

## The State of Inclusive Pedagogy in South Africa: A Literature Review

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**ABSTRACT** The states of inclusive pedagogy in South African schools remain bleak and teachers are in the dark about what constitutes an inclusive pedagogy in the South African context. This is despite policy changes since the advent of the new educational dispensation in 1994. In this review article the researcher presents the background in terms of inclusive education developments, both within historical and policy contexts. While articulating the conceptualization of inclusive education, the paper also discusses the model of inclusive education with reference to the role of all levels of ecosystemic system support such as school, district, provincial and national level of education. Further, the way barriers to learning and the notion of inclusive pedagogy are conceptualized within the South African context are discussed. The paper concludes by reviewing the current state of inclusive pedagogic practice in the South African classrooms. Among the findings of this paper is that the way inclusion is conceptualized still bears the hallmarks of the special needs education of the past education dispensation. The paper concludes that a shift from the special need approach to the conceptualization of inclusion is required.

### INTRODUCTION

The government of South Africa drafted policies that sought to ensure the implementation of inclusive education, conceptualized in vision 2021 as indicated in the White paper 6 (DoE 2002: 43). Various guideline documents were published to facilitate the implementation of inclusive education. The following could be regarded as a summarized version of developments leading to the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa (Landsberg et al. 2011: 18):

*The White Paper on Education and Training in a Democratic South Africa (1995); the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996; the White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS) (1997); the National Commission on Special Education Needs and Training and The National Committee on Education Support Services (1997); the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: building an inclusive education and training system (2001); the Draft National Disability Policy Framework and guidelines for the implementation of National Disability Framework (2008) and the UN Convention on rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) 2006 ratified by South Africa in 2007.*

However a lot was said in documents and papers but whether these documents have translated into action, especially in developing in-

clusion in classrooms and ensuring that teachers are fully equipped to handle an inclusive class is still a question mark. Therefore the study sort to answer the following research question:

*What is the state of inclusive pedagogy within the South African Classrooms?*

The research question led to the following sub-questions:

- *Which model of inclusion has South Africa adopted and;*
- *Which context led to this model of inclusion being implemented;*
- *How are barriers to learning conceptualised in a South African context and;*
- *How is inclusive pedagogy conceptualised?*

### METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE OF GATHERING THE LITERATURE

The literature review represents an attempt to synthesise and give an overview of developments, and changes leading to the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa. Few studies have been conducted on the state of inclusive education nationally. The criterion used to select the literature was guided by the availability of supportive empirical evidence. Literatures with speculative undertones were deliberately excluded.

A number of databases such as Google Scholar were consulted. Further sources of relevant information were internationally accredited.

ited journals such as the International Journal of Inclusive Education and the South African Journal of Education. The University of Johannesburg Library was consulted and books, articles and electronic sources were read to look for relevant, up-to-date literature on the topic. The South African government policy documents such as White Paper 6 (2001) were also reviewed.

### THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The implementation of inclusive education in South Africa came in the midst of curricular changes instituted by the African National Congress (ANC) lead government since 1994 (Naiker 2005). The broad transformation of the South African society towards equality coincided with the initiation of inclusion as promulgated in international documents such as the Salamanca Statement (1994) and Dakar World Education Forum (2000) (Engelbrecht 2006; Nkoane 2006).

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 section 29(1) states:

*“Everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education and to further education, which the state through reasonable measures must make progressively available and accessible.”*

The statement is fundamental to ensuring the inclusive nature of the schooling system (Walton 2011). The schooling system was before 1994 based on a racial and special needs education approach (Engelbrecht 1999; Engelbrecht et al. 2002). After 1994 the segregated system began to be replaced by a unified schooling system (Christie 1995; Nkomo 1990). However, there is a need to acknowledge that though formal desegregation began after 1994, desegregation had begun in the late 1970s to mid-1980s. According to King (2001), the notion of an integrated and comprehensive approach to inclusion focused on critical review of institutional policies, practices and programs which imply adopting a holistic approach to inclusion. The implementation of inclusive education in South Africa became part of a broad social transformation of the society (Engelbrecht and Waghid 2002; Sayed and Carrim 1998; Soudien and Sayed 2004). Mitchell (2005) describe this period as a period of a paradigm shift from special and ordinary categories of schooling to a

single system. But Hay et al. (2006) found out that teacher’s frame of thought were informed by the past regime which made them less ready to implement inclusion.

