

**COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL BOARD ROLES IN MITIGATING DROPOUT
AMONG CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES
IN LESOTHO PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

BY

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JUNE 2020

DECLARATION

I, **Mohapi Augustinus Monyane**, confirm that the study entitled “***Collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools***” is my own original work and it has not been previously submitted for the award of an academic degree or examination at any other institution or University. All the sources used were indicated and acknowledged through complete references and failure to acknowledge is inadvertent. In addition, I worked hard to ensure that the work does not breach copyright law and has not been taken from other sources, except where it is originally cited and acknowledged within the text. This study complies with the rules and anti-plagiarism regulations of the University of the Free State.

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APPROVAL LETTER (ETHICAL CLEARANCE)



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16-Apr-2019

Dear Mr Monyane, Mohapi MA

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

Collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2018/1537/1604

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely



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To whom it may concern

I hereby confirm that I have proof read and edited the following M.Ed. thesis using Windows 'Tracking' System to reflect my comments and suggested corrections for the author(s) to action:

Collaborative School Board Roles in Mitigating Dropout among Children with Physical Disabilities in Lesotho Primary Schools

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Although the greatest care was taken in the editing of this document, the final responsibility for the product rests with the author(s).

Sincerely

20.05.2020

SIGNATURE

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ABSTRACT

The Lesotho Education Act (2010) acknowledges that, ensuring that a child who is physically or mentally handicapped is given special treatment, quality education and care required by his or her condition, cannot be the role and responsibility of regular teachers alone, but also a major responsibility of school boards. Notwithstanding the benefits accruing from decentralising power to school boards, Lesotho is faced with the challenge of children with physical disabilities (hereafter CwPDs) who drop out of primary schools before they acquire skills needed for survival. The aim of the study was to explore the collaborative roles of school boards in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. The Bronfenbrenners' eco-systemic theory and Telford's collaborative leadership theory were used in the study. A case study design and interpretive approach were adopted in the study. In-depth individual interviews were conducted to obtain rich and accurate data from 10 participants from two purposively selected primary schools. Through thematic analysis of the interviews, three themes became apparent in the study. The main findings were that school boards in this study relied overwhelmingly on helping CwPDs to develop intrapersonal skills such as self-esteem and confidence as embedded in their roles. They also worked collaboratively to provide care and spiritual support as an attempt to mitigate dropout rate of CwPDs. However, the poor infrastructures as well as unclear policies and programs, lack of in-service training and insufficient knowledge/skills to address the needs of CwPDs compromised their leadership and affect the academic performance of CwPDs. In spite of this, school boards are expected to use the effective strategies such as; early identification of academic progress, as well as improving nutrition with the aim of improving academic performance and mitigating dropout rate of CwPDs. It was recommended that the Department of Education should provide on-going and in-service training for school boards to acquire skills needed to mitigate dropout of CwPDs in the mainstream schools. Furthermore, there is even a greater need for the equal involvement of all school boards members to implement the clear school-based disability policies.

Keywords: Collaboration, school boards, children with physical disabilities, mainstream schools, dropout rate.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my parents, the late 'M'e Alinah 'Mamotsabi and my father Ntate Nicholas Mothibeli Monyane for contributing to who I am today and instilling in me the importance of hope in life.

To my beloved wife: 'Mamonaheng Monyane who always believed in my work, with her words of wisdom "the sky is the limit". She is the main reason I was motivated to complete this research. Thank you for your love, continuous guidance, moral support and belief in my capabilities throughout the research project.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
CwPDs	Children with Physical Disabilities
DEB	Disability Equity Bill
DoE	Department of Education
EA	Education Act
EC	European Commission
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Information System
EU	European Union
FPE	Free Primary Education
GoL	Government of Lesotho
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IE	Inclusive Education
IEPs	Individual Educational Programmes
LNFOOD	Lesotho National Federation of Organizations of the Disabled
LSEN	Learners with Special Educational Needs
MDGSR	Millennium Development Goal Statistics Report
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
NCSR	Net Cohort Survival Rate
NCLBA	No Child Left Behind Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
SASA	South African Schools Act

SBM	School Based Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEN	Special Education Needs
SGBs	School Governing Bodies
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
USA	United State of America
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

“Disabled children are equally entitled to an exciting and brilliant future. We must see to it that we remove the obstacles, whether they stem from poor access to facilities; poor education; lack of transport; lack of funding or unavailability of equipment such as children’s wheelchairs. Only then will the rights of the disabled to equal opportunities become the reality.”

(President Nelson Mandela: First Annual Speech Wheelchair Sports Camp, 4 Dec 1995)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background to the study, research problem, research questions, the aims and the objectives of the study, rationale for conducting the study, two theoretical locations of the study which guide the investigations of the study, followed by the research design and methodology. It then presents the significance of the research, limitations of the study, and scope and delimitation of the study. It outlines all the chapters of the entire research study and the clarification of operational key concepts.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Ever since the proclamation, ‘Every individual has a right to education’, was made in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights released in 1948, there has been a need for countries around the world to make education free, basic and compulsory to their citizens, without discrimination. This draws global attention to the fact that education is recognized as a fundamental human right, and an essential element every child should benefit regardless of his or her gender, race, color, age, physical ability or disability (Flora, 2015; Kabuta, 2014). Education is an essential tool to combat malnutrition and hunger (UNESCO, 2016). Many countries have ensured the provision of quality education for children with disabilities progressively from primary, high and tertiary education through national legislations, action plans and policies (Mosia, 2017). As part of the international community, Lesotho, a small

mountainous country surrounded by South Africa, is bound by the various global declarations, conventions and policy frameworks (Shale, 2015; Yamba, 2017; Kremte, 2019).

The Government of Lesotho (GoL), through the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), responded to the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, the Education for All (EFA) Goals in 1990, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action in 1994, and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities in 2008 (Mosia, 2017; Ministry of Education and Training, 2018). In 2000, the country implemented the Free Primary Education (FPE) policy, and developed a compulsory primary education law in 2010, to ensure that each disabled Mosotho child, accessed and completed a 7-year free, publicly funded, equitable quality primary cycle of education (UNESCO & UNICEF, 2015; Mosia, 2017). The policies were also directed towards addressing the needs of CWDs in the schools.

However, despite the Lesotho's milestone effort to meet its target in the area of proportion of children with disabilities (CWDs) who complete primary school education, there is a growing evidence that the sub-Saharan Africa region within which Lesotho is situated, is worst affected by a high dropout rate of primary school age children with physical disabilities (hereafter CwPDs), and the country is not an exception to this reality (Kremte, 2019; UNESCO, 2017; McLeod, 2014; UNESCO & UNICEF, 2015; Mateusi, 2011).

According to World Population Review (2020), the population of Lesotho is estimated at about 2.26 million. Of this, an approximate 3.7% (about 68,926 people) live with diverse forms of disabilities such as physical, visual, hearing, epilepsy and psychosocial disabilities (Shale, 2015). It is estimated that 2.1% of these are males and 1.6% are females (Lesotho Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Unfortunately, "this significant number of the population of CwPDs is side-lined and suffers discrimination in primary schools" (Kremte, 2019).

Consequently, the cumulative loss of 10% of CwPDs between the ages 6 to 10 occurs in education annually before children reach the end of the upper-primary cycle (grade 7) and this represents a serious decline in the Lesotho education system (Shale, 2015). Lesotho National Federation of Organizations of the Disabled (hereafter, LNFOD, 2016) reveals that although both physically disabled boys and girls are at risk of dropping out of primary schools, physically

disabled girls have a higher likelihood of dropping out of primary school than boys as a direct result of poor planning for CwPDs in Lesotho. The nature of dropout amongst CwPDs has escalated in primary schools and the EFA goals have hardly been attained in Lesotho's education (LNFOD, 2016; Flora, 2015).

According to Sebatane (2009), disability is considered as one of the contributing factors to Lesotho primary school dropout, causing a cycle of poverty and exclusion (Aguilar, 2017). A study by Mohlouoa (2014:6) also reiterates the point that, "...the lack of initial access to primary school for CwPDs means most of them are able to drop out of school." Some repeat grades until their families withdraw them from mainstream to special schools (Shale, 2015). The irony is that, CwPDs who end up dropping out of primary schools are able to miss some political, economic and social benefits such as a right to quality education due to lack of support in mainstream schools.

Lesotho's government has been criticised as focusing more on '*dumping*' CwPDs into regular primary schools in the name of inclusive education (IE) with less attention been paid to meeting their educational needs (Mateusi, Khoaeane & Naong, 2014). The FPE policy has not made education responsive to the needs of learners mainly CwPDs (Mosia, 2017; Ralebese, 2019). For example, due to the introduction of FPE, the influx of learners mainly CwPDs overstretched the education resources in primary schools. As a result, teaching and learning have been compromised in such a way that the academic performance of CwPDs is seriously affected in the primary schools.

However, the argument is that regular primary schools with school boards who are committed to a collaborative ethic for schools are the most effective means of mitigating dropout of CwPDs. Section 2(b) of the Lesotho Education Act of 2010 specifically underlines that the new role attached to school boards is to ensure that a child who is physically or mentally handicapped is given the special treatment, quality education and care required by his or her condition (Liphapang, 2015). This policy is geared towards transferring power to local school boards to be accountable to CwPDs' academic performance and reduce dropout rate of children with disabilities mainly CwPDs in regular school settings (Liphapang, 2015).

Liphapang (2015) argues that school boards' inputs are not sufficient to make schools work better and work with CwPDs' difficulties due to various challenges mediated by physical, social and political context. The irony is that school boards are expected to make the necessary changes and plan to solve many problems that CwPDs encounter in the schools, such as poverty (Aguilar, 2017), attending overcrowded classrooms, teacher/pupil ratio ranging from 1:55 to 1:80 and poor infrastructures with little or no resources (Save the Children, 2013).

Again, in many mainstream schools, CwPDs struggle because some classrooms are still accessed via stairs rather than ramps (Yamba, 2017; LNFOD, 2016). In other words, school boards' roles become overloaded to the extent that it becomes complicated to mitigate dropout of CwPDs in schools. Liphapang (2015) argues that there is a weak accountability relationship among school boards and the staff as well as students they serve. Again, teachers do not see school boards as leaders who are capable of enhancing CwPDs' future success (Kayumbu, 2017).

Moreover, for too long, the programmes and strategies have been employed to assist school leaders in mitigating dropout of learners in Lesotho schools, such as providing more teachers and textbooks, reforming the curriculum, to mention a few (Liphapang, 2015; Ralebese, 2019). However, none of the programmes was deemed effective as a long-term solution to this worldwide problem in primary schools, as uncountable CwPDs continued to dropout (UNESCO & UNICEF, 2015). Research done by Galetuke (2017:8) posits that, to reduce dropout of CwPDs in the regular schools, the formal training of the newly elected school boards is needed to ensure the provision of education support services and appropriate resources.

