stated that lack of curriculum materials did not hinder him from carrying out inclusive education programs in the mainstream schools. He commented: "I modify teaching materials and strategies according to their needs by using the available teaching resources. Currently, I am concentrating on language, specifically looking at the phonological development in SN students' learning" (T4).

Another dilemma I noticed in the data is that teachers did not report any individualised education plans in the classrooms for their SN students. Therefore, the SN students were taught from the perspective of the general class-centred lessons. As T4 commented, "what is taught for the class is for the whole class and not for the specific student with special needs." T4 raised his concern that regular teachers are always referring the students identified with learning problems to the IERC for the coaching programs to improve the learning areas they lack. T4 argued that:

Most teachers do not spare time for the special needs students because they have other students in the class to mind. They complain that attending to such students is an extra burden and they do not want to waste their teaching time on them. Instead, most of the special needs students on the Island are referred to the inclusive education resource centre for assistance. (T4)

4.7 Availability of teaching and learning resources

The teachers raised their concerns that teaching and learning resources were scarce in the classrooms for SN students, while non-SN students have resources available in the schools. Teachers stated that they use the available teaching and learning resources to modify and teach the SN students to meet their learning needs. This was a commented on by T3, who said "I try to use whatever resources that is available to provide for the SN students and the students themselves cope with the equipment or the facilities we have in the school."

During my observation in the classrooms, I found out that the shelves in the classroom in the teacher's section had little by way of teaching and learning resources. Yet limited teaching and learning resources for inclusive education will delay their teaching of their SN students. T1 commented that "the administration has to support teachers with the teaching and learning materials."

Other factors that contribute to the teaching and learning of SN students are funding, staffing, access to facilities and training. Each of these factors are further discussed below.

4.7.1 Funding

Many parents of SN students attending regular schools on the island have difficulty paying for their SN child's school fees. The SN students registered under the IERC Callan Daru attend regular school; there is a shared responsibility in the payment of school fees between the IERC and the parents. The parents pay for one half and the IERC pays the other half. The IERC not only provides funding

assistance but also provides learning resource materials like exercise books, biros and pencils to the SN students. However, the parents who were involved in the research have low income rates annually. The source of income for the family was through the daily activities such as fishing and selling of cooked food. As P3 commented, "I go out fishing and whatever I catch, I come and sell at the market to get the money to provide [for] the needs of my family."

Generating income was a dilemma faced by many parents and the cause of it was due to unemployment. This has deprived students with disabilities from enrolling in regular school programs due to no money for school fees. It could also mean that parents were reluctant to participate in school activities when asked to do so. T4 argued that a parent's burden could be alleviated if the Department of Education at the national and provincial levels subsidised funding for the inclusive education programs in the schools. He further argued that other statutory bodies, such as the local level governments through the Community Development Department, could also provide assistance from their end. As T4 commented:

> The first very high people that are involved are the national and provincial department of education, where funding and training is provided towards policy implementation; then we have the local level government and they monitor the implementation of policy in their local LLGs and they provide some kind of funding as well. (T4)

Obtaining funding from Department of Education is not easy; the authorities of the funding agency will require the schools to provide evidence such as the report on the student's assessment and medical diagnosis concerning the particular risk conditions (Kienapple, Lyon, & McSorley, 2007). However, the participants did not mention other contributing sources of funding from the relevant funding agencies. Although, the Department of Education expects mainstream schools to provide inclusive education and care for children with special needs, the funding level was finite and unreliable for inclusive education programs to operate (Adams, 2000; Education Review Office, 2012).

4.7.2 Staffing

In the primary education system of Papua New Guinea, there is only one teacher allocated to a classroom. From my visit to the classroom, I can say that the estimated total number of pupils in each class on Daru Island was between 30-40 pupils. This comment made by T2 indicates the difficulties that can arise for teachers teaching large classes: "I just ignore the fact that he is there and I am carried away with my lesson and since there are a lot of students, I also need to cater for other students."

The parents were also concerned that their SN child may not be learning anything due to teachers allocating less time for them during lesson time. P1 commented:

> I am just wondering if the class teachers are trained to teach students with disability. I feel that my child's learning needs are not catered for by the class teacher. I am very happy that she is progressing with her grade level but I also want her academic level to improve as well. (P1)

No mention was made of any teacher aides in the schools to help the class teacher provide the necessary assistance to the students needing extra attention in learning. The IERC officer became the substitute for the teacher aide; however, he only visited the schools as planned in his program to help the SN students and the teachers, so there was not much time given to the SN students. T4 commented that "the national department of education has to create more positions for mainstream school-based inclusive education teachers to assist the classroom teachers." The suggestion from T4 would help alleviate the workload for the class teachers in the classroom and the SN students will benefit equally in the lessons taught. This is to fulfil the department of education's inclusive education policy for it to be implemented effectively in the schools.

4.7.3 Access to facilities

The SN students who took part in the interview have mild to moderate disabilities and are currently attending regular schools on the island. The SN students have access to the classrooms and other school facilities. Although the data has indicated that the school facilities were accessible to the SN students, P3 raised his concern that his daughter has a physical disability and her movement around the classroom was a problem due to the arrangements of the desks. As P3 commented:

> She finds it hard to move around the classroom to access learning resources such as reading books, textbooks and so forth. I visited the class teacher in her classroom, so I see that the desks have occupied most of the space and there was little space left to move around. (P3)

T4 made a similar point, arguing that "the arrangements of desks in the class may hinder a special needs student using a crutch to move around freely to access resources in the classroom." The class teacher was notified of the issue to make amendments in the classroom environment for the physically disabled child to freely move around in the classroom. Yet there are limitations to what a classroom teacher can manage by way of modifications.

4.7.4 Training

Inclusive education policy is one of the policies of the Department of Education; therefore, in order to fulfil this policy, inclusive education is taught as a separate course in the teacher training colleges. The findings revealed that there was little inclusive education training conducted for the teachers and the parents of SN students concerned. Data also showed that there was no refresher training conducted in this area to boost the teacher's' interest in working with the SN students in the classroom.

Primary teachers are trained in the area of special education during their teacher training at the college. However, the teachers expressed their concerns that they

have no regular in-service training to help maintain knowledge to support the SN students in their classroom. T1 commented:

> I am concerned about Gimsa's education and I was talking to other teachers to see if we could arrange for Callan Services to conduct a school based in-service. If the education board is emphasising phonics, they should also talk about inclusive education because we are already having students with disabilities in our classrooms. Some teachers graduated without receiving any training on special education so they should inservice us in this. (T1)

T1's comment was also supported by P3:

> I am just concerned about my daughter's education. The school should invite Callan Service teachers to train them on how to help students like mine and other disabled children who are in the school. I know that Callan teachers will have all the information on how to help these students. (T1)

T2 is a teacher who graduated before the introduction of the inclusive education policy in the education system. Therefore, she did not receive any formal training in the area of special education of any kind. When asked about her understanding of inclusive education training in the school, this was her comment:

> If I am properly trained in this area, then I can assist the students with disabilities to learn. I often feel guilty that I am not really doing much to meet their specific needs. I cannot push myself further to do anything without attaining information in special education through in-service training. (T2)

The above comment from T2 indicates that although she was not trained in inclusive education, she shows interest in helping the SN students in the class by wanting training on inclusive education. Another comment from T3 indicated that they have access to the IERC, so if they had no training then they can get direct assistance from them:

> We have to work together with the teachers from Callan Services because most of us in the mainstream school are not well equipped with the knowledge and skills to teach special needs students. I find it very hard to teach children with disabilities; even to make a single sign language to communicate with deaf student, I am frightened because I might make the wrong sign. Teachers from the Callan Services can inservice us on disability courses to help us teach special needs students. (T3)

4.7.5 Summary and discussion

The current changes in the education system have promoted SN students to have a voice in the classroom and school. The mainstream schools concerned accepted SN students into the school and they are placed in the classrooms. The education system does not have a curriculum specifically designed for the SN students. This has resulted in teachers teaching the SN students just as they would other students. Arguably, the necessary teaching and learning resources are essential elements required by the class teachers to effectively teach their SN students in the classrooms.