The South African government implemented the Curriculum 2005 which underpinned outcomes-based education (OBE) which sought to bring about an inclusive culture of teaching and learning. The implementation of outcomes-based education system through the announcement of the National Curriculum Statements (NCS) for the General Education and Training band (GET: grade 8-9) and Further Education and Training band (FET: grade 10- 12) became the initial step in the provision of equal opportunities for all (Makoelle 2004). The plan to introduce inclusive education was further highlighted in the White Paper 6 (2001) culminating into vision 2021 which will see inclusive education implemented at all levels of schooling. The FET (secondary schools included) sector envisaged to implement inclusion from the year 2008. Since then inclusive education has been implemented in the primary level of schooling and the notion of full service schools is being phased in periodically.

The relationship between the outcomes-based education and inclusive education is derived from the OBE principles that all learners can learn, succeed and that they could be in control of their own learning (Makoelle 2009). It is also important at this stage to put the curriculum changes within the context of the role of the teacher because this also had a significant bearing on how teachers in their new role may or may not practice the philosophy of inclusion. It would therefore for the sake of clarity be significant to highlight the philosophical changes with respect to the role of the teacher in the pedagogic relationship with the learners which to a great extent determine how well the notion of inclusion could be practiced. An attempt is made to show how curricular changes have affected what teachers were doing in the past and is currently doing and whether these changes had a positive impact towards the implementation of inclusive education.

Firstly, it is important to firstly give a background in terms of what influenced pedagogy and why the traditional approach to pedagogy sought to include or exclude learners. The traditional approach to learning was based on the behaviorist approach which presupposes that

for learning to occur there has to be a stimulus which can elicit a response from the learner, learning is regarded as a linear process (Eckstein and Henson 2012). Learners are regarded as passive and the teacher has the responsibility of transmitting knowledge to the learner. This approach gave the teacher more power to determine the content of the subject and how it should be taught, so chances that other learners could be excluded during both teaching and learning processes seemed high as learners had little say in what they had to learn and how. The teaching and learning pre 1994 in South Africa was dominated by this mode of behaviorist teaching (Makoelle 2009).

Conversely, after 1994 the government adopted a humanistic approach to teaching and learning based on the philosophy of constructivism which presupposes that the goal of education is to produce learners that are creative with high critical thinking skills. The learners are active participants in the learning process and have a say in the learning content to be learned. The role of the teacher is to give support to learners in their journey to discover the learning content and solve problems. The chances that this kind of approach could be inclusive seemed high as the learners were conceptualized as partners with the teacher in the process of determining the learning content and learning according to their pace and needs (Botha 2002).

However while the paradigm shift sought to have good intentions in policies, very little empirical evidence exist that suggests that this shift has achieved effectiveness of the inclusive practices especially in classrooms. The South African approach to inclusion could perhaps be conceptualized with reference to the society that has not only sought to think beyond simply the integration of learners with special educational

needs to mainstream education, but also sought to broaden the parameters of inclusion to issues of equality, human right and freedom which are fundamental to inclusive practice espoused in the constitution of the country (Sayed and Carrim 1998; Naiker 2005).

The government of South Africa, for example instituted laws such as the affirmative action act and the equity act and in them there is a strong move to affirm those that were previously excluded from the economy such as the disabled. The National Disability Strategy (1997) document elaborates and points out whether these people were employable or not. Inclusion was a process to use the available educational facilities to benefit all learners and to improve access of resources to those that were previously disadvantaged. The transformation of special schools into resource centers and the piecemeal transformation of some mainstream schools into full service schools is evidence enough to indicate the limited resource approach that the South African government has taken (DoE 2001). However it became a key to differentiate between mainstreaming and inclusion hence the distinction is clearly spelled out in the White Paper (2001: 17) (see Table 1).