Khama (2014) concurs that schools need to develop policies that meet the demands of all learners including CwPDs. Research into school leadership enumerate that empowering schools through school boards is a very significant strategy for reducing dropout, removing inequality and discrimination, encouraging innovation, and increasing efficiency in education system (Liphapang, 2015; Galetuke, 2017; Waslander, Pater & van der Weide, 2010). Some strategies include influencing teaching and learning, setting the vision, allocating the appropriate resources and establishing goals (Kayumbu, 2017:10). Mohangi (2015:70) suggests that collaborative decision making is also needed in the schools.

It should be noted that there is need for school boards to make a paradigm shift away from traditional focus on disability towards a social model (human rights model), where problems of CwPDs are everybody's responsibilities. In view of this, this present study, intends to explore the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. In this regard, an exploration of the collaborative school board roles should not be underestimated in terms of building cognitive ability, resilience, support systems (Williams & Bryan, 2013) and other positive factors that influence CwPDs in primary schools. This research study, therefore, comes at the right moment, as Lesotho is currently in the process of implementing national reforms by the year 2020.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The collaborative school board role in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities is very important in this study. The literature in the background to the study reflects a high rate of dropout of CwPDs between the ages 6 and 10, despite the presence of functional school boards in primary schools (Shale, 2015). These learners are hindered from succeeding in their academic work due to factors such as high poverty rate, poor infrastructure, shortage of teachers, inflexible curriculum and teaching methods, overcrowded classes, to mention a few. These dropouts frustrate families and the whole society, and put the right to Education for All (EFA) under a serious threat.

Looking at the school, the well-trusted disability policy oriented responses have been deemed ineffective to produce positive solutions to the problems in the schools, as a number of CwPDs, mainly girls, continue to drop out of primary schools and their voices remain unheard in primary schools (LNFOD, 2016; Flora, 2015). As a result, teaching and learning is compromised to such an extent that, the morale of primary school teachers and school boards declined and the academic performance of CwPDs has been negatively affected over the years.

School boards are required to work as a team in decision making in the school (Mohangi, 2015:70). School boards are also required to have formal training once they are elected, to ensure the provision of education support services and appropriate resources in the regular

schools (Galetuke, 2017:8). School boards are expected to mitigate dropout of CwPDs as part of their roles and responsibilities in schools that lack resources such as learning materials, classrooms, to mention a few. Again, teachers do not see school boards as leaders who are capable of enhancing CwPDs' future success. Due to all the factors mentioned above, school boards are blamed when CwPDs dropout under their leadership. What is painful is that, the experiences and knowledge of school boards in "primary schools" are unknown because their voices are still silent and unheard pertaining to mitigating dropouts in Lesotho primary schools. This study sought to understand and explore the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. The area lacks relevant previous research, and this is the gap that this research sought to fill. In order to find answers to the problem stated above, the following research questions were used:

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.3.1 The main research question:

- What are the collaborative roles of school boards in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools?

1.3.2 The sub-research questions are:

- What school boards perceive their role to be in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools?
- What strategies are used by school boards in the mitigation of dropout among children with physical disabilities?
- How do school board members create conditions conducive to academic performance of children with physical disabilities?

1.4 THE RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Aim of the study:

- To explore the collaborative roles of school boards in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study:

- To find out what school boards perceive their roles to be in the mitigation of dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools.
- To establish strategies used by school boards pertaining to the mitigation of dropout among children with physical disabilities.
- To investigate how school board members created conditions conducive to academic performance of children with physical disabilities.

1.5 RATIONALE TO THE STUDY

This empirical study emanates from my personal experiences as a parent, a citizen, a school board member for 8 years, and a specialist Life skills teacher for 17 years in Maseru district. I draw from teachers' complaints that there is a high rate of drop out of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs). I also noticed that most of CwPDs who drop out of primary schools end up roaming around the streets begging every day, while it is expected that, from grades 1 to grade 7, every disabled child should be in the classroom. This is strange because the government of Lesotho enacted the Education Act of 2010, which made primary education, not only free, but also compulsory.

I have observed that even though CwPDs spend most of their time in schools, they come from poor homes where their parents cannot afford to support them with food, school uniforms and other necessities. Galetuke (2017) highlights that school board roles and responsibilities are associated with children's learning outcomes in the school. This can only be real if all school board members work together as a team (MoET, 2018) and involve other relevant stakeholders such as parents and health professionals' in implementing strategies that can address the challenges CwPDs face in the school. The researcher was also concerned about the other intertwined factors such as lack of facilities, negative attitudes towards CwPDs, and insufficient support from the government; that put CwPDs under several traumatic experiences and hindered school boards from executing their roles in the schools.

There is a growing body of research on the challenges of school board members in supporting quality education in schools (Kayumbu, 2017). Although there is research on the challenges,

there is lack of research on the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among CwPDs in Lesotho primary schools, which is the focus of the study. This study sought to supplement findings from researchers such as Flora (2015) and Terhoeven (2009), who presented scant information on implementing strategies for reducing dropout rates of learners with disabilities in inclusive schools. Waititu (2013) says that CwPDs in integrated schools develop low self-esteem and lead to school drop-out or poor academic performance. Unfortunately, she says nothing about the role that school boards can play in addressing such challenges. Therefore, there is need for extensive research about the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among CwPDs in Lesotho primary schools.

1.6 THEORETICAL LOCATION OF THE STUDY

This study was underpinned by two theoretical frameworks, namely; Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic theory (1979) and Telford's collaborative leadership theory (1996).

1.6.1 Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic theory (1979)

Bronfenbrenner's eco-systemic theory (1979) of human development, later known as ecological system's theory, has recently been called '*bioecological systems theory*' to clarify that a child's own biology begins and is fueled in his or her primary environment (Kluits, 2017; Donald, Lazarus, Lolwana, 2010). This theory focuses on the interconnections and relationships between people and their physical environment (Kluits, 2017; Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 1997).

The ecological perspective shows that there is a series of nested systems fitted into one another (Kluits, 2017). The ecological system's theory proposes four levels namely; micro-, meso-, exo- and macrosystem (Kluits, 2017; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Visser, 2007; Khanare, 2008). In other words, in system theory, "the functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction between all parts" (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2002). This theory emphasizes that a child develops within the context of social relationships or environmental influences that have either a direct or an indirect influence on him or her (Kluits, 2017:52).

From the ecological perspective, the links between the school as a system and other systems such as immediate families, churches and community is vital when children have physical disabilities. In this study, schools are seen as social environments that can provide an efficient and effective education to CwPDs (Mohangi, 2015:68). Therefore, school board members (principals, teachers, parents, chiefs, school and the proprietors) significantly contribute to children with physical disabilities' growth and development. How school board members interact with each other and with other systems such as immediate families, peers, neighbors, churches and community influences CwPDs' development. Consequently, school boards have appropriate skills to mitigate dropout of CwPDs in the school. The eco-systemic theory will be explained in details in chapter two.

1.6.2 Telford's collaborative leadership theory (1996)

Over and above the eco-systemic theory, this study is also informed by the ideas of Telford's (1996) collaborative leadership theory, developed within the framework of democratic discourse for schools and school leadership/improvement to support the needs of learners (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988; Serpieri & Vatrella, 2017). This theory has evolved from four elements in the environment where a child survives namely; political, structural, human resource and symbolic element (Serpieri & Vatrella, 2017). Although this theory is explained in more detail in the literature review chapter, it is important to note here that Telford (1996) argues that the democratic process and leadership is actively cultivated by the leaders (school boards or principals), teachers, students and parent leaders.

This theory reflects that roles and responsibilities are shared through "*agreed-upon political behavior*" in the school (Serpieri and Vatrella, 2017; Mohangi & Archer, 2015). The theory is based on the belief that coordination and planning of internal and well-defined policies and programs and the support of staff cohesion are made through clear, well communicated and shared processes which promote a positive school climate in the school (Grimaldi & Serpieri, 2013:78). According to Vatrella (2015) and Harris (2014), "...frank, open and frequent communications prevail in respect and valuing for opinions of others in the schools."

Being an educational psychologist researcher, I am aware that the roles and responsibilities of mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities should be shared through clear communication by all members in the school. The assumption is that, in many schools, the power to address challenges like prevalent dropout, has been decentralized to school board. Collaborative leadership is suitable as the most powerful thing that school boards can do to shift away from the traditional approach of support to a new social model of support, where everybody is responsible for the learners' problems (Mohangi, 2015). Therefore, well-defined policies and programs and staff cohesions should be top priority in the school in order to promote a positive school climate. The collaborative leadership theory is explained further in chapter two.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.7.1 Research paradigm

This study adopted the interpretive paradigm (Creswell, 2014), which is a qualitative research approach, to explore collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in primary schools. The interpretive paradigm was adopted in the study because it allowed the researcher to focus on the meaning (Nieuwenhuis, 2016), which is aimed at understanding participants' experiences and circumstances. This is in line with Nene (2017) who points out that, "...interpretive paradigm aims to understand the subjective world of human experiences." The assumption in interpretive paradigm is that reality is socially constructed (Nene, 2017:37), as people give out their own interpretation about the phenomenon and develop their own personal experiences. Biggam (2015) observes that interpretive research paradigm is both context and time dependant. This is consistent with this study where all the interpretations depended on when they were made and the context in which they were made. This is further explained in chapter three.

1.7.2 Research Approach

This study used the qualitative approach for exploring collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. Morgan

(2014:47) regards qualitative research as typically subjective, inductive and contextual. This is because qualitative approach allows the researcher to interact with participants and narrate the story of participants' experiences in their own words (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). The qualitative research approach is situated at the heart of this research project because it allows the researcher to study things in the natural settings rather than in controlled situations (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Nieuwenhuis (2016) further highlights that qualitative research refers to "...methodology which allows the researcher to understand the social and cultural contexts and processes that can shape human behavior patterns."

Creswell (2015) reveals that "...qualitative research is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or a group ascribe to a social or human problem." For this reason, qualitative researchers commonly use numerous data gathering techniques such as interviews, focus groups and observations (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). For the study, individual interviews were selected to get insights through thematic data analysis. These allowed school boards to talk about how they could create conditions conducive for the academic performance of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in the primary schools.

1.7.3 Research design

According to Mohlouoa (2014), research design is defined as logic, procedure or master plan that gives light about how research should be conducted. In this study, the researcher adopted a case study design, which Creswell (2014) says is usually used in qualitative research. It is used to understand the phenomenon in depth, regardless of number of sites or participants of the study. Yazan (2015) also emphasizes that "...a case study is a qualitative study in which a researcher explores in-depth social behavior, contemporary bounded system or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time." The study was exploratory, as it sought to explore the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools.

1.7.4 Data collection methods

1.7.4.1 Individual interviews

In this study, data were collected through semi-structured individual interviews with school board members, which allowed open ended responses. This qualitative data collection method was used to collect in-depth data regarding the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among CwPDs. Nieuwenhuis (2016) correctly observes that “...as naturalistic conversations between an interviewer and participants, interviews provide rich description of practices and experiences from the participants’ perspectives.” This is in line with the views of Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012:134) who posit that the semi-structured individual interviews are used to gain participants’ perceptions.