It was revealed in the data that factors such as funding, staffing, access to facilities and training also had great influence in the teaching and learning of SN students, which resulted in delays in the progress of inclusive education. Therefore, these factors should be considered by relevant authorities when preparing and planning to accept SN students. Funding has been the major problem faced by both the parent and the administration of the school to buy necessities for the SN students. The learning environments should be modified to meet the specific needs of the SN students. Making available the teaching and

learning resources by the relevant authorities has to become a practice, to cooperate together and provide effective service for the SN students in the classrooms. Class teachers also suggested that regular training should be conducted on inclusive education by IERC personnel and other relevant authorities in the school, for the inclusive education to progress. From my personal experience, the parents of SN students interviewed had regular training before, when their SN children were attending the IERC. Short trainings for parents have made the parents become aware of their SN child's rights and care needs. However, they are also concerned about the way their SN students are receiving education in a regular class setting.

The comments from the participants indicated that regular inclusive education training such as school-based in-service training for the teachers will help the implementation of inclusive education policy in mainstream schools.

4.8 Awareness

Disseminating information about including students with disabilities and their rights to education in mainstream schools and community is of paramount importance. People's attitude towards concepts about disability based on traditional education and beliefs still have great influence over children with disability in all classroom situations throughout Papua New Guinea (Winis, 2013). One of the elements contributing to the delay in inclusive education development in primary schools in Papua New Guinea is lack of awareness and motivation for teachers, students and parents to become involved in the SN student's educational development program, which can contribute to negative perceptions (Rombo, 2007; Torombe, 2013). Here, teachers can make a huge difference. For instance, T3 makes it her duty to inform her class to have respect and dignity for the SN children. She commented:

> As far as I am concerned, there is always a reminder every day to my
> students that we have special needs students in our classroom and we

need to respect them as they are. They have come to understand each other and the students help them in their school study. I monitor to make sure that there is no discrimination against these special needs students in my class. (T3)

Doing so will have great impact on the way people perceive SN students in the community. The parents will tend to respect them and care for them. The teachers and peers will accept and welcome the SN students in their classrooms. From personal experience, the people generally are still yet to learn about the importance of inclusive education. Therefore, conducting awareness for teachers, students and parents is essential, as it is one of the ways for reducing negative stereotypical behaviours and prejudices; engaging the non-disabled people to take part actively in any simulated activities regarding people having a disability could see that simple environment change to make movements towards inclusion possible (Ainscow, 2005; Storey, 2007). For instance, in the school context, constant awareness of disability can be conducted regularly during assembly time at the beginning of each term of the schooling year. This will have a strong impact on abled students' attitudes towards students with disabilities. Having been made aware, non-SN students can then become the advocates in their class groups. This enables the SN students to feel that they are included in the society, and their learning in a non-discriminatory environment will boost their self-esteem to learn without fear and also help them to develop their real potentials.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the findings of the five main themes gathered from the three groups of participants in the study. The themes are: attitudes and practices towards inclusive education development of SN students; the promotion of inclusive education development through relationships; inclusive education practice towards SN students by the teachers, students and parents; constant curriculum reform in the education system of PNG; and the barriers that contribute to the educational development of SN students in the classroom and

the school, focusing on the SN students' education educational experiences and attainment. Overall, it was found that inclusive education in the PNG education system needs more resourcing, advocacy and refresher training for the classroom teachers. Teachers said that they knew a little but are still not aware of how to teach the SN students. Parents had high expectation for their SN children and they wanted their SN children to become self-reliant in the future. Yet they were concerned about the quality of education being provided in mainstream classes. The SN students themselves were eager to attend mainstream school and attain education just like other non-SN students. Yet there are delays in implementing the inclusive education. The delays in implementing inclusive education found included: lack of resources, too many students in the class, lack of motivation to teach SN students which resulted in SN students becoming disengaged, willingness of teachers to teach SN students and lack of training. Other factors such as cultural and socio-economical differences also had an impact in the inclusive education development.

The next chapter is a concluding chapter and it has two parts. The first part discusses issues that emerged from the findings. The second part is the final conclusion of the chapters and gives further suggestions for future research and makes recommendations about what can be done to address the issues arising from the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to delve into the account of how special needs (SN) students were attaining and experiencing their education in regular classroom settings. The reason for the study is that the current education reform system in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is designed to encourage teachers to practice inclusive education as much as possible in all school settings. While the department of education in PNG emphasises the practice of inclusive education policy, previous recent studies have revealed that too little is being done for SN students' education development by teachers, peers, parents and other relevant stakeholders, both in the school and the community (Ahsan & Burnip, 2007; Le Fanu, 2013a; Torombe, 2013). Deruage (2007), who also investigated this point, found that teachers in PNG experience many challenges in this area. Teachers juggle many responsibilities in their teaching job, so it is hard for them to focus on one SN student and try to meet all their needs (Avrazmidis & Kalyva, 2007).

5.1 Attitudes and practices towards inclusive education

The study found that teachers, peers and parents held a number of views about working with SN students in regular classrooms. Cultural differences in Papua New Guinea's society have great influence on how teachers, peers and parents perceived SN students and their subsequent inclusion in the classrooms (Breiger, 2000; Fawcett, 2016; Goodley et al., 2012). PNG's diverse cultural heritage makes it difficult for teachers to model the attitudes and values in different school settings that would to meet the needs of SN students (Avalos, 1993; O'Donoghue, 1993; Winis, 2013). Such attitudes do more to disable rather than enable success for SN students. Memua (2011) suggests that teachers and non-SN students require "teaching and learning of social and cultural knowledge, skills and values" to deal with SN students in the school environment (p. 88). Further, teachers, students and parents have to develop a common understanding of attitudes towards practicing inclusive education, both in the school and at home. By

understanding the specific learning needs of SN students, this will enable the teachers, students and parents to consider SN students' needs in every aspect of human development in the community.

The findings of this study suggest that overall the inclusive education practices by schools and the IERC aimed for the same outcome. Ajuwon (2008) argued that the idea of the central focus of the inclusive education process is to ensure that SN students, and their families, are included "in any national policy on education is important and carries lifelong implications" (p. 13). In this study, prior to SN students' integration into mainstream schools, SN students were taught at the IERC by specialist teachers in Daru. Then they were integrated into mainstream schools based on their academic performance. The data showed that non-SN peers accepted this move and had passion for their SN peers. This is illustrated through their social interactions and participation inside and outside of class, whereby there was participation of SN students in the classroom and school.

The study has indicated that active involvement of different people and stakeholders can increase the chance of inclusive education practice for SN students. Teachers of SN students actively involved in the inclusive programs conducted by IERC all had positive attitudes toward SN students and had the knowledge of teaching the SN students (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden 2000; Varcoe & Boyle, 2014). The data indicated that teachers adjusted to the needs of SN students by utilising whatever resources were available to modify and teaching according to their varying needs. In doing so, it elevated the self-esteem of the SN student and improved their academic performance, and it also developed a sense of belonging in society through social interactions (Ahmmed, Sharma, & Deppeler, 2012). SN students expressed their interest in attending regular school as non-SN students did. The SN students valued education as an essential tool to be attained for self-reliance. An example of this was a comment made by SN1 that he wanted to become a doctor in the future.

From my class observations and feedback obtained from the teachers, my data revealed that overall teachers do accept and include SN students in activities in the classroom, yet they also contribute to SN students' underperformance in school. SN students generally require the assistance of everyone in their learning to improve in the learning area they lack to receive education just as other non-SN students. In my observation in the school during field work, I did not come across any evidence of an individualised education plan (IEP) being used. An IEP is an essential tool the class teacher will refer to when teaching an SN student (Le Fanu, 2013b). The IEP monitors the progress of an SN student's learning, and is evaluated at the end of the assessment period to see if the learning outcomes are achieved during the set time frame. Failure to develop the IEPs could mean that there is lack in communication between teachers, parents and the IERC staff on what kind of educational support is best for the SN student. Also, the SN students' specific needs are overlooked and they are taught the same material as other non-SN students.

This study indicated that parents were optimistic about the SN students' future and they showed great support to their SN children's education at home or in the school. Since the parents are the primary caregivers, they have great impact on their SN student's life. They wanted the best education for their SN children; therefore, they wanted optimal support from teachers and non-SN students. This desire is crucial for SN children's success at school. A similar study conducted in New Zealand showed that there is a special bond between the parents and their schoolgoing SN children, and their experiences and attitudes are embedded in the family life cycle (Ballard, Bray, Shelton, & Clarkson, 1997). In the study, parents had high expectations for their SN children's achievement in mainstream school. P1 showed great support in both education and daily life skills. However, in the case of P3, his expectations were expressed as concern for his SN child's education development in the mainstream school.