In the White Paper 6 (2001) it is also highlighted that the significance of support to all learners rather than focusing on an individual learner support is crucial. While there is efforts to move towards full inclusion various stumbling blocks exist. For example, South Africa has one of the highest HIV/AIDS (Human Immune Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Virus) statistics in the Sub Saharan region, impacting on classrooms through affected and infected learners. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has devastating consequences to inclusion in the classrooms because of the emotional challenges it brings to the classroom for both learners and

**Table 1: Mainstreaming and inclusion**

<i>Mainstreaming or integration</i>	<i>Inclusion</i>
Mainstreaming is about getting learners to “fit into” a particular kind of system or integrating them into this existing system.	Inclusion is about recognizing and respecting the differences among all learners and building on the similarities.
Mainstreaming is about giving some learners extra support so that they can “fit in” or be integrated into the normal classroom routine. Learners are assessed by specialists who diagnose and prescribe technical interventions, such as the placement of learners in programmes.	Inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus is on the teaching and learning actors, with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners.
Mainstreaming and integration focus on changes that need to take place in learners so that they can “fit in” Here the focus is on the learner.	Inclusion focuses on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs. The focus is on the adaptation of and support system available in the classroom.

teachers (Beyers and Hay 2007). The stigmatization of the disease in South Africa has a potential to develop into an exclusionary measure for affected and infected learners despite policy stipulations (Walton and Lloyd 2011; DoE 2001). Demystifying the disease may assist in improving attitudes and reducing prejudice for those affected and infected in the classrooms (Muthukrishna and Ramsuran 2007).

Furthermore, South Africa is composed of learners of different races, ethnic groups, eleven official languages and learners from different political, religious, socio economic backgrounds. For all learners to be included in the classroom, teachers have to be engaged in orientating learners about such differences and ensuring that learners begin to know about their differences and learn to respect and tolerate one another. Despite all these policy changes alluded to, it is not clear if the state of inclusion is been realized. The next section therefore discusses the education system and how inclusion is positioned within it.

### **INCLUSIVE EDUCATION WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM**

The inclusive model of South Africa is underpinned by the constitution of the country Act 108 of 1996 since the dawn of the new political dispensation which sought to transform the society from that which is uninclusive to a more inclusive one. The constitution put more emphasis on equity which is ensuring the human rights for all citizens. Section 29(1) of South African constitution states:

*“Everyone has the right to basic education including adult basic education; and to further education, which the state through reasonable measures must make progressively available and accessible”*

This constitutional principle has embraced all about building an inclusive model of education. The constitution articulates clearly the notions of non-discrimination section 9(3, 4, 5), and also receiving education in the language of your choice section 29(2) which are fundamental to the notion of an inclusive society. Noting the significance of the constitution the national education department embarked on the legislative path which sort to ensure the realization of constitutional modalities to encrypt the philosophy of inclusion. Further in this route came into

existence the South African schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA), then later White Paper 6 in 2001 as legislative and policy frame work for the implementation of inclusive education. Section 5 (1) of SASA states that:

*“A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirement without unfairly discriminating in any way”*

The legislative process culminated into the White Paper 6 which became the road map transforming the education system towards a more inclusive one. The White Paper 6 outlined the model of inclusive education aimed at responding to learner and teacher needs by establishing institutions and structures of support which will ensure quality education for all. The organogram illustrate the relationship between the support structures enhancing inclusion (See Fig. 1).

The model of an inclusive education system as indicated earlier evolve from the constitutional parameters and its mandate is carried forward by the national department of education, provincial departments, education districts schools and institutions of learning such as adult basic education and training centers (ABET). The principles of expanding access of education for all are crucial for: ensuring inclusive policies; ensuring change and upgrading of infrastructure; enhancing institutional support and development and ensuring the equitable distribution and use of educational resources.

### **The Role of the National Education Department**

The National Education Department determines direction towards inclusion by promulgating on policy, norms, standards and guideline for an inclusive framework. The education department introduces national policy that enhances the inclusive approach towards learning and teaching (DoE 2001).