In this study, the open-ended questions allowed flexibility and enabled the researcher to probe for more information from the school board members and to clarify misunderstandings (Creswell, 2014). Mosia (2017) concurs that the guiding questions and open-ended questions are asked to elicit more data from the participants. The researcher was the interviewer and maintained a neutral stance during his interaction with the participants. In addition, the second phase of data generation was through taking ‘pictures’ from the environment on the 11th of May 2019 which took one hour in order to provide insight about the physical environment of CwPDs. This was explained further in chapter three.

1.7.4.2 Piloting

In a study conducted by Liphapang (2015), piloting is defined as a preliminary research conducted prior to the main study to see the weaknesses in instrumentation, and to test the functionality of the research instrument (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014). In this study, the researcher chose the primary school which was very close to home. This allowed the researcher to make estimations about the length of time needed to conduct the interviews. As articulated by Matalasi in (2000:15), piloting is important in removing the mistakes out of the instrument. The findings of the pilot study made the researcher aware of some mistakes in design and instrumentation and also made sure that important points were covered. For instance, in

interviewing the parents and the teachers as part of school board members, there were repeated questions which the researcher corrected. This process happened until the researcher was very content with the interview questions.

1.7.5 Selection of research participants

The participants for this study were selected through purposeful sampling in two primary schools located in St Bernadette centre in Maseru district Lesotho. Creswell (2013) affirms that most of the researchers select participants and locations to study or have a complete understanding of central phenomenon. The researcher chose these primary schools because they enrolled children with physical disabilities and they had experience of giving care and support to the disabled children. These two primary schools were also convenient for the researcher (Nene, 2017), since they were situated in the same district where he stayed. The total sample consisted of 10 members of school boards: 2 principals, 2 parents, 2 representatives from church (proprietor), 2 chiefs and 2 teachers from two primary schools who responded to in-depth interviews.

1.7.6 Data analysis

According to Mohlouoa (2014:60), data analysis is the period when a great amount of data is analyzed, summarized and interpreted in a qualitative study. This study employed thematic data analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2014), "...thematic analysis is a method that systematically identifies, organizes, and offers insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set." The researcher found thematic analysis appropriate for this study because it suited the theoretical perspectives and research interests. Braun and Clarke (2013), Kipfer (2015), Creswell (2014) and Mouton (2008) found the following features of thematic analysis to be significant when generating qualitative data analysis: (1) familiarization with data, (2) forming primary codes, (3) searching for theme codes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) describing and giving names to themes when producing the final report.

In this study, the researcher interviewed 10 participants individually. After the interview was transcribed and thoroughly checked, data was analyzed using the steps indicated by Creswell

(2009), Leedy and Ormrod (2010). The researcher listened to the voice recorded material several times and transcribed data. The researcher organized, prepared data for analysis, re-read through the data, and started detailed analysis with coding process. Furthermore, the coding process was used to generate description of themes. This is in line with Braun and Clarke's (2014) observation that "...themes are important in revealing what is essential about the data that relates to the research question." The researcher made reflections on the findings of the data and compared them with the literature. Similar topics were clustered together. The researcher then asked for help from a colleague who was fluent in English and Sesotho to make thorough check and editing of the translations. Data were converted into text and were analyzed in codes or themes and categories in order to get in-depth perspectives of the participants in regard to the topic.

Data were compared to create themes, which were further categorized into topics. The researcher also compared the topics in the categories. In accordance with McMillan and Schumacher (2010), the following strategies were used to verify for trustworthiness; allowing participants to answer in their own language or words, accurately recording the participants' responses, and allowing colleagues to check and made verifications on data collected. (See more details in chapter three & four).

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The findings from a study of this nature are beneficial to the Department of Education and educational psychology professionals as they provide a better understanding of the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout of CwPDs. This study aimed to establish the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropouts of children with physical disabilities in primary schools. Schools can use the results of the study to establish the dropout prevention programs and strategies in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders. These programs can be utilized to bridge the gap between homes and schools. This implies that school boards have a significant role to play towards the provision of high quality education to children with disabilities (CWDs) in the schools (Galetuke, 2017; Liphapang, 2015). School board members

can also use this study as a tool to energize efforts towards transformation of primary schools and guarantee that CwPDs have opportunity to reach their full potentials.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The participants were selected for the purpose of this research study from two primary schools in Maseru District, Lesotho and the sample cannot be generalized to all the greater Lesotho schools. The interviews were delayed by some of the participants who were not ready for the interviews to commence, and the researcher had to be patient until such participants were ready. Some intended participants left the place which had been decided as the meeting place without the researcher's knowledge. The research was conducted within time constraint. For instance, data were gathered after school hours and participants were tired.

1.10 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Even though the participants of this research were school boards, this research incorporated leadership and management and had Psychology of Education slant. This research project was limited to some two selected primary schools in St Bernadette centre in Maseru district within different constituencies.

1.11 RESEARCH AREA

The study took place in schools which were in rural and urban areas of Maseru district in Lesotho. The researcher wanted to identify the strategies that school boards used in mitigating dropout of CwPDs in different primary schools which are in different areas.

1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Kluits (2017:14) the ethical issues that are significant throughout the qualitative research are: voluntary participation, avoidance of harm, informed consent, compensation confidentiality, and publication of findings.

1.12.1 Ethical clearance

The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the University of the Free State before conducting the research. The ethical committee assessed the proposal of the intended research study. Permission was obtained from the Ministry of Education and Training, the district office, and selected school boards, before the research was undertaken. The reason for asking permission was because research had to be conducted in an ethical manner.

1.12.2 Informed consent

The researcher ensured that informed consent forms were given to all participants to give their voluntary consent to participate in the study project. Drisco (2013:30) indicates that terminology must be clear and understandable. Pseudonyms for the schools and participants were utilized when reporting the findings to maintain confidentiality for the participants' protection (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The researcher wanted to hear whether the consent was granted.

1.12.3 Voluntary participation

Rubin and Babbie (2005:71) state that the research participation of the participants should always be voluntary. Participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to.

1.13 CLARIFICATION OF OPERATIONAL KEY CONCEPTS

Collaborative roles: Collaborative roles are the shared roles that ensure all members of a group take a sense of ownership in shared visions and goals (Galetuke, 2017).

Drop-out Rate: This is a process of leaving education system without having learnt basic life skills. Dropout rate can either be leaving school before passing any recognized exams or leaving unqualified during school year (Flora, 2015:18).

School Board: According to Galetuke (2017), school governing bodies (hereafter SGB)/school boards, are the democratically-elected bodies mandated to govern the public schools.

Physical disability: Physical disability refers to all forms of disabilities that can limit a person's physical capabilities such as neurological problems, orthopedic difficulties and health impairments (Kluits, 2017; Smith & Kruger, 2005; Onderi & Makori, 2013). Note: the terms physical disability and physical impairment are used interchangeably in the study.

Mainstream: This is the regular, standard and ordinary school which can provide access to diverse learners without giving required care and support to LSEN. Mainstream is about 'fitting' learners into a particular kind of system. Mainstream focuses on changes that need to take place in learners so that they can fit in a normal classroom routine (MoET, 2018:2).

Special school: This refers to a school that is built and organized to provide educational services to learners with one or multiple profound/severe disabilities that cannot be accommodated in a regular school (MoET, 2018:2).

Inclusive education: This is an educational provision that ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs (SEN), receive appropriate educational services and multiple opportunities in their neighborhood schools (Flora, 2015).

1.14 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 - Background of the study:

It provided a brief introduction and background, statement of the problem, research questions, aims and objectives, the rationale for the study supported by preliminary literature review. It also presented the theoretical framework, research problems, research aims and objectives, overview of research designs and methodology, limitations, delimitation of the study, ethical considerations, and definition of terms and a brief summary of the study.

Chapter 2 - Review of the related literature:

The researcher provides the literature review of the contributions of other scholars to position his own work amongst various sources. The researcher reviews literature on the definition of dropout, different onsets of physical disabilities, physical disability dropout, roles of school boards, strategies of mitigating dropout rate, conditions suitable to academic performance, policies and legislations used, challenges faced by school boards in executing their roles, an overview of Lesotho national disability policies and legislations and the two theoretical frameworks.

Chapter 3 –Research design and methodology:

It explores the research design, the research methodology, sampling, data collection strategies and analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4–Dataanalysis and interpretation:

It presents the findings of the research and the description of two schools that participated, the participating sample and discussion of the findings.

Chapter 5 – Discussion of findings, conclusion and recommendations:

This chapter is an overview of the study, the discussion of findings, conclusion and recommendations for collaborative strategies that can be used by the school board in mitigating dropout rate of CwPDs in primary schools.

1.15 CONCLUSION

In the conclusion to study, the researcher discussed the introduction and background of the study to set the context for the study. This was further clarified by statement of problem and research questions which clarified the focus of the study. Thereafter, the primary research aim and the three secondary research objectives were formulated. The rationale for the choice of qualitative research method used in this research was provided. The researcher identified and briefly explained the nature of the underlying paradigm, research design and methodology or methods selected for the study. The relevant theoretical frameworks that guided the study were presented. The values of the study, limitations and delimitation of the study, ethical consideration, concepts definition and layout of chapters were briefly discussed. In the next chapter, the literature review and theoretical framework are discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“...We know how important basic education is to a nation’s current and future prosperity, development and growth.”

(South Africa Minister, Angie Motshekga: Basic Education Budget Vote, 6 May 2015)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the background of the study. Therefore, this chapter presents literature on collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. It, inter alia, defines the concept “physical disability, and provides the statistics on physical disabilities’ dropout internationally, continentally and in Lesotho. It also discusses literature on the roles of school boards in the mainstream schools and strategies that can be used in the mitigation of dropouts among CwPDs, and in the creation of conditions conducive to academic performance. The problems encountered by school boards in executing their roles, and the policies and initiatives meant to assess and mitigate dropout rates are also discussed. The literature review also provides an in-depth review of the two theoretical frameworks in which this research is grounded. The chapter ends up with a conclusion.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF “PHYSICAL DISABILITY”

2.2.1 The meaning of ‘physical disability’

According to Rafoneke (2017:30), physical disability is a major public health concern worldwide. To quote MoET (2018:2), “Physical disability is a difficulty which limits performance of particular tasks because of some physical or health problems.” Kabuta (2014:15) also makes the point that the term ‘physical disability’ is broad and has been known to cover all various forms of disabilities and health issues, including both acquired and congenital disabilities that can limit an individual’s physical capabilities. Erickson and Lee (2008) indicate that physical disability is

any long-lasting condition that limits physical activities including climbing stairs, walking, reaching or lifting.

Flora (2015) notes that physical disability is a combination of three major groups such as health impairments, orthopedic and neurological difficulties which are the conditions that make it hard for a child to perform tasks and interact freely in the school. Kluits (2017) says physical disability refers to all the conditions that affect the ability to move, to manipulate the physical environment, to interact fully or to communicate easily. It is important to take into consideration that disability is part of physical disability but is not limited to visual and hearing impairments, spinal cord injuries and muscular dystrophy. It is also important to know about the onsets of physical disability.