5.1.2 Non-disabled's perception of SN students towards inclusive education

The study showed that attitudes of non-disabled people towards SN students have a greatly significant influence on the SN student's educational development, as Rombo's (2007) research argues. This comment from T4 showed that abled people's perception can contribute significantly to SN students' development. As T4 commented, "it is the abled people's perception of special needs students' disability that enslaves them from participating freely in class, school or even in the community." As a result, SN students can feel devalued within the classroom environment and the community. From my own knowledge of Daru, in general parents of SN students thought that the IERC was the best institution SN students could attend to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. Although awareness programs are available, parents too still hold traditional ideas about disability that also contribute to the delay in the educational development of their SN child's aptitude. This factor has deprived many SN students from attaining regular education for self-reliance in future. Here it needs to be added that educational services provided by the IERC could specifically meet the SN student's needs, while regular schools can be too general in their teaching programs. Consequenlty, genereral approach to teaching in mainstream can create tensions for parents who want to make sure that their SN child is able to learn. However, from personal experience, I argue that in rural PNG, non-disabled people often concentrate on the SN student's disability and dwell on it that so they forget about what the SN student can do. Thus, unless the attitudes of the non-disabled people and their ways of perceiving SN students are changed, then SN students will not experience the full benefits of inclusive education in the classrooms.

5.2 Barriers to inclusive practices

One of the issues identified in this study was abled people's view of relating to SN students involving the concept of ableism. Able people identified SN students as one of the most disadvantaged cohorts in our societies (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Hegarty & Alur, 2002; Rombo 2007). In this study, it is also noted

that although SN students are recognised as students who will need extra attention in the classrooms, teachers give little attention to their needs. The study revealed that SN students have expressed their concern about negative attitudes towards them by non-SN students, and this has led to a regression in achieving inclusive practices, preventing the individuals with diverse abilities to participate in a meaningful and active social activity both in the school and classroom (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000). This tension was evident in my study.

As indicated from the data, teachers, peers and parents contribute economic and social barriers that segregated SN students from participating in the social activities both in classroom and at home, as Goodley et al. (2012) indicate. Research identifies teachers' attitude as one of the contributing factors, which affects many SN students' learning in the classroom (Ainscow, 2005; Florian, 2012). In a prior PNG-based study, Torombe (2013) argues that a teacher's negative attitude can contribute to their poor performance in the daily duties such as planning, teaching, evaluating and developing strategies to help improve their SN student's learning. This point is supported by Fawcett (2016), who indicates that due to negative attitudes from the teachers and peers in the school, many SN students "have been singled out and responded to in ways that have differed significantly from those relating to non-disabled students" (p. 226).

The participants have argued that a myriad of factors hindered the practice of inclusive education. The three common constraints faced by teachers and parents found in the research are discussed in light of the previous findings from international research.

5.2.1 Training

The data indicated that one of the inclusive education policies developed from the statement was that special education programs be incorporated in tertiary institutions for in-service and pre-service teachers to be trained in the area of special education (Kekeya, 2014; Winis, 2013). This study reveals that teachers

on Daru Island lacked regular in-service training to maintain the practice of inclusive education. Participants in the study have commented that training on inclusive education is essential towards the practice of inclusive education. This is similar to findings of Varcoe and Boyle (2014), who supported "the notion of training to have a strong influence on pre-service and in-service teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with special needs into [the] mainstream classrooms" (p. 326). Mainstream teachers who have passed out from teachers college after the introduction of the inclusive education policy in 1994 in PNG should have a better understanding of the inclusive education policy and its practices (Rombo, 2007; Torombe, 2013; Winis, 2013).

The PNG Ministry of Education (2010) asserts that it is better to include all people that come into contact with the SN students in all inclusive education training so to alleviate prejudice and segregation. Regular training helps people who are involved to better understand the concept of disability and provide support accordingly. By doing this, it enables everyone in the community to learn how vulnerable SN students are and they will more likely show respect and treat them with dignity. The motive for conducting regular training is to render and promote an education system that is appropriate for students with disability to be involved within the community, and where they are recognised for their self-worth (Ministry of Education, 2012). My research found that mainstream teachers needed regular inservice to continue practice of inclusive education.

This study found that parents thought that while mainstream teachers had knowledge and skills for working with SN students, they did not always assist SN students with their needs during class. The teachers who participated in the study expressed that they were faced with many challenges while attending to students. They argued that they lacked regular training in the area of special education to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to assist the SN students. For instance, in the study, T2 argued that she had never heard or come across inclusive education through her 18 years of teaching life. As she commented, "honestly, I have not come across it yet" (T1). I can say that maybe

school administrations on the island are not involving the IERC in their in-service training programs. A lack of training resulted in teachers' "actions and practices to cater for SN students [being] minimal or non-existent" (Rombo, 2007, p. 165). Teachers having the knowledge of inclusive education and practicing it will have great impact on non-SN students' learning and behaviour in the classroom environment. With the help of the IERCs are established around the country in the urban centres to support the practice of inclusive education policy and to assist teachers, SN students and young people with disabilities. One of the roles of the IERC on the island is to do a follow-up visit on the integrated SN students and assist the class teachers through in-service training about inclusive education when requested by the school. However, some teachers who took part in the study have argued that there were fewer visits or in-service trainings from the IERC personnel than they would have liked. This has indicated that the IERC needed an additional officer to assist in this program. Another possible explanation could be that there are only a few paid positions created by the department of education for the IERCs. More importantly, the establishment of the IERC on the island has seen that many SN students are being accepted and included in the mainstream schools.

5.2.2 Conducive learning environment

The study found that creating a conducive learning environment is essential for accepting and including SN students into the classroom. Creating a conducive learning environment for all students to learn is crucial to the promotion of good inclusive practices. From international research, there are three findings that relate to Bronfenbrenner's nested systems that the class teachers of SN students need to consider them when accepting SN students into their classroom (Claiborne & Drewery, 2010). They found that the physical setting of classrooms, socio-cultural influences, and building relationships contribute to the development of conducive learning environments for SN students.

One of the issues found with the physical setting of the classrooms was that the architectural settings of the classrooms made it difficult for physically disabled

students and those using wheelchairs to access the buildings. This was confirmed by P3, when he raised a concern that his daughter was physically disabled and could not move around freely in the classroom due to the organisation of the desks in the classroom that takes up the space. This creates a less conducive learning environment. This was an issue for P3. He argued that his daughter's lack of mobility in the classroom was due to the arrangement of the desks which occupied the space. SN students are a vulnerable group of students, and if class teacher does not take physical setting into consideration, SN students will fall behind in their academic work.

Creating a conducive learning environment for SN students also could mean that class teachers have to ensure that the environment itself is ideal for their SN students' learning. For instance, the organisation of the classroom has to be accepted by the SN student. This refers to the arrangement of desks, displaying relevant teaching aids and providing enough working area for self-learning; all of these are contributors of effective learning where it also affects the SN students' learning (Fraser, 2012). In the study, T1 had put her SN students with the non-SN students in the sitting arrangements. This was one way of removing the negative concepts of disability and practicing inclusion. In the IERC setting, the learning environment is always conducive for the SN students. Fawcett, (2016) stressed that "special schools can cater for individual needs far better than mainstream schools and have the facilities to enable disabled students to achieve their full potential" (2010, p. 3). From my visits to the classrooms, I found that the classrooms were not flooded with teaching aids. For instance, SN1 was a hearing-impaired student and needed more visual cues to compensate for the hearing loss the child had, to develop better learning. When the classroom is less attractive to the SN students' intellectual development, there is no engagement in the SN students' learning; therefore, teachers have to be creative and put up appropriate learning materials such as more visual aids.

This study also probe the socio-cultural influence of PNG's diverse cultural heritage, which has a great influence on SN students' education through

socialisation. The sociocultural influence is believed to be inherently situated in regard to the cultural, historical and institutional contexts (Steffe & Gale, 1995). The SN students that attended the three schools were from different cultural backgrounds.