### **The Role of Provincial Education Departments**

The Provincial Education Departments play a significant role in building institutional capacity and managing closely its implementation of inclusive education in various education districts. Provinces set guidelines on matters of curriculum, planning, management and finan-

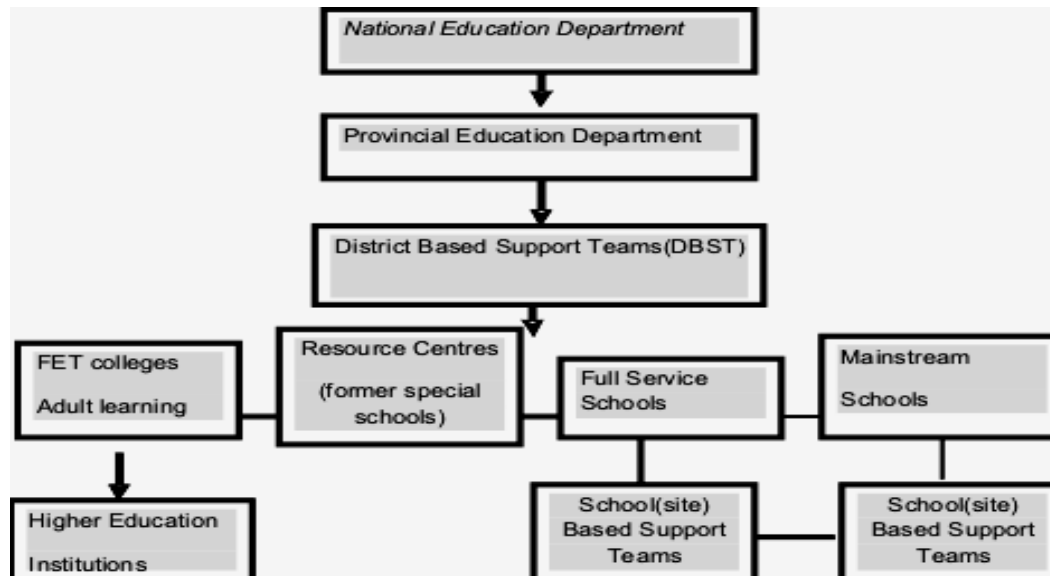


Fig. 1. Organogram of South African inclusive system

cial support in enhancing inclusion in schools of each province (DoE 2001).

### The Role of Education Districts-based Support Teams

The education districts established the district-based support teams composed of district specialists and former special school teachers. The district-based support teams are charged with the responsibility of providing evaluation of needs and support of all schools in their district including centers of early childhood education, adult education centers, colleges, further and higher education institutions. The role of district-based support teams is generally: ensuring that special schools are transformed into resource centers; that the implementation of national inclusive education policies is monitored; that the needs and support required by each school in the district is responded to in terms of curriculum, assessment and instruction; and upgrading and training of staff as part of the district support team (DoE 2001).

### The Role of Institution-based Support Teams (SBST)

Teams composed of teachers, special needs teachers, care staff, learners, parents care givers, members of district-based support team and

local community member is established by all institutions. The team coordinates the institutional support of the institution, identifies institutional needs, collectively develops strategies to address needs and barriers to learning, monitor availability and use of resources and assesses the general operation of an institution in terms of inclusion (DoE 2001).

### Full Service Schools

Full service schools are those identified by the district-based support team to render full services of inclusion in collaboration with the resource centers. Such schools assist the neighboring schools in terms of the provision of inclusive services and support (DoE 2001).

### Resource Centers

The former special schools are now geared towards providing specialized support to mainstream and full service schools. The resource center also works in collaboration with full service schools to provide support to other schools (DoE 2001).

### Mainstream Schools

Schools which are not providing full services get their support from full service and resource



centers. Mainstream schools have to establish site-based support teams that will coordinate inclusive services at their school and network with the specialists from district-based support teams and resource centers (DoE 2001).

While noting the role of various institutions in developing an inclusive approach to education, the role of the community is also central. The community based organizations, non-governmental organizations of the disabled, partnerships of parent's bodies are significant in delivering a support network for inclusion as part of the broader social transformation process of the government. Inter-ministerial collaboration between the ministries of social development, health, education and public service and administration becomes pivotal for joint integrated service delivery that is aimed at support for schools and communities towards an inclusive society (DoE 2001).