2.2.2 Different onsets of physical disability

There are many reasons why a child may become physically disabled (Rafoneke, 2017). Careerforce (2015) says physical disability is either acquired before birth, during birth or after birth. The cause of physical disabilities can be divided into two major categories; hereditary/congenital and environmental/acquired. Bogart (2014:6) says that congenital and acquired disability can differ depending on the way children incorporate their physical disability into their self-confidence or self-concept.

According to Careerforce (2015), physical disability may occur before birth as a result of the conditions such as influenza, maternal rubella or exposure to x-rays. Recent studies have shown that congenital disability may include physical disability which occurs during birth as a result of heredity, prolonged labour or lack of oxygen (Kluitz, 2017; Kabuta, 2014; Careerforce, 2015). Acquired disability would include any physical disability that has been acquired after birth as a result of head injuries, very high fever, or complication of infectious diseases such as meningitis, leprosy and poliomyelitis, or of physical disabilities resulting from accidents (Careerforce, 2015:9; PACER, 2004:1).

Stone (2005:123) argues that, in most cases, children acquire physical disabilities at a later stage in their lives often find it difficult to cope in school than those who were born with

physical disabilities. Consequently, they make the decision to drop out. Power and Dell Orto (2004:56) are of the opinion that CwPDs who acquire disability in their life may struggle when trying to make meaning of the school environment. From what the authors say about physical disability, it is clear that children may be born with disabilities, develop disabilities or be involved in accidents that leave them with different forms of physical disabilities. This research concentrates on exploring collaborative school board roles in mitigating the dropout of children with congenital as well as acquired physical disabilities.

2.3 STATISTICS ON PHYSICAL DISABILITIES' DROPOUT

2.3.1 Physical disability dropout worldwide

According to World Health Organization (WHO) (2011), an estimated 15% of the world's population (around 700 million people) is living with various forms of disabilities. Out of the 72 million primary age children that are out of school worldwide, one third have physical disabilities (WHO, 2011; Flora, 2015). In United States of America (U.S.A), an estimated 13% of all CWDs aged 6-21 and from low-income and single-parent families exited schools by dropping out in 2008 (Mosia, 2017; Martha, Thurlow & Johnson, 2011).

In 2016, the average primary school CwPDs dropout rate in USA was 6.6%, in contrasting with 6.4% in 2008, and this was twice as high as in countries such as Italy, Norway, Iceland and Canada (Kraus, Lauer, Coleman & Houtenville, 2018). This number is expected to double by 2050 (UNESCO, 2017). Hall's (2008) study found that Latin American and the Caribbean region had the third-highest regional dropout of CwPDs on average, for Hispanic, Black and Native Americans. On the contrary, Finland had a very small drop-out percentage of CwPDs, of less than 0.5% compared to U.S.A, and performed better than other European Union (EU) countries (Eurostat, 2015).

According to United Nations (2018), in data analyzed in various developed countries in Europe and Southern Asia in 2017, 47% of more than 30 000 education facilities such as wheelchairs were available in schools for CwPDs. This shows that more countries are trying by all means to remove barriers and address bottlenecks caused by disability. Additionally, United Nations

(2018) reports that in 2017, 88% of 102 countries made progress in implementing laws or policies protecting the right of CwPDs to receive education.

It is surprising that physical disability dropout rate significantly escalates in a time when countries in the world have policies which fully support inclusive education and programmes that combat discriminatory attitudes internationally, than in the 1970s. For example, the USA has generally promulgated the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) Public Law 107-110 but drop out of CwPDs still exists. A study by Flora (2015) shows that a high number of CwPDs is still placed and isolated in special schools in countries such as Denmark despite being a pioneer in terms of policies such as “*Education for All*”. In India and other societies in Asia, disability is considered to be the bad luck or punishment from God because of *karma* practice (Kluits, 2017; United Nations, 2018). Looking at how high dropout rate among CwPDs is in the countries such as USA, it is very clear that more needs to be done to curb it.

2.3.2 Physical disability’ dropout in sub-Saharan African countries

In terms of physical disability dropout in sub-Saharan Africa, UNESCO (2017) and UNICEF (2015) reveal that about 58 million children, including CwPDs of primary school age (6 to 11 years), are out of school, and dropout escalated from 40% to 42% in 2009. It was established that this region has the highest rates of CwPDs who are discriminated and excluded (UNESCO, 2017). According to United Nations (2018), in countries such as Colombia, Maldives, Uganda and Yemen, CwPDs are two to three times higher than children without disabilities. In these countries, the gap is not as wide as in Cambodia where CwPDs are eight times likely to be out of school as compared to their peers without disabilities (United Nations, 2018).

A report by Global Partnership for Education (hereafter, GPE) (2018:12) reveals that the prevalence of physical disability and dropout rate of CwPDs seemed to be highest in countries affected by conflict and fragility. For instance, in Chad, after the end of 2010 civil war, as in many other countries, the prevalence of physical disability increased (GPE, 2018:18). Up to 65% of Chadian school age CwPDs dropped out of schools and approximately 18% of CwPDs were in primary schools (UNESCO, 2015). This means that many CwPDs to drop-out of schools and

learning was compromised. According to GPE (2018:17), in Haiti, the prevalence of physical disability and dropout got high after 250 000 were injured by earthquake. An earthquake also seriously injured 23 000 people in Nepal in 2015 (GPE, 2018:24).

The South African census of 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2014:8) shows that, of 186 850 people with disabilities, 49% of CwPDs lived in the Western Cape Province in 2001. A study by Ben-David (2011:95) posits that the majority of CwPDs receive little or no education in South Africa, mostly in rural areas. Evidence from many studies further revealed that being physically disabled doubles the chance of having never attended school (Kabuta, 2014; Sebatane, 2009; UNESCO, 2015), and those who are already enrolled or start school are at risk of disengaging from school mostly in Africa.

In line with UNICEF's (2015) and United Nations' (2018) findings, it was found that many CwPDs suffered because of the curtailment of donor funds or disability grants in developing countries such as Madagascar and Ethiopia. Due to unmet needs, CwPDs made decisions to dropout of primary schools (United Nations, 2018). The prevalent dropout occasioned by physical disability calls for urgent action for schools in many African countries to rise up and mitigate various forms of discriminations that CwPDs face.

2.3.3 Physical disability' dropout in Lesotho

According to the Millennium Development Goal report (2015:17), in Lesotho, grade repetition and dropout of CwPDs occurs most often in the 4th grade, with as many as 14.5% of enrolled CwPDs not continuing to grade 5, and 5.7% was dropping out in 2011. Yamba (2017) and Mohlouoa (2014) note that a serious fall of 1.2% of CwPDs was seen from 2011 and 2012 implying a serious decline in Net Cohort Survival Rate (NCSR). Mohlouoa (2014) further says that, compared to other forms of disabilities, only a proportion of 1, 246 CwPDs were enrolled in primary schools from grade 1 to grade 7 in 2014. This implies that physical disability dropout has continued to be a major concern in Lesotho.

According to Shale (2015) and Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (2008), out of 424 855 primary age pupils in Lesotho, an estimated 5.2% (22 233) have different forms of disabilities.

Physical disabilities may prevent the learners from engaging in learning, and learning breakdown occurs when CwPDs' self-concept is low. Rafoneke (2017) and Shakespeare (2006) argue that physical disability dropout occurs due to lack of self-acceptance. This means CwPDs require a lot of emotional support from the school.

The tragedy is that many of these CwPDs drop out of primary schools before transitioning to grade 8 (LNFOD, 2016) and others stay at home with no support services. However, Lesotho has a very limited coordinated disability database to show statistics of persons with disabilities, particularly CwPDs who drop out (Shale, 2015). In other words, due to limited data of CwPDs in Lesotho, their invisibility in the education system is perpetuated and it becomes hard to make evidence-based plans for their needs in schools.

The United Nations (2018:89) observes that "...the collection of data is important to governments to change attitudes towards children with disabilities." Many countries are making progress in collecting disability data through Education Management Information System (EMIS) (United Nations, 2018). Lesotho recognizes physical disability dropout as a cross-cutting issue. In order to overcome some of the challenges that CwPDs are facing, there is need for more than just laws or policies, but the school board's paradigm shift to collaboration.

2.3.3.1 The challenges faced by children with physical disabilities

Being physically disabled is a reality for many children in many Lesotho primary schools. Children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) are sent to school to learn, and the challenges they face have to be addressed by the school. The reasons for physical disability dropout in Lesotho are multifaceted and complex. Many of the challenges facing CwPDs are disability, truancy, poor academic performance, social factors such as HIV/AIDS and poverty, lack of educational opportunities and negative attitude towards physical disability, particularly in rural areas of Lesotho (Shale, 2015; LNFOD, 2016). Other challenges that put CwPDs 'at risk' of dropping out include, shortage of teaching and learning materials, overcrowded classrooms and unqualified teachers (Mosia, 2017). Some of the challenges will be discussed as identified in the Lesotho context.

Studies indicated that HIV/AIDS pandemic has resulted in a high number of physical disability dropouts due to children having lost one or both parents (Yamba, 2017; LNFOD, 2016; Shale, 2015; Khama, 2014; Hamutenya, 2013; Shumane, 2009). Many CwPDs carry a shame, stigma and community isolation when their parents die due to HIV and AIDS-related diseases (Nene, 2017; Ben David, 2011). Due to rejection, CwPDs experience a feeling of inferiority, helplessness and lack of self-esteem. This has implications for CwPDs' school attendance.

Most CwPDs live below the level of poverty in Lesotho. Due to poor socio-economic status of parents, vulnerable children, including CwPDs do not have food and school uniforms. These children are ridiculed by others until they think of quitting. Nene (2017) observes that children who are born in conditions of poverty are more likely to suffer inadequate health care, malnutrition and they struggle to succeed at school. Mosia (2017) and Ralejoe (2016) pointed out that poverty and disability correlate with each other and are intertwined or interwoven.

The Basotho have a culture that says hunger sabotages progress in any work and one has to have something to eat in order to do a proper job (*Tsie e fofa ka mokota*) (Ralejoe, 2016). Poverty in Lesotho has a profound impact on CwPDs' attendance at school and it has been identified as a major challenge for CwPDs to dropout of primary schools. Drop out among CwPDs as a result of poverty needs a visionary and collaborative school board whose vision is embedded in the principles of inclusive education to curb it.

Evidence shows that infrastructure restricts CwPDs' access to quality education as most of them walk long distances to get to school (MoET, 2018:12). Additionally, a related challenge is that most primary schools are inaccessible for CwPDs, as there are neither adapted toilets nor ramps designed for assisting CwPDs to move easily from one level of school building to another. As a result, CwPDs are assisted by their fellow students. According to Wills (2015), under-resourced primary schools tend to be difficult to manage, posing a great challenge to school boards and principals in running a well-functioning school.