Building relationships with teachers, peers, SN students and the parents is an essential aspect towards practicing inclusive education in the classroom. In this study, T4 argued that building relationships will enable non-disabled people to mingle with the SN students to get to know the disabled's conditions, and it will encourage non-disabled people to accept SN students with disability into society, and will change the abled's attitudes. Hellner (2006) added that mutual understanding through building relationships by non-disabled people will encourage the non-disabled people to show their respect and dignity towards SN students. For instance, in the data, T2's visits to the parents of SN2 was another way of building good relationships between school and community. Poor relationships among teachers and SN students mean that there is ignorance, and SN students' specific needs were overlooked. A possible reason mentioned in study could be that there were many students allocated to a class; therefore, teachers may have difficulty building rapport skills (Ahmmed, & Mullick, 2014; Ainscow, 2005; Winis, 2013). Another factor could be due to the diverse cultural backgrounds that every individual student has, which may be a barrier to teachers building rapport skills.

The study has also indicated that SN students interviewed have expressed that they were keen to learn in mainstream school. Some of the SN students went to the extent of identifying their future dreams. However, in order for these SN students to experience their full education potential in the classroom and achieve their dreams, the learning environment has to be made conducive for all. Therefore, Reid and Green (2005) argue that when the learning environment is made conducive for students with disabilities in mainstream schools, this will make the teaching enjoyable for the individual with disabilities, and as a result they develop good academic knowledge and skills.

5.2.3 Limited resources

The study revealed that many SN students attending school in PNG did not have access to specific teaching and learning resources (Martineau, Lamarche, Marcoux, & Bernard, 2001). O'Donoghue (1993) supported that due to the scarcity of the teaching and learning resources, teachers do not have interest in teaching SN students. With the changes in the education system, teachers who come out of the teachers college are equipped with the necessary information on the pedagogical practice in Papua New Guinea's special education, but it is the inclusive education system catering for students with disabilities that does not provide the necessary teaching and learning material. Therefore, this could be affecting the Universal Primary Education's objective to include all students who are eligible for primary entry and is most likely probably not implemented well.

In the study, the teachers commented that they lacked teaching and learning resources in all classrooms and that there are not any specified teaching and learning materials being made available to the mainstream primary schools by relevant authorities in the education sector. Class teachers developed their own teaching and learning resources where they could to cater for the needs of the students with disabilities. For example, T4 commented that he had created a big book on phonics to cater for SN students who have reading difficulties. Teachers who graduated after the introduction of the inclusive education policy are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, and they are in a better position to produce their own modified teaching and learning resources that meet the needs of the SN student. Teachers have to innovative and be creative when it comes to devising teaching and learning resources.

5.3 Promotion of inclusive education

In Daru, since the establishment of the IERC, SN students in urban centres and some parts of the rural schools are now able to access regular school because of

the ongoing awareness and support given by the IERC. The non-SN students attending regular schools on the island received information about students with disabilities from teachers or by participating in school, so their behaviour towards students with disability in the schools showed more positive attitudes than schools on mainland PNG that are not practicing inclusive education to the same degree. The parents of SN students have commented that regular visits made by IERC personnel to the schools to provide their expertise and support to the teachers and SN students are a great help in promoting equal access to education for all. As a practitioner and researcher, I can say that primary schools that were accessible to the IERCs had much assistance from the IERCs with trainings or teaching resources to boost their knowledge and skills to provide appropriate service for the SN students. Teachers, peers and parents are supported through advocacy programs in the schools and communities. The data showed that there were good socialisation skills between SN students with peers. Actively promoting the inclusive education policy in the school settings is essential, as it promotes SN students' identity formation and productivity within their social community. It also gives more positive feedback on the student's strengths and weaknesses. The work of Tschannen-Moran and Barr (2004) suggests the benefit of regular inclusive awareness, so "school[s] can construct [positive] social and organisational cues demonstrating that stigmatised individuals may succeed despite general unfavourable larger cultural stereotype" (p. 9). Armstrong, Armstrong and Spandagou (2011) further clarify that the promotion of inclusive education practices in the mainstream schools was in conjunction with the Salamanca Statement, which was the only way to advocate for ending discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and helping to achieve education for all. Moreover, when SN students are integrated into the education system, it improves their "efficiency and ultimately the cost effectiveness of the entire education system" (UNESCO, 1994, p. 3). Although the education reform aims to promote "self-confidence, optimism and self-esteem" this was not applicable to some schools on the island and the remote schools on the mainland PNG struggle to achieve these ideals (Department of Education, 2002, p. 4). Some of the needs of the SN students are

overlooked during class. Therefore, teachers need to have sound knowledge of and skills for dealing with SN students by planning, administering, supervising and engaging with the SN students, and teachers should be socialising with the members of the community. Teachers could also be restricted from practicing inclusive education by certain factors such as the availability of the teaching and learning resources, the culture of the community they are teaching and the teachers' willingness to accept SN students into their classroom.

Rombo (2007) argues that "most teachers and school administrators are aware of the policies in terms of human rights and rights to education," while others viewed it from the professional and moral perspective (p. 122). In the study, parents raised their concern that if the teachers were aware of the inclusive education policy, then they would be able to meet accordingly the needs of the SN students. While other studies suggest that teachers are the prime agents of the implementation of the inclusive education policy, teachers are not often prepared to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the classrooms and are more reluctant than administrators and policy makers to practice inclusion in their classes (Abosi & Koay, 2008; Ainscow, 2005; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007). The possible cause could be that there are many things to consider at once when handling a class with a population of 30-40 pupils. Another factor could be that it is not emphasised by the school administration during staff meetings, where they can take it into consideration.

5.4 Education reform

From personal experience, the education reform may not be successful for SN students attending mainstream school under the inclusive education program. Initially, I support the comments from the participants of this study, but in reality, I have never come across specific inclusive education policies detailing for teachers to see and follow how to assist the SN students. The inclusive education policy is written at the national level and this policy could be published to be distributed to the schools for teachers to see and follow when teaching SN students in their class. However, teachers expressed that despite their lack of full

knowledge and skills in the area of special education, they accepted SN students and taught them as normal students as this was part of their teaching professional responsibility. The study indicated that even though there is reform in the education system, teachers commented that they lacked the specific teaching and learning resources and the pedagogies to teach the SN students (Torombe, 2013; Winis, 2013). They also argued that they needed regular in-service training to keep up-to-date with the knowledge and skills of inclusive education. The education reform has also brought positive developments such as the establishment of the IERCs. These have encouraged for more advocacy in the schools and communities. As a result, many SN students are recognised and enrolled in mainstream schools.

5.5 Summary

In PNG society, culture plays an important role in shaping every individual of the community. As indicated above, culture has great influence over people's behaviour and attitudes. Often non-disabled people perceive SN students differently and compare them with their traditional beliefs. Beyond all other consideration, attitude was seen as one of the main contributors to the delay in SN students' educational development, both in the school and at home. However, providing specific teaching and learning resources is another aspect to be considered within the concept of inclusive education development. Teachers play a key role as educators in the school; therefore, applying the necessary knowledge and skills they attained from teachers college is of much help to all the students. In order for school administration and teachers to practice inclusive education, they have to understand the central issues affecting the learning of the SN students. This will enable teachers, school administration and the inclusive education division to makes changes in the education systems, especially with teaching and learning strategies and the resources are modified appropriately.

5.6 Conclusion, recommendations and further research

5.6.1 Conclusion

With the current educational transitional stage PNG is experiencing, and anticipated further developments in future, information gathered about SN students' educational experiences in regular school settings in PNG is very important. The findings of the study add to understandings about how inclusive education is fitting into the mainstream education system, and how far the impact of the inclusive education policy in the mainstream schools around the country has been felt. This enables implementers to reflect, analyse and develop the curricula with its pedagogies accordingly to address the needs of students with disabilities. However, as Miles and Singal (2010) assert, inclusive education does not only focus on the educational needs of SN students but also needs to take into consideration the underlying values and beliefs held across PNG's education system that affects the development of our society–socially, economically and politically.

This study focused on the educational experiences of SN students attaining education in regular schools. Practicing equality and supporting the SN students with different cultural backgrounds and with a common pedagogical goal should be the focus of the teachers, SN students' peers and parents, avoiding negative stereotyping and discrimination. Although the National Department of Education wants the teachers to practise the policy as much as possible in the classrooms, there were also other factors that hindered the smooth implementation of policy. The inclusive education motive that aligned with the universal declaration on education for all that worked towards the goal of success for all is expected.

5.6.2 Recommendations

To enhance the educational quality of SN students in all classroom contexts to have a voice, there are several things that need consideration. This is to ensure that there is equality being practiced in all the classrooms and the teaching and learning facilities are accessible by all students, and with the environment being

conducive to learning. This will enable the SN students to identify their own potential progress in their education system to become productive citizens in the community. Failure to cater for the needs of the SN students may lead to poor human development for people living with disabilities in Papua New Guinea.