### CONCEPTUALIZATION OF BARRIERS TO LEARNING

In South Africa the development of barriers to learning were associated mostly with the intrinsic factors (internal) that is medical and disability models (Waltons 2006; Engelbrecht et al. 2008). However there has been a paradigm shift in the way barriers to learning were conceptualized in South Africa, a shift from the understanding that specialized needs stem from the learner which often resulted in the identification and labeling of learners thus separating them from their peers (Pather 2007). The current understanding is that barriers to learning are caused by a multiplicity of factors which some are not necessarily of the learner's making, but could be social or lie with the school and curriculum. While noting the above move one is tempted to put those factors in the context of South Africa with its political history of segregation and how they act as barriers to effective teaching and learning.

**Socio- economic Barriers:** The availability of education resources places a profound influence on learners who were formerly deprived access to such resources especially in the rural areas. Tihanyi (2007) articulates racism as the main aspect influencing the implementation of inclusion. Race is projected especially in South African schools as one of the main forms of exclusions.

**Lack of Access to Basic Services:** As a developing country, South Africa experiences problems in providing transport, welfare, health services and other basic needs to all its children. Those who cannot access such services are faced with difficulties as there is little support for schooling. Johnson and Lazarus (2003) highlight the significance of the community in enhancing inclusion, however the society of South Africa has not moved to an ecosystemic approach to inclusion. On the same note, Will (1986) regards care of learners as a responsibility of all role players, a phenomenon which currently is quite rare.

**Poverty and Under-development:** Most people especially in rural communities are facing hardships which often affect their children negatively. The high unemployment rate resulting in problems of nutrition, shelter and clothing for those with unemployed parents. This consequently impact on the learner's ability to concentrate and learn effectively.

**HIV/AIDS Epidemic:** There are a growing number of orphans at schools as a result of the disease. Learners affected and infected show signs of emotional and psychological problems which sometimes teachers find difficult to provide due to lack of training, stigmatization of the disease and the negative attitude the society holds of those infected by the disease. Beyers and Hay (2007) posit that HIV/AIDS adds to the problems experienced by learners in the classroom. They indicate that the virus affects both the interpersonal and the contextual factors which could affect the full implementation of inclusion as it increases the number of learners with special educational needs. The stigmatization of the virus could affect the learners' willingness to meaningfully participate in the teaching and learning activities in the classroom.

**Curriculum:** What is being taught and the way is being taught can have far reaching implications for learners and their learning process. Poorly trained teachers who sometimes cannot articulate the learning content in such a manner that responds to the needs of learners could be barriers to learning themselves. The learning material that is not prepared to respond to the learner needs also can also act as barrier to effective learning.

**Communication and Language:** South Africa has eleven official languages including sign language however most teachers who got their

training during apartheid times find themselves in a position where they have to teach in the medium of English which is a major challenge of communication to both learners and teachers. Further, few teachers are skilled in Braille and sign language. Some white dominated former model C schools sometimes cling to Afrikaans as a medium of instruction making it deliberately difficult for non-Afrikaans speakers to access education at those schools (Makoelle 2011).

***Physical Facilities, Attitudes and Parental Involvement:*** Many school buildings in South Africa are not compliant to the needs of the disabled and are inaccessible and act as barriers to disabled learners. The indications is that when facilities and attitudes do not accommodate diversity, differences and learning styles of learners, learning could be negatively affected.

The attitudes of teachers and the society to the disabled have a profound influence on how well the teachers will respond to their needs. In some instances negative attitudes towards disability act as a barrier to teaching and learning. Further, the conditions at home and factors such as emotional, sexual and physical abuse could have a negative impact on the learning process.

There seems to be a tendency in South African schools for parents not to take part in the education of their children due to a number of factors such as illiteracy and non recognition by teachers (Makoelle 2004). The non involvement of parents put teachers in a difficult position especially when dealing with learners exhibiting behavior difficulties. The conceptualization of barriers to learning raises a question "what form of pedagogy is inclusive?" the subsequent section discusses how inclusive pedagogy is understood within the South African context.