2.4 THE ROLES OF SCHOOL BOARDS IN MITIGATING DROPOUT AMONG CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES (CwPDs)

Literature is explicit on the pivotal roles and responsibilities that school boards ought to execute to address prevalent dropout of CwPDs who, Zaretsky, Moreau and Faircloth (2008) indicate, are often marginalized in regular schools. Section 2 (b) of the Lesotho Education Act (2010) highlights the roles of school board members as follows:

- To ensure that the physically or mentally handicapped children are provided with the special treatment, education and care required by their conditions.
- To ensure that learners, including CwPDs are free from any form of discrimination and are availed all educational opportunities provided at school.
- To promote integration of learners with special educational needs (LSEN) into the regular school system at all levels.
- To ensure that the LSEN are given the opportunities and facilities to enable them to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy, normal manner and in the conditions of freedom and dignity.
- To liaise with a wide range of development partners to enhance service delivery and provide access to inclusive quality education.

2.4.1 Nurturing schools and supporting quality education

School boards play a significant role in nurturing schools and supporting quality education that benefits all children, including CwPDs (Cobb, 2015; Hooge & Honingh, 2014). According to section (20)1 of the SASA, every governing body/school board must promote the best interest of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school. Many of the school board roles for improving and nurturing schools are technical in nature (Sider, Maich & Morvan, 2017:24), such as ensuring appropriate human and technical resources for learners mainly CwPDs (Tshabalala, 2013). At same time, school boards should capitalize of community resources and make sure that the resources provided by the government such as assistive equipments and ‘support teachers’ are benefiting CwPDs (Galetuke, 2017; Liphapang, 2015; Save the Children, 2013). The school boards should

first monitor their local school budgets to be sure that the resources are used for the benefit of CwPDs and achievement of goals as envisaged by the Education Act. The school budgets should specify which resources the school must purchase for CwPDs in a year.

2.4.2 Supporting the principals and promoting learners' welfare

Most of the leadership roles of school board have to do with administrative work of supporting principals to foster a culture of inclusive schools (Gulsen & Gulenay, 2014). Thus, school boards are expected to supervise principals regularly to increase their efficiency in supporting learners, including CwPDs with special education needs. Marongwe, Sonn and Mashologu (2016) state that learners, mainly CwPDs, come to school with heavy burdens imposed by trauma, child-headed households, and lack of parental love and guidance. They need that gap to be filled in the school.

Botha (2013) advises that school boards should support the principal to ensure that CwPDs are not only provided with opportunities and facilities, but are also provided with counseling to enable them to bounce back from trauma, disappointments, and develop in a healthy and normal way. By doing so, CwPDs will develop physically, mentally, spiritually and socially in a dignified and normal manner. When CwPDs are accepted and helped in the school, they feel comfortable and enjoy the school environment.

Weybright, Caldwell, Xie, Wegner and Smith (2017) point that lack of motivation and 'learning interest' affects CwPDs' learning. This is because CwPDs struggle in the classrooms and fall behind academically. The lack of motivation can be characterized by CwPDs' unwillingness to initiate learning activities and their lack of commitment to learning (Terhoeven, 2009). Liphapang (2015) is of the opinion that the role of the school boards is to guarantee that CwPDs are motivated, and have a chance to reach their potentials in a child-centred learning environment. In addition, school boards are empowered to find the appropriate ways to enhance CwPDs' interests in and enthusiasm for school. School board members should work with the principals to ensure that CwPDs always feel at home so that meaningful learning takes place.

2.4.3 Empowering teachers

Save the Children (2013) stresses that another role of school boards is to encourage and support class teachers to serve CwPDs and empower them to handle the challenges they face when delivering services or reducing the likelihood of dropping of CwPDs in the school. Sider and Ashun (2013) affirm that if school boards provide teachers with opportunities to reflect their own experiences and of CwPDs, this can lead to the school success and changed practices. What makes the role of school boards more challenging is the fact that teachers do not consult or include school boards when they interact with and teach CwPDs. Howell (2016) and Wafula (2010) note that school leaders are the key variables in the school to model the way teachers engage CwPDs in the inclusive classroom.

Cameron (2016) and Skovdal (2015) point out that school board members that have strong collaboration with teachers provide different levels of support to meet the most urgent student needs. This means teachers and school boards should work together to make a choice of curriculum development and teaching materials that promote active learning and meet the most urgent student needs. MoET (2018: iv) affirms that reducing the likelihood of dropping out can only be possible through the efforts of many.

2.4.4 Policy development

Waters, Marzano and McNalty (2006) say "...school boards are the architects and drivers of school government policies that directly affect the quality inclusion of children with disabilities." In addition, Galetuke (2017:16) opines that the role of the school board is to decide on the admission policy which clearly explains the general requirements that need to be satisfied by all learners, including CwPDs. The school board members should be empowered to set a policy that makes it easy for parents of CwPDs to feel welcome to register their children at schools. Some studies are of the opinion that school policies can also be about the support of poor parents to get more funding for their children from the department (Marongwe et al., 2016; Nene, 2017), and this situation will increase the learners' enrolment and mitigate dropout of learners, especially CwPDs.

2.4.5 Promoting community participation

The school boards are the links between the community served by their school and the school (Nonyane, 2016). It is this school board role that shows that the mitigation of dropout among CwPDs requires community will. The school boards should organize workshops to train the members of the community to understand CwPDs' stages of development and support (Maphoke, 2017:49). Venville and Oliver (2015:48) suggest that CwPDs should always receive 'interventional, productive and purposeful thinking' learning support. Therefore, the good relationships between the school boards and the community members are essential in promoting higher levels of learning for CwPDs and ensuring that CwPDs receive appropriate care and learning support.

Further, working in a purposeful manner with all the school board members, a community is able to bring about change in school programmes and priorities. Martha et al. (2011) say that the community has to intervene in the programmes in decision making, monitoring the progress and problem solving. The community has information, materials, goods, skills and concerns to contribute in the school. The community leaders and the school boards should collectively take responsibility to engage in different self help projects and initiatives or give their own money, energy and time to assist CwPDs in the primary schools. It is also important for the community to transform or reform education, preserve and protect education facilities in order to enhance quality education.

As stated above, effective schools have school boards which are regarded as policymakers, motivators, decision makers and agents of change in education. During the process of mitigating dropout rates, the school boards must act as the supporters of positive learning, promote the best interest of CwPDs, and encourage inclusive climate within the schools. Waters et al. (2006) indicated that "The local school boards should take their roles seriously, as failure in any part of the system could cause an impediment on the focus on issues such as learners' academic performance and mitigation of dropout process in the school."

2.5 CREATING THE CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES (CwPDs)

For this study, creating conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs is a key approach to mitigating their dropout rate. School boards should provide a conducive, suitable and stimulating learning environment with basic needs like electricity, water and sanitation systems (Heystek, 2014) that will develop CwPDs' wellbeing (Bojuwoje, Moletsane, Stofile, Moolla & Sylvester, 2014). This responds to the call in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 4 (target 4.a) namely, "...building and upgrading education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all" (United Nations, 2018:73).

A study by Nene (2017) indicates that "...a safe school is a space that elevates students in order for them to improve their world and be contributing members of a democratic community." Some studies show that when learners' educational systems are transformed into a more resourceful, responsive and humane system, they feel included, safe and utilize opportunities of quality education in their local schools (Venville & Oliver, 2015; Sitienei & Mulambula, 2012). The school boards should create the school environment which will allow CwPDs to maneuver around, and have enough space to sit comfortably in an area free from distractions. Engelbrecht and Green (2001) say "A proper physical management procedures enable school boards and physical assistants to handle and lift CwPDs without hurting them."

Meintjes (2014) is also of the opinion that a school environment is safe and conducive for academic learning when all learners are exposed to protective resources in order to boost their resilience. A study by Kabuta (2014) suggested that the learning environment of CwPDs require facilities and new buildings to be constructed with federal funds, which is practiced in developed countries, to meet federal physical accessibility standards through the school board leadership. School boards should create a positive school environment where CwPDs experience respect, caring and encouragement from peers, parents and teachers. This environment can make CwPDs feel welcome and capable of succeeding in school.

According to Nene (2017), when learners feel connected to the healthy school environment, they socialize with others during break and lunch time hours. Maciver, Hunter, Adamson, Grayson, Forsyth and McLeod (2018) highlight that “School board should focus on the whole school approaches, physical and social aspects of the environments.” According to Global Annual Result Report (2018:44), in improving academic performance of CwPDs, the school board should provide creative learning activities including games and sports in order to build the healthy living styles of CwPDs. This means that most commonly planned academic programmes should focus more on fostering social cohesion, and developing life skills and personal development of CwPDs.

Liphapang (2015:33) affirms that school-based management (SBM) can also be used as a tool by school boards to provide an enabling environment within a framework of policies, standards and accountability. In other words, school boards as frontline providers should have a positive attitude towards education, as well as a greater authority and accountability on the academic learning of CwPDs in the school. Prinsloo (2016) is of the opinion that school boards should develop trust in parents, teachers and all learners, including CwPDs, as a fundamental way of keeping things running smoothly in the school.

According to Heystek (2014), “...the high level of trust, respect and co-operation among school board members and other stakeholders made Finnish education system successful.” School board members must not betray the trust of the staff and CwPDs in the school. Tanggaard (2013) and Goman (2014) opine that listening to the voices of staff, as well as CwPDs and knowing what is expected from them, can bring about change and trust in the school. Therefore, school board members are entrusted to establish a working model, trust and co-operative atmosphere for the school where CwPDs are included in support of quality education.

From the discussion above, CwPDs need a healthy and welcoming physical and social school environment at all times. In addition, Joneja (2016:13) says “CwPDs are unique and their academic performance is tied down to their preferences in learning.” and therefore, (Ford & Ihrke, 2015) stated that they need to be motivated and encouraged to improve their academic

performance by the school boards. Thus, the more CwPDs' resilience, self-concept, self-esteem and confidence are boosted, the less their chances to dropout from primary schools.

2.5.1 Inclusive schools as sites for provision of academic support in Lesotho

Recent studies have revealed that inclusive schools are the best environments mandated to ensure provision of academic support and improve academic performance for all learners including children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) at all school levels (Mosia, 2017; Kabuta, 2014; Flora, 2015; Yamba, 2017). Overall, in the Lesotho context, MoET (2018) states that for learners with special needs (LSEN), apart from home, the school is essential in giving opportunities that enable them to feel more encouraged, supported, access high-quality instruction and to experience success in academic learning.

Since 2000, more schools and the new school feeding programmes were established in Lesotho as a paradigm shift towards stimulating inclusive learning environment (Millennium Development Goals, 2015). Again, MoET (2018) emphasized that there was an increased school attendance of learners after school fees was abolished in Lesotho primary education. The fact that the environment was enabling, the self-concept of children with disabilities was positively boosted and their academic performance improved.

A study by King and Nkosi (2016) urged that primary schools under school board leadership to provide training for teachers to equip them with knowledge and skills in order to provide CwPDs with care and support. Galetuke (2017:74) argues that, to achieve the vision of care and support, school boards must have necessary knowledge and skills required to ensure that the needs of CwPDs are met in the school. Pittman (2014) opines that schools should also be the centers and supportive venues for the provision of counseling services and essential health education to psychosocially disturbed learners including CwPDs.