This study identified issues for inclusive practice in PNG that need addressing in the future. Four recommendations suggested for actions to improve the educational attainment of SN students and to move towards a more inclusive practice in the school and community are outlined below as the final part of this thesis.

Firstly, caring for the SN student's education is a shared responsibility for anybody that has influence on the child's life. It is recommended that there should be a different inclusive education program created within the school programs to specifically attend to the queries that class teachers raise about teaching SN students in the classroom. This inclusive education program will ensure that the inclusive education policy is implemented effectively. This program should focus on the leadership and organisational practices, inclusive practices of the school administrators, teachers, peers and parents. Regular inspections in the area of inclusive education also boost teachers' performance in implementing the policy. Constant awareness and traning in disability can help community members to have positive attitudes towards SN students. This will enable everyone in the school and parents and family members of SN students to be aware of inclusive education's existence in a learning institution, so that a more positive approach for SN students can be achieved.

Secondly, it is recommended that a school-based inclusive education officer be attached to all schools in Papua New Guinea. The inclusive education division should create paid positions for more IERC officers if the Department of Education wants to see more engagement with inclusive practice in mainstream schools. The IERC officer will assists the class teachers to cater for the SN students' education needs. Their main role in the school is to help the class

teachers with the necessary teaching aids, conduct inservice training on students with disabilities for teachers, and conduct individualised education plan meetings and do evaluation and make recommendations for future practice. Taking the responsibility of advocating for students with disabilities will help to break negative attitudes that might be held about SN students. In doing so, non-disabled others will better respect their SN peers, and SN students will feel they are being accepted into the community. IERC officers could also report to the inclusive education sector of the education system on the progress of the policy.

The third recommendation is that there is a need to establish stronger school/community partnerships for positive development to support SN students attain quality education. By establishing a good relationship with the local communities, mutual understanding is developed and SN students gain further respect and have a voice in the community.

Finally, it is recommended that the primary caregivers of the SN students are to be actively involved in any circumstances where parental support is needed. For example, involving parents in planning an IEP with the rest of the team will help to plan effectively to meet the specific learning needs of the SN students. The primary caregivers know best the weaknesses and strengths of their young family member. This could also alleviate some stress that primary caregivers may have on how to help in their SN child's educational development at home. Parents must also support the teacher by taking part in all school-organised activities and assist their SN students with their schooling as much as possible at home.

5.6.3 Recommendations for further research

The research represented SN students' educational attainment and experiences in the primary school settings in the Western Province of Papua New Guinea. The findings add to the current literature and surrounding some key concepts considered as the fundamental development towards the education of SN students. However, further research is needed if the knowledge surrounding the

inclusive education activities in the schools is to be expanded on. As mentioned in the discussion, further study could be carried out on the cultural aspects of indigenous people's attitudes towards the practice of inclusion in the school community. Culture is seen as the national identity, with traditional beliefs and customs passed on from previous generations still having much influence in the way non-SN students perceived their SN peers. As practitioners of inclusive education, how can we as stakeholders collaborate to eradicate the indigenous mentality of disability in our society, which will enable more positive attitudes towards SN students and other disabled in the community to flourish? When inclusive education is seen as a valid program in the school, there is successful engagement from teachers, peers and other stakeholders that are involved in the promotion of inclusive education principles. The tasks become everyone's responsibility and the school becomes an inclusion-oriented institution and also becomes the model for other mainstream schools and the community as a whole. This program will ensure that inclusive education activities are practiced as much as possible, such as training, awareness, curricula production and involving the SN students in all school-organised activity. If the knowledge presented in the study and further studies is made available to, and is taken up by, the practitioners of inclusive education, it is more likely that they will contribute meaningfully to inclusion programs in the schools and other sectors involving people with disabilities in Papua New Guinea.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Approval letter from ethics committee of the University of Waikato

Dean's Office
Faculty of Education
Te Kura Toi Tangata
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4500

www.waikato.ac.nz

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

MEMORANDUM

To:	**Roweng Bomen**
From:	**Dr Carl Mika** Chairperson, Research Ethics Committee
cc:	Dr. Carol Hamilton
Date:	11 October 2016
Subject:	Request for Research Ethics Approval – Student (FEDU099/16)

Thank you for your request for ethical approval for the project:

> *How are Special Education Resource Centre (SERC) supported children with special needs (SN) are experiencing education in regular classroom settings in the town schools in Western Province of Papua New Guinea? A case study approach.*

I am pleased to advise that your request has received ethical approval.

Please note that researchers are asked to consult with the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee in the first instance if any further changes to the approved research design are proposed.

The Committee wishes you all the best with your research.

Carl Mika

Dr Carl Mika
Chairperson
Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee

Appendix 2: Permission letter to research, policy and communication division
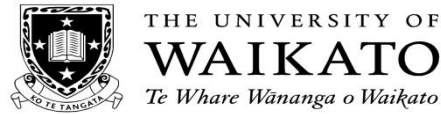
![The University of Waikato logo]

Roweng Bomen
Orchard Park Halls of Residence
183 Silverdale Road
Hamilton, 3216
New Zealand

13th October 2016

The Director
National Department of Education
Research, Policy and Communication Division
Research and Evaluation Section
P.O.BOX 446
WAIGANI,
National Capital District
Papua New Guinea

Dear Director,

SUBJECT: **SEEKING CONSENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE TOWN SCHOOLS OF DARU ISLAND IN WESTERN PROVINCE.**

My name is Roweng Bomen and I am a Master of Education student currently enrolled in Faculty of Education program at the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. As a requirement towards the completion of my study program, I am required to undertake home-based research to complete a 40,000 words thesis. My research topic is:
How are inclusive education resource centre (IERC) supported students with special needs (SN) experiencing education in regular classroom settings in the town schools in Western Province of Papua New Guinea? A case study approach.

My plan to carry out this study includes fieldwork with parents, teachers and students with special needs in the town schools on the Island of Daru in the Western Province in September 2016.
I am writing this letter to kindly ask if you could draft me consent to gain access to participants for my research through our school system.
Prior to taking up my studies in New Zealand, I was an inclusive education (IE) teacher. Helping SN students motivated me to find out what the experiences of IERC's supported SN students in mainstream schools are, and how teachers and parents of SN students view what is happening for the education of SN students

education in our country. Research has been done before on inclusive education in Papua New Guinea and my research will follow on from Torombe's (2013) research into implementation of the IE policy in the SN students' context. My research will also explore the experiences of IERC's supported SN students in the mainstream class, something not covered in previous research studies. From my experience I would say that many teachers may not be aware of the education policy they are being asked to work with and thus do not necessarily explore each disability aspect carefully to determine the specific needs of SN students accordingly. This can happen for a number of reasons. However, this has resulted in at least some parents losing hope for their SN students and the SN students leaving the school without being educated in basic academic and social life skills. I hope my research will help to sort out the difficulty outlined.

I am assuring you that my research will work within and abide by the ethical principle of a robust research framework, respecting all participants and schools accordingly. I have obtained ethics permission to undertake my study and my ethics approval number is FEDU099/16. I have attached a copy of the ethical approval letter from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato for your information, and would be pleased to send you a copy of the application in full if needed. Confidentiality is a paramount importance in this study as to protecting the participants and the schools by not disclosing their information or identity. Pseudonym names for participants and schools will be used instead of their real names to represent the data gathered. A bound copy of my completed thesis will be sent to your office after the study has been formally assessed.

I would greatly appreciate if my correspondence be sent to the above stated address.

Should you need to clarify further on this, please do not hesitate to contact my principal supervisor provided her contact details below.

Dr. Carol Hamilton
Senior Lecturer: Department of Human Development and Counselling
Faculty of Education
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton 3240, New Zealand
Telephone (64)7 856 2889 ext: 8587, Fax: (64)7 838 4434, Email: hamiltca@waikato.ac.nz
Thank you for your consideration and I await your response soon.