### **THE SOUTH AFRICAN VERSION OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY**

The understanding of what constitutes an inclusive pedagogy is still confusing as teachers and stakeholders in education hold varied interpretations of what it means. The influence of special educational needs which was based on the medical-deficit model is still prevalent in schools (Landsberg et al. 2011). While policies clearly articulate that learners have to be taught in accordance with their needs, teachers' beliefs and practices have not changed significantly.

The question of whether there is an inclusive pedagogy is still very debatable in South Africa. There is virtually very little research in this regard, although the notion of inclusive education dominated the educational discourse since the implementation of the White Paper 6 referred to earlier in this article.

While there have been efforts to train teachers on the notion of inclusive education, there have been problems with regard to teachers changing their beliefs from the old education system to the new dispensation (Naiker 2000). There have been very minimal implementations on the ground despite the major policy shifts towards an inclusive pedagogic discourse. Several studies have been conducted in South Africa to attempt to provide support to teachers in an inclusive pedagogic instruction; however such efforts have not yielded any results. In some of the studies, models have been developed to empower teachers with inclusive models of teaching strategies. For example, Prinsloo (2001) mentions examples of models such as firstly, the one developed by F.W. Weeks which focuses on helping teachers deal with the behaviour problems of learners, secondly, the model of determining the extent of intellectual disabilities developed by A.C. Bouwer (2000) called the At-Risk Disk and lastly, the manual to assist the learner with mild intellectual disabilities, especially in foundation phase developed by M.F. Sethosa (2001).

However, a careful study of such models seems to suggest that the learning problems learners encounter in the teaching and learning situation stems from the learner and very little is said about how the environment, teaching approach, the support skills of teachers could have on the learning process, inclusive solutions being developed seem to mainly stem from experts with the influence of special needs education, which is still a dominant discourse in inclusive debates and engagements in South Africa.

While there is a challenge among teachers to make a paradigm shift towards inclusion other studies have actually provided hope that the question of changing the mind set of teachers can actually be altered, to cite an example the work of Vayrynen (2003) in conjunction with UNESCO where inclusive teaching activities were implemented in 21 schools (10 in Mpumalanga province and 10 in the Northern

Cape) where an approach seemed different from the special need approach. In this study an emphasis was that success of inclusion is clearly related to the curriculum as it can create a barrier to learning process. The curriculum has to be responsive to the educational needs of all learners and learners neither should nor be blamed for not accessing the curriculum if it is not designed to provide support they need. According to Vayrynen (2003), inclusion can be realized by developing inclusive cultures, collaboration and cooperation among the teachers, creating learning environments that foster collaborative learning and learner interdependence.

### **Inclusive Pedagogical Practices in the South African Classroom Context**

While there are guidelines for full service schools published in 2010 in terms of the implementation of inclusive teaching strategies by teachers in the classrooms, a closer look at the guideline document does not offer the solution to the eminent problem of pedagogic practice in the classroom (DoBE 2010). The guidelines only provide the background of the legislative framework for inclusive education as promulgated in section 12 of the South African schools Act (1996) where it is stated that the provincial education department has to make provision for the accommodation of learners with learning barrier in an ordinary public school where it is possible, the guidelines go further to detail the role of the principal and the School Governing body (SGB) in putting this legislative requirement into practice. While the guidelines indicate that inclusion can be attained among others by the collaboration among teachers, on going professional development and determining the level of need among the learners, what remains a question is whether the kind of teachers South Africa has are in a position to make such changes in their beliefs about pedagogic practice which was earlier questioned, due to the kind of training they got and the kind of the dominant discourse of special education that seem to have influenced their thinking about inclusive teaching.

The special education influence in South African debates about inclusion is also seen in some of the studies conducted, for example Pillay and Terlizzi (2009) argue that the learn-

ers with learning barriers thrive well in the so-called special schools. The argument is that the situation in mainstream schools is not yet ideal for inclusion because of factors such as lack of resources and teacher expertise which is prominent to the support learners with learning barriers need. Pillay and Terlizzi feel that while inclusion in theory is thought to be a good idea preparation of the current classrooms will have to be prepared in such a way that the needs of the learners are met. In their study, a learner with learning barriers was placed from mainstream to a special need education environment and various findings were recorded including, improved socialization of the learner as well as improved academic performance. This study which was conducted recently as of 2009 since the advent of inclusive education in South Africa seem to reasonably justify the concern about old thinking versus new thinking in terms of inclusive education debate in South Africa.