2.6 THE STRATEGIES FOR MITIGATING DROPOUT OF CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Historically, school boards and teachers have played a central role in the care and support of children with disabilities, well into their education (Galetuke, 2017). With some notable

exceptions, many studies have ignored effective strategies that school boards can implement in mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs). A study by Nonyane (2016) advocates that in order to reduce the dropout rate of children with disabilities (CWDs) in regular schools, a number of strategies should be adopted by the school boards including fostering staff development and strengthening the school's culture.

2.6.1 Appointment of qualified teachers

Flora (2015:22) asserts that schools are charged with myriad tasks, such as appointment of qualified teachers and helping the teachers to diversify the curriculum for all learners including children with physical disabilities (CwPDs). Such strategy responds to the call in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (4.c) namely, "...increase the supply of qualified teachers, through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries" (United Nations, 2018). Mariga and Phachaka (1993) say that a trained teacher can establish a working model and atmosphere for the class where CwPDs are included.

Galetuke (2017) notes that a qualified teacher can provide adaptations when needed, employ a variety of teaching styles and gives CwPDs extra time. Shober and Hartney (2014) indicate that a trained teacher can modify environment to the best of CwPDs' needs as a strategy to promote more participation and mitigate dropout in the school. Therefore, school boards should provide support for teachers (Sarma & Oliveras, 2013), recruit additional staff, conduct pre-service and in-service teacher training (GPE, 2018:34). School boards should not just appoint an ordinary teacher, but a specialist teacher who can change the classroom environment to help CwPDs and make sure that the number of CwPDs per class is appropriate so that learning can go on smoothly.

2.6.2 Enhance positive relationships

Studies found that the good relationships between the school board, principal, the staff and the learners would foster the inclusion of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) (Martha et al., 2011). When CwPDs are included, this will make them feel very valued into the mainstream class setting and never dropout. Kipfer (2015:22) observes that the main determinants of

mitigating dropout rate of CwPDs in schools are good relationships, collaboration and interventional programmes in the school. Flora (2015) substantiates that the good relationship means that everybody shares resources, experiences and accountability for CwPDs. Nonyane (2016) and Bryk (2010) concur that “...effective working together relationships rely on trust.” It is important for school board members to work together with relevant stakeholders to raise disability-awareness in the school and in the community (Heystek, 2014). The other children need to be made aware of physical disabilities to develop acceptance and respect.

2.6.3 Cooperative learning

Various studies have a view that cooperative learning is an instructional method that can provide opportunities for learners to work together in groups or in pairs to achieve common goals (Nene, 2017; Mateusi, 2011; Flora, 2015; Heward, 2006). A study by Nene (2017) further makes the point that vulnerable learners, including CwPDs, need to be supported academically by giving them a chance to read and work together as a team during school hours. For this reason, this effective strategy provides CwPDs to build positive relationships with their non-physically disabled peers (Mateusi, 2011). School boards should encourage teachers to use cooperative learning on a regular basis in order to assist CwPDs who are slow learners to interact with others who master skills needed to solve problems.

The researcher argues that cooperative learning can be used as a strategy in Lesotho primary schools to achieve common outcomes to CwPDs. It should be noted that cooperative learning focuses on collaboration in which all learners work together to solve problems, respect for self, others and environment. In overall, in cooperative learning CwPDs will develop social skills to succeed and be positive in life and this will develop self-esteem and confidence in CwPDs in the school (Mateusi, 2011:43). A study by Bryk (2010) shows that many South African schools that use cooperative learning systematically produce excellent results for several years.

2.6.4 Parental involvement in their children’s education

Maphoke (2017) states that school boards should engage parents in meetings so that they can speak about school related matters such as rules and information related to children with

disabilities. When parents of CwPDs take part in the school, it helps CwPDs to cope, develop reliance and have a positive perception about their school. A study by Trollope (2013) noted that parents struggle with the feeling of guilt when they have CwPDs. As a result, when they are involved in the school, they adjust to the feeling of guilt and help their CwPDs to cope in the school. Englund, Egeland and Collins (2008) argue that parental unemployment can contribute to dropout of learners including CwPDs in the school.

Rafoneke (2017) concurs that children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) from poor families manifest low sense of belonging and get absent from school more often because of poverty. According to MoET (2018:16) and MDG Final Status Report (2015:27), parents as primary care givers of children in the communities, are central to provision of quality education and functional learning. Section 6 (1) of Lesotho Education Act (2010) stipulates that the parent of a learner from the age of six to an age determined by the Minister shall enroll the learner, be they CwPDs, in an independent or public school (MoET, 2018:18).

A study by Kluits (2017:6) says that parents are responsible for giving care and guidance to children with physical disabilities (CwPDs). Galetuke (2017) says school boards should foster the spirit of volunteerism among parents, in the school. In doing so, CwPDs will be willing to participate in the school activities and feel motivated. In addition, parents as the caregivers of CwPDs, should communicate with the school about the disability history of their children, help children with homework, monitor their activities, and provide coaching services at home. In general, when parents help CwPDs with homework or other things, they are likely to have interest and love in learning.

2.6.5 Promoting access to assistive technology

United Nations (2018) outlines that promoting access to assistive technology for CwPDs should be done through the provision of grants, maintenance of assistive products, and free training on using them. In order to achieve this, the school boards have to implement assistive-technology-related policies in the school. United Nations (2018) further observes that assistive technology enables CwPDs to live independently. In other words, assistance technology can

play a critical role in achieving equalization of opportunity of CwPDs and enhancing productivity. Mateusi (2011) endorses the point that CwPDs in Lesotho have very slim chances of interacting with assistive technology such as hearing aids, wheelchairs, ICT devices, to mention a few.

Many studies have found that the use of assistive technology as additional support, advances inclusion of learners including CwPDs (Sitienei& Mulambula, 2012; Mosia, 2017; Mateusi, 2011). School boards should make sign language interpreters, adapted games, line readers, and mobile boards appropriate, accessible, adaptable, and acceptable to CwPDs in the school (Lim & Larson, 2010). This implies that school boards should work together with the government to supply CwPDs with assistive technology (electronic devices) in primary schools. It is clear that the use of computers can mediate CwPDs' learning in the school environment (United Nations, 2018). Although the electronic devices are costly, every primary school needs to have them to reduce barriers to access to schools (Flora, 2015). The rise in computer-based software can help CwPDs to construct their own learning in primary schools when they have access to internet. Again, when CwPDs have access to internet, it can motivate them to be connected to school and be less likely to drop out.

2.6.6 The support services for children with physical disabilities

According to Flora (2015:33), the support services such as, academic, community, administrative, parental and peer support are equally significant to mitigate dropout of CwPDs in inclusive settings. As a result, academic support may include showing positive attitude towards CwPDs, providing instructional materials and additional specialized help to CwPDs. Again, there should be a linkage between school board and the staff in order to provide the remedial instructions to CwPDs (Flora, 2015; Maciver, Hunter, Adamson, Grayson & McLeod, 2018). The support services depend on the existence of consultation and collaboration of all role players in the school.

MoET (2018:17) recommends that the school board should develop school-based policies and programmes that would promote inclusive education and rectify the deficiencies of CwPDs. In

addition, the programmes should help to empower teachers to develop strategies in dealing up with dropout of each individual learner (Flora, 2015; Terhoeven, 2009). In other words, school boards should work with class teachers to design and administer the Individual Educational Programme (IEP). A study by Maciver et al. (2018) found that, in Scotland, a programme such as ‘Additional Support Needs’ is used to record CwPDs who need extra support. Flora (2015) and Therefore, financial assistance is needed for school boards to change the lives of CwPDs in the primary schools.

2.7 THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY SCHOOL BOARDS IN EXECUTING THEIR ROLES

A study by Khama (2014) reveals that school boards fail to execute their roles and responsibilities to support CwPDs with quality education in rural areas. However, school boards feel stressed and over-loaded with many responsibilities. For example, “...their challenges include the fact that they have dual roles, dealing with many problems that involve teachers, parents, learners, and the school in general” (Ralebese, 2019; Kayumbu, 2017; Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013). The limited access to information about physical disability and undesirable working conditions are some of the barriers that hinder school board members’ abilities to perform their functions (Ralebese, 2019).

School board members’ low level of qualification is regarded as a challenge that hinders them from supporting quality education of CwPDs. The largest determinant of dropout rate of CwPDs in schools in terms of school boards’ characteristics is the professional training and experiences (Flora, 2015; Khama, 2014; Sinalumbu, 2013). Due to lack of training on support services and skills on how to mitigate dropout of CwPDs, school boards feel not qualified and equipped for their job. They should be motivated to act accordingly towards the realization of the needs of CwPDs in primary schools.

2.8 NATIONAL POLICIES AND INITIATIVES TO MITIGATE PHYSICAL DISABILITY DROPOUT

Several national and international policies provide a panorama for responding to issues confronting CwPDs. From a global perspective, the Salamanca Statement and framework for Action of 1994, education systems should be designed to take into account the wide diversity of

characteristics and needs of every child, including children with physical disabilities (CwPDs), in order to achieve an acceptable level of learning (Nene, 2017:16; UNESCO, 1994). Several policies and legislations play an important role in providing service delivery and addressing issues such as dropout of children with disabilities, and mainly CwPDs (Kluits 2017:62).

Lesotho has made a significant commitment to the right of education for children with disabilities under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in Article 13 and 23 (UNESCO, 2015). The country has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008 (Mosia, 2017:1). As a signatory of UN, Lesotho has laws and policies to protect, care, support and allow inclusion of children with disabilities. Although there are myriad policies in place within the sector of disabilities, clearly, CwPDs still decide to dropout at alarming rate (Kluits, 2017; Flora, 2015; Mosia, 2017; Waititu, 2013). Liphapang (2015:2) shows that despite the adoption of policies, school boards also seem to experience several bottlenecks in executing their roles due to various factors.

In addition, Mosia (2017:1) states that to date, many schools in Lesotho have buildings that are not designed to cater for full access of CwPDs. Kluits (2017:36) found that legislation and policies require appropriate facilities, budgetary allocations, monitoring tools and enough personnel in MoET with knowledge and expertise on disability issues. The discussions below are the initiatives relevant to the issues of CwPDs in Lesotho:

2.8.1 The National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy of 2011

The objective of the above policy is to strengthen people with disabilities' access to justice. The policy provides, among others, the upgrade of department of rehabilitation to administer services for people with disabilities in all the districts of Lesotho, to make sure that the services cater for diverse needs of people with disabilities, including CwPDs. The aim of this policy is to advocate implementation of prevailing health laws and other disability related laws (MDG Final Report, 2015; Mosia, 2017).

2.8.2 National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2012-2017

This policy has an article on the prevention of disability and assistance of persons with disability (PWDs) to lead healthy and productive lives. The aim is to conduct public education campaigns, to de-stigmatize disability at all levels. The plan was cognizant of the fact that the number of challenges which exclude vulnerable groups such as CwPDs from having access to justice, health, public buildings and other social services still exist (MDG Final report, 2015:27).

2.8.3 Disability equity bill [DEB] of 2017

The bill provides for the rights of people with disabilities and states that the minister responsible for social welfare shall take necessary steps to achieve the full realization of the right of people with disabilities (MoET, 2018; LNFOD, 2016). The researcher is of the opinion that this bill has some gaps, including lack of decentralization of power on collaborative school boards to execute their roles of mitigating dropout among CwPDs in Lesotho primary schools. In addition, to date, the country has not enacted the disability equity bill into disability-specific law, due to lack of political will on the part of government.