Yours faithfully,

_____

Roweng Bomen (Mr.)
Master of Education Student
Ph: (64) 0220403769
Email : rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 3: Approval letter from research, policy and communication Director

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of the Deputy Secretary – Policy & Corporate Services Directorate

TELEPHONE: (675) 301 3342/301 3343

FASCIMILE: (675) 323 1031/325 4648
EMAIL: Walipe_Wingi@education.gov.pg

FINCORP HAUS
PO BOX 446
WAIGANI – N.C.D
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Date: 19/10/2016
File: PPR1-1-2

Mr. Roweng Bomen
Orchard park halls of residence
183 Silverdale Road
Hamilton, 3216
New Zealand

Dear Mr. Bomen,

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH IN PRINCIPLE

Your research proposal titled *"How is Special Education Resource Centre (SERC) supported children with Special Needs (SN) are experiencing education in regular classroom settings in the town schools in Western Province of Papua New Guinea"* has been approved in principle prior to the Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Steering Committee(RESC) next meeting.

The approval in principle is given due to the urgency of your data collection and presentation of final report as expected from your supervisor. Use this letter as an approval for your data collection at the selected schools in Western Province in Papua New Guinea.

While your research is approved in principle to collect data in educational institution/s it is also subject to approval by the Provincial Research Committee (where applicable) and/or the Provincial Education Advisor or the Principals or Head Teachers of your nominated institutions. It is your responsibility to ensure such is obtained prior to the field work.

In serious case of breach of ethical issues and Department of Education (DoE) research guidelines the DoE reserves the right to inform the researchers home institution or sponsors directly and take necessary actions as deem necessary.
Failure to observe the above conditions may lead to the withdrawal of research approval.

I thank you and wish you good luck in your study.

Yours sincerely,

MR. WALIPE WINGI
Chairman - Research Evaluation & Monitoring Steering Committee /
Acting Deputy Secretary – Policy & Corporate Services

cc: Assistant Secretary – Research & Evaluation Division

"Quality Teaching & Learning Makes a Difference in School"

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Roweng Bomen
Orchard Park Halls of Residence
183 Silverdale Road
Hamilton, 3216
New Zealand

13th October 2016

The Provincial Education Advisor
Western Province
P.O.BOX 60
Daru, Western province
Papua New Guinea

Dear Sir/Madam,

SUBJECT: SEEKING CONSENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE TOWN SCHOOLS OF DARU ISLAND IN WESTERN PROVINCE.

My name is Roweng Bomen and I am a Master of Education student currently enrolled in Faculty of Education program at the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. As a requirement towards the completion of my study program, I am required to undertake home-based research to complete a 40,000 words thesis. My research topic is
How are inclusive education resource centre (IERC) supported students with special needs (SN) experiencing education in regular classroom settings in the town schools in Western Province of Papua New Guinea? A case study approach.
My plan to carry out this study includes fieldwork with parents, teachers and students with special needs in the town schools on the Island of Daru in the Western Province in September 2016.
I am writing this letter to kindly ask if you could draft me consent to gain access to participants for my research in the selected schools on Daru Island.
Prior to taking up my studies in New Zealand, I was an inclusive education (IE) teacher. Helping SN students motivated me to find out what the experiences of IERC's supported SN students in mainstream schools are, and how teachers and parents of SN students view what is happening for the education of SN students education in our country. Research has been done before on inclusive education in Papua New Guinea and my research will follow on from Torombe's (2013) research into implementation of the inclusive education policy in the SN students'

context. My research will also explore the experiences of IERC's supported SN students in the mainstream class, something not covered in previous research studies. From my experience I would say that many teachers may not be aware of the education policy they are being asked to work with and thus do not necessarily explore each disability aspect carefully to determine the specific needs of SN students accordingly. This can happen for a number of reasons. However, this has resulted in at least some parents losing hope for their SN students and the SN students leaving the school without being educated in basic academic and social life skills. I hope my research will help to sort out the difficulty outlined.

I am assuring you that my research will work within and abide by the ethical principle of a robust research framework, respecting all participants and schools accordingly. I have obtained ethics permission to undertake my study and my ethics approval number is FEDU099/16. I have attached a copy of the ethical approval letter from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato for your information, and would be pleased to send you a copy of the application in full if needed. A consent approval letter from Research, Policy and Communication Division Director is also attached. Confidentiality is a paramount importance in this study as to protecting the participants and the schools by not disclosing their information or identity. Pseudonym names for participants and schools will be used instead of their real names to represent the data gathered. A bound copy of my completed thesis will be sent to your office after the study has been formally assessed.

I would greatly appreciate if my correspondence be sent to the above stated address.

Should you need to clarify further on this, please do not hesitate to contact my principal supervisor provided her contact details below.

Dr. Carol Hamilton
Senior Lecturer: Department of Human Development and Counseling
Faculty of Education
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton 3240, New Zealand
Telephone (64)7 856 2889 ext: 8587, Fax: (64)7 838 4434, Email: hamiltca@waikato.ac.nz

Thank you for your consideration and I await your response soon.

Yours faithfully,

_____

Roweng Bomen (Mr.)
Master of Education Student
Ph: (64) 0220403769
Email: rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 5: Approval letter from the Provincial Education Advisor

WESTERN PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 60

DARU	FAX: 6459071
WESTERN PROVINCE	DIGICEL: 72300880
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	CUG: 72228554
EMAIL: Netsey- Baerey@education.gov.pg	

28th October 2016

Mr Roweng Bomen
Orchard park halls of residence
183 Silverdale Road
Hamilton, 3216
New Zealand

Dear Mr Bomen

RE: SEEKING CONSENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE TOWN SCHOOLS OF DARU ISLAND IN WESTERN PROVINCE.

As you have requested with your subject as above reads; the Western Provincial Education Board approves your research to be carried out in the town schools of Daru Island.

You can now go ahead to consult the head teachers of the schools in Daru town to grant you permission to walk into their schools to carry out your research. While you do that; observe their daily operation schedules so that you can easily fit your program in.
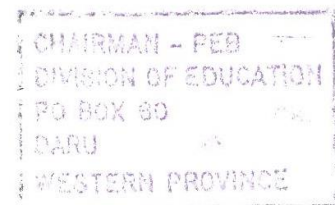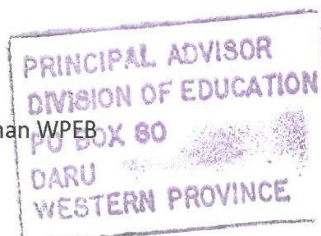
I believe you will keep to your design and ethics of your research as guided by research conditions.

Thank you and wish you success in your research

Yours sincerely

NETSEY BAEREY MR
Principal Education Advisor & Chairman WPEB

PRINCIPAL ADVISOR
DIVISION OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 60
DARU
WESTERN PROVINCE

CHAIRMAN - PEB
DIVISION OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 60
DARU
WESTERN PROVINCE

Apendix 6: Principal's sample letter

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Roweng Bomen
Orchard Park Halls of Residence
183 Silverdale Road
Hamilton, 3216
New Zealand

13th October 2016

The Principal
…………….. Primary School/SERC
P.O.Box …….
Daru
Western Province
Papua New Guinea

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Roweng Bomen and I am a Master of Education student currently enrolled in Faculty of Education program at the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. As a requirement towards the completion of my study program, I am required to write a 40,000 research based thesis and this will begin soon in October 2016. The topic of my research is
How are inclusive education resource centre (IERC) supported students with special needs (SN) experiencing education in regular classroom settings in the town schools in Western Province of Papua New Guinea? A case study approach. The National Department of Education encourages all teachers in the schools to practice the inclusive education policy everywhere in the schools throughout Papua New Guinea. However, it seems like the policy is not always being fully implemented. IERC's supported SN students do attend mainstream schools but challenges still face SN students who are in regular classes. The aim of the study is to explore the experiences of IERC's special needs (SN) students in mainstream education, and teacher's perceptions, attitudes and contribution towards SN students' progress in these educational settings. Studies of teachers' perceptions have been undertaken before. However, the focus of my study is on SN students, because it is their social interaction and engagement in the class and with the surrounding community, which liberates them from discrimination and segregation.
I have chosen your school to participate in this research, as I know that you have SN students in your school. This letter is an invitation to the teachers and

students concerned to take part in my study. From this study, I hope to find out what is working well for SN students who are integrated into a regular class. I also want to find out, when difficulties arise, what can be done to solve the problems facing this group of students. Does the inclusive education policy help schools, teachers and parents support their SN students to experience educational success? The result of the study can help teachers, peers and parents to build a more positive attitude, behaviour and relationship for SN students being educated in mainstream classes.