However, there have been other studies conducted about inclusive teaching practices in South African schools which have shared different insights on the matter. For example in their work Walton et al. (2009) found in independent schools that inclusive teaching strategies that were applied often were cooperative learning, peer tutoring, modification of the assessments tasks to suit the needs of the learners, marking and spelling concessions and providing extra-time for learners with learning barriers. This could maybe be cited for the high academic results in independent schools though the same cannot be said about the public schools.

Landsberg et al. (2011) concurs with the notion of an assignment that is geared towards inclusion, for example in their work, they postulate that early identification of a learning need is important for the kind of support needed for the learner. It is also crucial that information leading to an appropriate identification of a learning need is gathered from varied sources such as assessment results, observations and interviews. However, this view seems to be consistent with the argument that needs can only stem from the learner and very little is said about what the teacher ought to be doing in the class as part of the pedagogic practice.

The significant factor that seem to be highlighted by Landsberg et al. (2011) is the need for visionary leadership which can have an in-



fluence on the beliefs, attitudes and values of teachers, that the realization of inclusion can come about as a result of whole school approach where all aspects of the school are assessed for their effectiveness to enhance inclusion. That an effective strategy is applied in the utilization of available resources and the ongoing professional development of teachers especially their ability to reflect on their practice. While these studies attempted to conceptualise the notion of inclusive pedagogy, these seem to be isolated cases which may not necessarily be generalized to national context. The philosophy of constructivism which is based on an assumption that learners should learn through discovery could form the bases from which inclusive practices could be determined.

## DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

### Research on Inclusive Pedagogy

The analysis of literature indicates very few sources could be found from the South African literature that actually addressed the way inclusive pedagogy, is conceptualized, operationalized and implemented within the South African classroom context. The trend is that of importing studies from countries such as UK and US whom their context differs from that of South Africa sharply.

### The Implementation of Inclusive Policies

While there have been efforts to implement the White Paper 6 and other policies, the review indicates that there is still a gap between what policies envisage and the reality in the classrooms. For example the implementation of White Paper 6 has not been fully realized.

### Conceptualization of Inclusive Education and Inclusive Pedagogy

The way inclusive education is conceptualized in South Africa seems to be derived from the special needs education. The review indicates that there is still serious contestation whether full inclusion could replace the special needs approach. The review points out that pedagogy are still understood to be the utilization of particular strategies in the classroom which are often borrowed from the special needs approach.

### Role of Inclusive Structures within the Education System

The model of inclusive education as discussed with reference to the role of all levels of system support such as school, district, provincial and national level of the Department of Education seem to still reflect the influence of special needs education, for example, most of the special needs structures had been retained or slightly modified.

### Conceptualisation of Barriers to Learning

The way barriers to learning are conceptualized seem to indicate a willingness to shift from the medical model of diagnosis but the reality points to the contrary because the systems are still such that the fault is found in the learner and not schooling structures.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the finding of this review several lessons could be drawn, firstly it could be concluded that more research is required to conceptualise the notion of inclusion within the South African context. There is a need for more pragmatic approach towards policy implementation. There is clearly a need for a paradigm shift from medically oriented special needs approach supported by altering educational structures to accommodate full inclusion. The intention of policy with regard to conceptualizing barriers to learning beyond those that stem from the learner has not really been achieved. Therefore this review points out that the current state of inclusive pedagogic practice in the South African classrooms has not improved despite the implementation of inclusive policies

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher therefore recommends that more funding be provided for context relevant research into inclusive practices. That the nature of inclusion envisaged be clearly articulated in the policies, and such be very clearly distinguished from the special need approach as the two are in principle philosophically different. The schools and other institutions will need radical change from their current form in order to accommodate full inclusion.

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