2.8.4 Education Act 2010

This policy is a key milestone in the development of education for all children including those with disabilities (MoET, 2018). As highlighted earlier, section 2(b) of the Lesotho Education Act 2010 outlines that teachers, school boards and the government must work together to ensure that as soon as circumstances permit, a learner who is physically or mentally handicapped is given the special treatment, education and care required by his or her condition (Ralebese, 2019).

2.8.5 Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy (LIEP) 2018

This new policy ensures the protection of the rights of children with disabilities to enrolment in regular or special schools. In addition, this policy reveals that the placement of learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN) should be done after the professionals have done proper

screening. Again, the LIEP was implemented based on child friendly schools' principles, and it intends to address the unpleasant elements of exclusion (MoET, 2018:3).

All the policies above have provided guidelines for rights-based response to the form of disabilities in Lesotho but challenges still remain. Although there are clear numerous policies in place within the disability sector, the gaps still remain. They include lack of national policy or internal policies on prevention of disability dropout in Lesotho. Furthermore, in some schools, school boards are ignorant about implementing disability policies. "The policies are not aligned to programmes of action for implementation, and monitoring tools are lacking" (Kluits, 2017:39).

The question that this empirical study pursued was whether there are any collaborative school board roles for mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. A study by Amy (2009:8) points out that school boards are faced with baggage of policies such as national policies, provincial policies and district policies to familiarize themselves with. Therefore, they should be in collaborative relationships to achieve more. The researcher argues that primary school boards should strengthen policies and programs that are based on collaboration with all partners in Lesotho primary schools.

2.9 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.9.1 Introduction

According to Mouton (2014), "...a theoretical framework in qualitative studies explains the relationships between the concepts used in the study." This study is informed by two theories namely; Bronfenbrenners' eco-systemic theory (1979) and Telford's collaborative leadership theory (1996). These two theories were the theoretical frameworks utilized by the researcher to offer an understanding about how collaborative school board roles can mitigate drop out of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in Lesotho primary schools.

2.9.2 Bronfenbrenners' eco-systemic theory

Urie Bronfenbrenner's eco-systemic theory (1979) of human development, later known as ecological system's theory, has recently been called '*bioecological systems theory*' to clarify that

a child's own biology begins and is fueled in his or her primary environment (Kluits, 2017; Donald et al., 2010). The ecological perspective reflects that there is a series of nested systems fitted into one another (Kluits, 2017:52). The ecological system's theory proposes four levels identified such as micro-, meso-, exo- and macro-systems (Kluits, 2017; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Visser, 2007; Khanare, 2008). A schematic plan of the ecosystem for children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) and a concentric structure is demonstrated in the figure below:

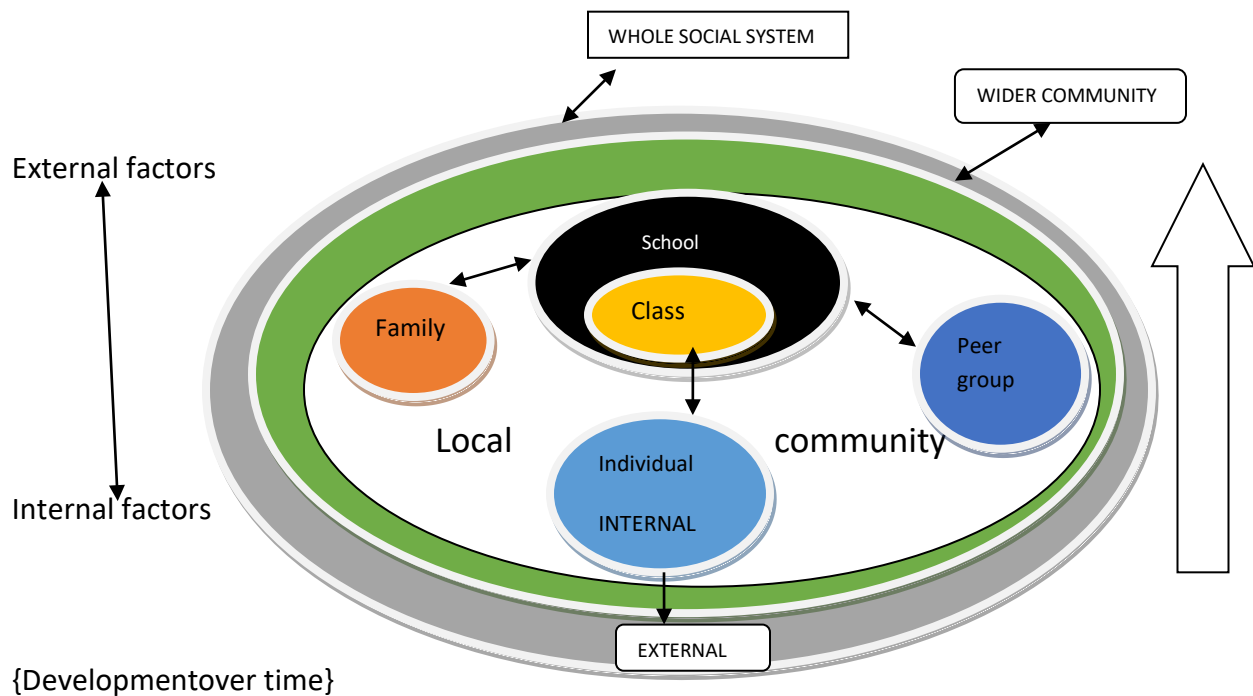


Figure 2.1: Levels of systems within the whole social context, the researcher-constructed diagram from (Donald et al., 2002: 47)

Figure 2.1 shows that in ecosystem theory, a child develops within the context of social relationships or environmental influences that have either a direct or an indirect influence on him or her (Kluits, 2017:52). Therefore, the focus of this theory is on the relationships and interdependence between the children's own environments. According to figure 2.1 above, the needs of a child have to be understood at different levels of the systems such as immediate family, environmental context and school context. The idea is that, if there can be any change in either family or school, this can affect the entire system and the child as well.

According to Donald et al. (2002), “The functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction between all parts.” For example, the **micro-system** consists of the intimate and closest system to a child e.g. family, school, peers and community (Donald et al., 1997; Kluits, 2017). Correa (2013:83) reiterates the point that **meso-system** refers to interconnection between the two or more of the developing child’s micro-systems. In **exo-system** (meaning outside), the child is not an active participant e.g. school board promotes workshops or training, implement inclusive policies and laws. The **macro-system** is influenced by the wider sub-cultural, social and legal context and it also encompasses other systems (Kluits, 2017:69; Donald, et al., 2010).

For the purpose of this research, the researcher used the ecological system’s theory as a theoretical framework or exploring the collaborative school board roles in mitigating the dropout among CwPDs in Lesotho primary schools. In this study, a school appears as a system which has various parts, such as management (school board), principal, teachers, learners as well as a curriculum. Similarly, the school board comprises the school principal, parents, teachers, gazette chief, proprietor, and sometimes a district councilor, and each member has a role to play (Liphapang, 2015; Galetuke, 2017).

The success and the functioning of the entire school depend on the skill, care and support enjoyed by each individual. Lesotho Education Act (2010, section 25) calls for school board members to realize their roles and be firm in setting the tone for the implementation of support in mainstream schools. Consequently, school boards should ensure that their facilities and services are accessible and both dignified accommodation and dropout mitigation processes are in place in the schools they manage and administrate.

2.9.3 Collaborative Leadership Theory

This study was also guided and supported by the Telford’s collaborative Leadership Theory, propagated from the idea of development of democratic *discourse of schools* and *school improvement* (Telford, 1996, Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988; Serpieri & Vatrella, 2017). Leadership refers to a process or ‘*a willful act*’, whereby a leader operates on the basis of

coalition and induces followers to act in a manner that will enhance the shared purposes, beliefs and goals (Serpieri & Vatrella, 2017). This theory focuses on the notion that “in the seemingly intractable conditions facing schools at the present time, collaborative culture would appear to be critical in meeting the attendant challenges of learners”(Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988).

In addition, it is a theory that reflects that the social interactions and relationships between school leaders, staff and parents within both social-economic and political environments are important in regulating the social goals and well-being of teachers and learners (Grimaldi & Serpieri, 2013; Serpieri & Vatrella, 2017).According to Telford (1996), the Collaborative Leadership Theory hinges on four elements, namely; structural, political, human resource and symbolic element. It realizes the importance of interconnection between these elements in the environment where a child survives (see Figure 2.2 below).

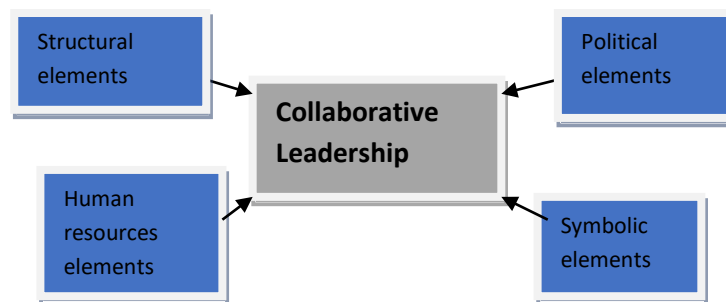


Figure 2.2: shows the elements of Collaborative Leadership by Telford (1996)

From figure 2.2 above, Telford (1996) draws attention to the relations between *political, human resource, structure and symbolic elements*. The political elements of collaborative leader behavior centre through negotiation, compromise, discussion and reaching agreement in the climate of openness (Grimaldi & Serpieri, 2013). This implies that disagreements are expected in the value-laden and social context of the school. *Human resource elements* assume that schools are institutions steeped in human needs. There is interplay between the individual and a school. Leaders should create a healthy learning environment of mutual acceptance, support and inclusive learning through professional development of cooperative sharing of staff

(teachers) experiences or cohesion, and a strong sense of community (Serpieri & Vatrella, 2017; Mohangi & Archer, 2015).

The structural elements of leadership refer to the leaders' structure decision-making process in the school to allow democratic processes to give parents, staff and students an opportunity to participate in roles, policy process, budgeting, planning, coordination, shared goals and visions (Telford, 1996 cited in Serpieri & Vatrella, 2017). On the other hand, Serpieri and Vatrella (2017) show that in *symbolic elements of collaboration*, the beliefs, attitudes, values, rituals, symbols and ceremonies should help learners to attain high quality education in the school. Therefore, all the elements are inextricably linked and interconnected.

For the purpose of this study, the most immediate relevance of this theory lies in sharing an understanding of the school, and that the collaboration, interaction, conception, shared meanings within, are important in mitigating dropout among CwPDs. School board members are the leaders and free to take a more constructive role in mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities. Vatrella (2015) and Harris (2014) note that effective communication of school board members is essential in the school as it involves goal setting, problem solving and decision making. The legitimate political process within the school should be considered as part of life not a hindrance or a disruption to the success of CwPDs' education attainments and it should be done in frank, open and frequent communication (Serpieri & Vatrella, 2017).