For more details about the study, please refer to the information sheet attached. I am assuring you that my research will work within and abide by the ethical principle of the research, respecting the participants and the schools accordingly. I have obtained ethics permission to undertake my study and my ethics approval number is FEDU099/16. I have attached a copy of the ethical approval letter from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato, a consent letter from Research, Policy and Communication Division Director and a consent letter from the Provincial Education Advisor. Confidentiality is a paramount importance in this study as to protecting the participants and the schools by not disclosing their information or identity. Pseudonym names for participants and schools will be used instead of their real names to represent the data gathered. A copy of my completed thesis will be sent to your office for information. It will be also be available online through the University of Waikato library website and the link will be sent to you.

I would greatly appreciate if my correspondence be sent to the above stated address. If you agree for me to carry out the study in your school, advise me in advance so that I can contact you for further arrangement.   Should you need further verification about any aspect of this study or this letter, you can contact my principal supervisor on her details provided below.

Dr. Carol Hamilton
Senior Lecturer: Department of Human Development and Counseling
Faculty of Education
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton 3240, New Zealand
Telephone (64)7 856 2889 ext: 8587, Fax: (64)7 838 4434, Email: hamiltca@waikato.ac.nz

Thank you for your consideration and I await your response soon.

Yours faithfully,

_____

Roweng Bomen (Mr.)
Master of Education Student
Ph: (64) 0220403769
Email: rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 7: Participant's information sheet

Participation information

Hi, I am Roweng Bomen. I am currently studying towards my Master of Disability and Inclusion studies degree at the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. I am interested in the doing my research on how incluisve education resource centre's (IERC) supported special needs (SN) students experience the education they receive in regular class settings. Prior to my studies, I was an inclusive education teacher for nine years. At the same time I was a child foundational protection trainer with Callan National Unit for Southern Region for two years. I have wide experience working and giving trainings to teachers, parents and other church groups for helping students with all disabilities both in the rural and urban schools. Seeing a student with disability included in a community and them learning a new skill in life motivates me to work more for them.

Reason for the Study

It is believed that student children who passed out from IERCs experience many educational challenges in mainstream schools. The research I am undertaking aims to enhance and deepen the understanding on the experiences of IERC's SN student in mainstream education. The perceptions, attitudes and contribution towards SN students' progress in education by teachers, peers and parents are of paramount importance. The focus of my study is on SN students and how they are supported because it is their social interaction and engagement in the class and with the surrounding community that enables them to access the educational need without facing any barriers. Your participation in this study will be a great help for the future SN students who will be transiting from IERCs to mainstream class to access education well. This is an opportunity for you to speak up about how students with special needs are accessing their right to basic services, such as education.

How Fieldwork Will Be Carried Out

With the permission granted from you, your voice will be recorded with an audio device for transcription for data analysis purpose. The researcher will transcribe audio recordings for the teachers and parents. However, if there is a possibility that a transcriber will be needed for transcribing of SN students' audio, the IERC teacher will be the one to assist the researcher in the transcription process. The IERC teacher will sign a confidentiality form prior to transcribing. The transcripts for teachers and parents will be distributed to them by the researcher for comments. The transcripts for the SN students will not be sent out for checking, but another meeting will be held so the focus group's participants can agree on any changes made. Soft and hard ware will be kept in a password locked computer and a locked box respectively. Your participation is voluntarily and permission from you to take part is gained prior by you signing the consent form. All data gathered from focus group, non-focus group and observation will be kept confidential and pseudonym will be used for anonymity. The timing for the

non-focus group interview will be between 30-45 minutes and the SN students will be between 20-30 minutes. Visual notes will be taken from class observation for 15-20 minutes as additional information to my research. SN students will not be involved in the observation study. An information letter will also be sent to the parents of non-SN students about the observation. The observation result will be discussed with the class teacher after observation. None of the information gathered during the observation will be disclosed to anyone except the class teacher.

Research Outcome

The final report from my research will be submitted to the University of Waikato as requirement for the completion of my Master of Education in disability and Inclusion Studies program. The findings could also be shared for other academic purpose. Further it is possible that these findings could be presented to the Papua New Guinea National Research Institute for them to further make recommendation to relevant departments if requested by them. A copy of this report will be sent to your institution upon your request. After the transcribing, I will give the transcripts back to the teachers and parents to edit and comment on the information. Ten working days are given for the comments and feedback. I will visit them as a follow up after ten days if they do not give back the transcripts.

Should you have any queries and need more information regarding my research project, please do not hesitate to contact me on my cell phone number: (64) 0220403769 or 0675 73754475 or email me: rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Or

My supervisor Dr. Carol Hamilton at the University of Waikato, Hamilton. Her details are as follows: Telephone (64)7 856 2889 ext: 8587, Fax: (64)7 838 4434, Email: hamiltca@waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 8: Invitation letter for school

Date:_____/_____2016

_____ Primary/SERC school

Ref: Invitation to take part in the research study

Your school is cordially invited to take part in a research that I am currently undertaking as part of my thesis in Master of Education at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. The research project is about inclusive education resource centre's (IERC) supported special need (SN) students' experiencing educational attainment in regular class.

The research aims to explore the views and the experiences of the teacher/s, SN students and their parent's on inclusiveness - mainly the SN students' educational, social and physical development in regular class. The feedback from the interviewees will enable me to draw connections between the current inclusive education policy, SN students' experience and the educational attainment in regular class setting in ways that are designed to be helpful to future educators.

As the Papua New Guinea inclusive education policy has been in operation for over a decade now this research project is one way of determining whether or not if SN students are being fully included and are accessing the basics necessity towards their educational development. By allowing me to do research in your school on the SN students and their lived experiences you will help me to draw possible solutions to any problems that emerge that could alleviate classroom teachers' burden when dealing with SN students.

Further explanation on the research project is outlined on the participant's information sheet and the consent form explaining the roles and rights to participating in the study.

I anticipate that your participation in the study will be enjoyable and meaningful.

Yours faithfully,

_____
Roweng Bomen
(Student Researcher)
Ph: (64) 0220403769/ 0675 73754475
Email: rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 9: Invitation letter for teachers

Teacher's invitation letter

Date: …….../……..2016

Dear_____

Ref: Invitation to take part in our research study

You are cordially invited to take part in a research that I am currently undertaking as part of my thesis in Master of Education at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. The research project is about inclusive education resource centre's (IERC) supported special need (SN) students' experiencing educational attainment in regular class.

The research aims to explore your views and experiences as a teacher on inclusiveness, mainly the SN students' educational, social and physical development in your class. Your feedback from interviewing will enable me to draw connections between PNG's current inclusive education policy, SN students' experiences and their educational attainment in regular class setting in ways that are designed to be helpful to future educators.

As the Papua New Guinea inclusive education policy has been in operation for over a decade now, this research project is one way of determining whether or not the SN student in your class is being fully included and is accessing the basic necessity towards his/her educational development.

Further explanation on the research project is outlined on the participant's information sheet and the consent form explaining your roles and rights to participating in the study.

I anticipate that your participation in the study will be enjoyable and meaningful.

Yours faithfully,

_____

Roweng Bomen
(Student Researcher)
Ph: (64) 0220403769/ 0675 73754475
Email: rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 10: Invitation letter for parents

Parent's invitation letter

Date:…….../………2016

Dear_____

Ref: Invitation to take part in our research study

You are cordially invited to take part in a research that I am currently undertaking as part of my thesis in Master of Education at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. The research project is about inclusive education resource centre's (IERC) supported special need (SN) students' experiencing educational attainment in regular class.

The research aims to explore your views and experiences as a teacher on inclusiveness, mainly the SN students' educational, social and physical development in your class. Your feedback from interviewing will enable me to draw connections between PNG's current inclusive education policy, SN students' experiences and their educational attainment in regular class setting in ways that are designed to be helpful to future educators.

As the Papua New Guinea Inclusive Education policy has been in operation for over a decade now, this research project is one way of determining whether or not the SN student in your class is being fully included and is accessing the basic necessity towards his/her educational development.

Further explanation on the research project is outlined on the participant's information sheet and the consent form explaining you roles and rights to participating in the study.

I anticipate that your participation in the study will be enjoyable and meaningful.

Yours faithfully,

_____

Roweng Bomen
(Student Researcher)
Ph: (64) 0220403769/ 0675 73754475
Email: rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 11: Invitation letter for special needs students

SN students' invitation letter

Date:……/……….2016

Dear_____

Ref: Invitation to participate in my study

I want to talk to you about what your life is like when you are at school. I will bring with me many interesting pictures for us to see and talk about. A few other children will join the group. Someone from the resource centre will be there to help us as well. You can ask me any questions you want about talking in the group before we start. Our discussion will not be long and I hope you will like being part of the group. Our discussion will help me finish my research project.

Yours faithfully,

_____
Roweng Bomen
(Student Researcher)
Ph: (64) 0220403769/ 0675 73754475
Email: rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Appendix 12: Consent forms for teachers

Consent form for teacher

[   ] I have read the participant's information and have had all my questions answered with satisfaction.

[   ] I understand that the researcher will not reveal my identity in any way in publication or presentation reporting on the research.

[   ] I understand that all electronic data gathered from this research will be securely kept away in a password locked computer after transcription for a maximum of five years.

[   ] I understand the researcher will maintain the confidentiality of the data gathered, using pseudonyms where possible in every situation. However, I also understand that anonymity cannot be fully guaranteed.

[   ] I will be able to see the transcripts for the interview before it is approved

[   ] I understand that I have the right to:
  • withdraw from the study anytime before or after transcriptions are made and I do not have to say why.
  • edit the interview transcripts if am included in the follow-up interview. Editing might include taking information out or adding to information given at interview.

[   ] I understand that any information published with my consent may not be withdrawn, but have the right to withdraw part or all my interview data up to the point of transcripts are approved.

[   ] I understand who I can contact if there are uncertainties that need further clarification.

[   ] I consent to:
  • participate in an interview discussion
  • allowing the researcher to collect the information they need on how inclusive education policy, practices and building community is treating the SN child/ren to experience educational attainments in regular class.

[   ] I consent for a non-participatory observation to be carried out by the researcher in my class for 15-20 minutes bearing in mind the information gathered will be shared.

[   ] I consent to being asked to participate in a follow-up interview if a further assessment in this area is required.

Teacher's signature: _____ Date:………/……../2016

Researcher's signature:_____ Date:………/……../2016

Appendix 13: Consent forms for parents

Consent form for parents

[   ] I have read the participant's information and have had all my questions answered with satisfaction.

[   ] I understand that the researcher will not reveal my identity in any way in publication or presentation reporting on the research.

[   ] I understand that all electronic data gathered from this research will be securely kept away in a password locked computer after transcription for a maximum of five years.

[   ] I understand the researcher will maintain the confidentiality of the data gathered, using pseudonyms where possible in every situation. However, I also understand that anonymity cannot be fully guaranteed.

[   ] I will be able to see the transcripts for the interview before it is approved.

[   ] I understand that I have the right to:
  • withdraw from the study anytime before or after transcriptions are made and I do not have to say why.
  • edit the interview transcripts if am included in the follow-up interview. Editing might include taking information out or adding to information given at interview.

[   ] I understand that any information published with my consent may not be withdrawn, but have the right to withdraw part or all my interview data up to the point of transcripts are approved.

[   ] I understand who I can contact if there are uncertainties that need further clarification.

[   ] I consent to:
  • participate in an interview discussion
  • allowing the researcher to collect the information they need on how inclusive education policy, practices and building community is treating the SN child/ren experience educational attainment in regular class.

[   ] I consent to being asked to participate in a follow-up interview if a further assessment in this area is required.

Teacher's signature: _____ Date:………/……../2016

Researcher's signature:_____ Date:………/……../2016

Appendix 14: Consent form for students

Parental concern form

Your son/daughter has been chosen by the inclusive education resource centre as a potential candidate for my research project.

I am asking for your consent to allow your son/daughter to take part in a small focus group session for my study to take place on the ………./………./2016. A full description of the study is in the information sheet. I am also happy to answer any questions you have about this request.

By signing below, you give your permission for your child to participate in the interview on the ………../…………./2016. However, if you choose to withdraw your son/daughter from the study at any time before the focus group takes place you may do so and you do not have to say why.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor should you wish further clarification of this request. All contact details are provided in the information sheet.

You may keep a copy of this consent form.

Name of the student			
Name of parent/ legal guardian.			
Signature		Date	
Researcher's Signature		Date	

Appendix 15: Confidentiality agreement form

Confidentiality agreement form for IERC teacher

IERC teacher: _____   Date: …..…/……/2016

I agree that, in consideration of taking part in the interview session for the SN students, I will:
- keep all information discussed in the interview room to me in strict confidence.
- not disclose any information at all to anybody that I may come into contact with during and after the research project.

Understood and agreed on the …………./……………/2016.

Teacher's signature:_____   Date:………/……../2016

Researcher's signature:_____   Date:………/……../2016

Appendix 16: Observation letter for the parents

Class observation information for parents/guardians

Date:………../…………/2016

Dear parents/guardians,

I am Roweng Bomen. I am currently studying towards my Master of Disability and Inclusion Studies degree at the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. I will be observing the class your child/ren is in to see the social interactions of special need (SN) students with normal children for 15 -20 minutes. The focus of my study is on SN students and how they are supported because it is their social interaction and engagement in the class and with the surrounding community that enables them to access the educational need without facing any barriers. It is believed that SN students who passed out from inclusive education resource centre (IERC) experience many educational challenges in mainstream schools. The research I am undertaking aims to enhance and deepen the understanding on the experiences of IERC's special needs (SN) students in mainstream education. The perceptions, attitudes and contribution towards SN students' progress in education by teachers, peers and parents are of paramount importance. During this observation no student will be involved in the study process. The result of the observation is shared only with the class teacher. The observation will be looking at SN students on the following:
   • active participation in class
   • On-task learning
   • Attitudes of other children toward the SN student
   • Interaction with the teacher
   • Interaction with other students
   • Behaviour
   • Inclusive practice in the class by teachers and other students.
   • Has sufficient learning materials
   • Learning environment is conducive
   •
Should you have any queries and need more information regarding my research project, please do not hesitate to contact me on my cell phone number: (64) 0220403769 or 0675 73754475 or email me: rb118@students.waikato.ac.nz

Thank you for information,

_____
Roweng Bomen
(Master of Education student)

Appendix 17: Observation checklist

Observation Checklist

Name: _____ Grade:_____

Date:………/……../2016

Areas to be assessed on	Very good	Good	Satisfactory
Active participation in class			
On-task learning			
Attitudes of other students toward the SN child			
Interaction with the teacher			
Interaction with other students			
Behaviour			
Inclusive practice in the class by teachers and other students.			
Has sufficient learning materials			
Learning environment is conducive			

Note:
- This study is a non-participatory study.
- No SN students will be involved in this study.
- All information will be kept confidential and anonymous.
- The information will be known only to the researcher and the class teacher.
- Visual notes taken will be kept in a locked box.

Appendix 18: Interview questions

Interview questions

A. Focus group
1. What will you do in school?
2. Do you like going to school?
3. Who are your best friends?
4. Do you like playing with friends?
5. How many times do you play?
6. What do you and your friends do in school?
7. Are there times when you cannot be with your friends – tell me about these times?
8. Tell me about your school work – easy? hard?
9. How does your teachers help you?
10. What stops your teacher from helping?
11. How is the learning environment treating you and your studies?
12. Are your parents supporting you in your school work?
13. Tell me anything your do not like in school?
14. Tell me anything you like in school?

B. Teachers
1. What do you know about the Inclusive Education policy?
2. How do you think the policy is practiced in the school?
3. How is the learning environment welcoming SN students?
4. Are you interested in the educational development of SN students? – if not why not?
5. How do feel when extra time is allocated for assisting the SN students?
6. How do other class members relate to the SN students in the class?
7. What are the SN students expressions like in regular class?
8. How well do you work with SN students and their families in the community to bring quality educational experience for them?
9. Are the teachers, abled students and the surrounding community very supportive to the educational development of SN students?
10. Tell me about the barriers that exclude SN students from receiving quality education and equal treatment as abled-students?
11. What treatment do you give to the SN students when distributing school materials?

C. Parents
1. Did you want your child to receive education in regular class – if so why?
2. How do you support your child to receive this education?
3. Does your child attend school regularly – if not can you tell me why?
4. How do you know that your child is included in all the school activities?
5. Does your child play around with other children – what are the barriers?
6. Do your other children have time playing with him/her how do they help make this happen?

7. How often do you buy school materials your child – do you buy more or less?
8. Who is given the priority amongst your children in distributing the school materials?
9. How often do you prepare lunch for your children?
10. What do you think might need to change so that your child is happier at school?

NB: Please note that these are general, sample questions only. Prompting questions may arise depending on the depending on the nature of the question.