2.10 CONCLUSION

From the literature reviewed, it emerged that preventing CwPDs from dropping out of primary school in Lesotho is a difficult task which needs effective collaboration of school board members. The school board members need to construct intervention strategies and multi-disciplinary preventions to address the challenges faced by CwPDs. In the next chapter, the researcher discusses research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

“...school systems are reaching more children with disabilities but losing them due to inefficiencies, which lead to early school leaving. It is far more difficult and costly to reach children once they leave school than to address the barriers and bottlenecks in the systems.”

(UNESCO, 2012:1)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two, the researcher provided the review of literature in relation to the physical disability dropout, taking into consideration the collaborative school board roles and strategies for mitigating dropout of CwPDs in the mainstream schools. It also included the theoretical frameworks of the study, i.e. the ecosystem and collaborative leadership theory. Chapter three focuses on research design and methods used to conduct the study.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM

Research paradigm is a pattern and a set of beliefs and assumptions about the reality or worldview (Mosa, 2017). It is important in addressing beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between the knower and what is known (epistemology), and how data is collected (methodology) as the fundamental assumptions about faith (Galetuke, 2017). In this study, a research paradigm describes the way a researcher views research material and determines the research approach, and it was used in data collection, analysis and interpretation.

3.2.1 Interpretive paradigm

This study adopted the interpretive paradigm, which is a qualitative research approach to explore collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in primary schools. Interpretive researchers focus on meaning (Henning, 2011), as a way of understanding individual experiences and circumstances about their environment and others (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). In interpretive paradigm, social constructivists hold the crucial

assumption that access to reality is socially constructed through meanings and language (Nene, 2017), as individuals interpret their unique world or beliefs, and develop their own personal experiences.

The researcher discovered the truth and knowledge through listening carefully to what the participants said about the phenomenon during data gathering process, and made sense of meanings about the strategies they use to mitigate dropout of CwPDs in primary schools. Biggam (2015) says that interpretive research paradigm is both context and time dependent, as in this study. All the interpretations depend on when they are made and the context in which they are made and this helps the researcher to know how and when participants derived meaning from the phenomenon through a more interactive approach under the study, i.e. epistemology (Mosia, 2017).

3.2.2 Qualitative approach

This study used qualitative approach for collecting data and analyzing it. The researcher found the qualitative approach most suitable to use for the purpose of exploring collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. Morgan (2014:47) regards qualitative research to be typically subjective, inductive and contextual. This is in line with Creswell's (2015) idea that "most of the qualitative researches use an inductive approach because it allows the researcher to collect data and derives explanations from that data." It is the method that uses numerous data gathering techniques such as interviews, focus groups, and observations, to mention the few (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). The researcher selected in-depth semi-structured interviews to get insights on different understandings and perceptions of the participants.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Mohlouoa (2014), a research design is defined as logic, procedure or master plan that gives light about how research should be conducted. This study adopted a case study design to explore the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools.

3.3.1 Case study design

The case study was used in this research, which Yazan (2015) says is a qualitative design in which a researcher explores a real life, in-depth social behavior, contemporary bounded system or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of data. Yin (2014) concurs that a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in-depth and within its real-world context." Fletcher, Massis and De Nordqvist (2016) say that "case study can be developed using a limited number of data sources." A case study design was preferred in the study as it allowed the researcher to investigate and use a variety of sources, different types of data, and various research methods. Galetuke (2017) also says it entails a choice of what should be studied. The study used semi-structured interviews as data generation instruments. A case study also helps the researcher to gain deeper understanding of the subject and the context (Mosia, 2017). Kumar (2014:155) correctly points out that "the various data generation processes can make a single entry of the case study." Mosia (2017) noted that many researchers opt to use case study in order to produce extra and better theory.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODS

3.4.1 Research setting

MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) highlight that a research setting focuses on the selection of a site to locate individuals who are involved in the research or particular event. This section provides a detailed description of the geographical location of the study and profile of the schools.

3.4.1.1 Background of Maseru district

The Maseru district, where this study was conducted, is one of the ten districts and houses the capital city of Lesotho. This region is large, with an area of 4 279 square kilometers. This district is one of the western regions of the country and borders the Free State province of its neighbor South Africa (see **Annexure L**). It has both an urban and a large rural environment, where the

remote villages are known as hide-out for outlaws. According to MDG final report (2015), in 2017, there were 1478 registered primary schools in Lesotho, most of which were owned by churches and fewer owned by community, government and private entities. Of this number, most of the primary schools were found in Maseru district (MoET, 2018) and many children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) were enrolled in these schools. Physical access to schools in the remote areas is a major challenge for CwPDs as there is lacking technological support such as internet facilities, infrastructures to mention a few. In addition, many of the schools in Maseru district have established school boards legally in accordance with the Education Act 2010.

3.4.1.2 Selection of the schools

School A

This is a public primary school which was established in 1948 and the roll of the learners is 1 649. The classrooms are old and dilapidated. This school is situated in the Motimposo constituency closer to rural Sehlabeng (commonly known as Thuathe Hill) which is in a rural area of Berea district, and is about three kilometers away from Maseru urban. This is the large primary school which has the surprising 46 number of classroom teachers with few number classrooms. There are always two teachers in one classroom. Most of the parents are factory workers who earn pittance salary monthly. Most of them are dependents of donations given to their children by Government or Non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

School B

This is a public primary school located in the periphery of the urban Maseru, the capital town of Lesotho, near the main circle. Even though this school is owned by the church, but it is a very modern in terms of facilities. There are approximately 2 456 learners in the school and most of them are from the middle class community. The education is free and compulsory from grade 1 to 7 at the school. The areas that the researcher conducted the study were different but both were found in the same centre called St Bernadette centre. The choice of these two schools helped the researcher to evaluate how school boards in different areas (both urban and rural)

played their roles in mitigating dropout, and whether the challenges that could lead to dropout of children with physical disabilities in urban and rural primary schools could be treated in the same way or not, in terms of strategies used.

3.5 SAMPLING AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Sample is a subset from the large pool or population (Maphoke, 2017). The participants for this study were selected through purposeful sampling in two primary schools located in St Bernadette centre in Maseru district Lesotho. Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2014) say selection is done with particular purposes in mind. Creswell (2013) observes that most of the researchers select the participants and locations to study or have a complete understanding of central phenomenon. The total sample consisted of 10 school board members (two principals, two parents, two representatives from church [proprietor], two chiefs and two teachers) from two primary schools who responded to in-depth interviews.

Selepe (2016:27) says that the selection of participants is affected by a number of factors in the study. In this study, the two primary schools were purposively selected and sampled on the basis of: (1) they being in the mainstream schools that admit children with physical disabilities, (2) they being convenient in terms of accessibility and (3) both being large schools in Maseru district but in different constituencies (rural area and urban area of Maseru) and convenient for the researcher, since they were situated in the same district where he stayed. Therefore, was easy to compare how school boards effectively engaged in their roles in different areas. The criteria for the selection of school board members as participants in this study were that:

- 1) They were part of a specific selected primary school appointed under Lesotho Education Act 2010 and they had experiences and important information about how to deal up with children with physical disabilities (CwPDs).
- 2) School board members were actively involved and fully operational in the board meetings where decisions were made and problems of CwPDs were solved and,

- 3) The school board member should have been part of any supporting or dropout prevention program among the vulnerable children e.g. children with disabilities, drugs addicts and orphans.

The researcher wanted to compare whether the responsibilities and the strategies that school boards use to address the problems of dropout among children with physical disabilities werethe same in the two schools. Thebrief characteristics of school board (SB) involved in the study are shown in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1: characteristics of participating school board members

Characteristics of school board	Principal	Educator	Parent	Gazette chief	Proprietor (church rep.)
School A: Gender	male	male	female	male	male
Age	52	37	45	50	44
Qualifications	PTC, B Ed.	DEP, B Ed.	0	Junior certificate	B Com.
Years of experience	10	12	6	18	18
Training in disability	yes	yes	no	no	yes
School B: Gender	Female	Male	female	male	male
Age	59	39	40	44	41
Qualifications	B Ed, B Ed Hons.	ACE, B Ed.	Catering cert.	COSC certificate	Dip in Agriculture
Years of experience	18	15	19	16	7
Training in disability	yes	yes	no	no	no

The table 3.1 shows that the school board consists of principal, teacher, parents, gazette chief and a proprietor. Three members were males and one member was female in school A and their ages ranged 37 to 52. In school B, there are two females and two males whose age ranges from 39 to 59. Most of the members were qualified in both schools and had attended disability training.

3.6. PILOT STUDY

Before conducting the main empirical study, a pilot study was done in a form of interviews to see the weaknesses in instrumentation Liphapang (2015) and to test the functionality of the research instrument (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014), in one primary school in Maseru district Lesotho. The researcher chose the school which was very close to home. This assisted the researcher to make estimations about the length of time needed to conduct the interviews. The principal of the neighboring school and the school board members were interviewed. Some items were revisited to make necessary adjustments where possible and the bugs were removed (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014).

Liphapang (2015:73) highlights that pilot test assesses the appropriateness and practicality of a research methodology. Piloting gave the researcher a chance to be familiar with the interview questions, protocols and instructions (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014). Matalasi (2000:15) says piloting is a preliminary research made prior to the main study. It is a very important aspect in the process of conducting qualitative research as it highlights the improvements needed to the actual study.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

3.7.1 Individual interviews

In this study, data were collected through semi-structured individual interviews because it allowed open ended responses. They also allowed the researcher to ask follow up questions in order to get in-depth and valuable qualitative information. In individual interviews, the interviewer collects data by asking the participants the questions to address the research questions. The researcher personally designed the interview questions in English for the participants in the study project. Individual interviews saved time and required participants to answer predetermined questions. In that way consistency was ensured (Mweti & Van Wyk, 2014). Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012:134) assert that semi-structured individual interviews are used to gain participants' perceptions.

Mosia (2017) added that the guiding questions and open ended questions are meant to elicit more data from the participants. Nieuwenhuis (2016) correctly points out that “as naturalistic conversations between an interviewer and participants, interviews provide rich description of practices and experiences from the participants’ perspectives.” In addition, the second phase of data generation was through taking ‘pictures’ from the environment on the 11th May 2019 which took one hour. This was meant to provide insights about the physical environment of CwPDs. Some of the pictures are used in chapter four. All participants’ responses were recorded to assist the researcher in a process of data analysis.

3.7.1.1 Interviewing participants

In this research project, the semi-structured individual interviews were scheduled to last from 30 to 40 minutes. The time given was used to give school boards chance to give out their experiences. According to Laforest (2009:2-4), in order for the interviewer and the respondent to concentrate in the semi-structured interview, sixty to ninety minutes interviews are perfectly acceptable.

3.7.1.2 Preparing for interview process

It is important to consider the following steps when preparing the interview process (Laforest, 2009:2-4):

1. The researcher must first study the interview plans.
2. He/she must make an appropriate decision about which questions are appropriate for the interviewees or make the preparations of the new ones.
3. The researcher must draw up the consent form which clarifies the rules and regulations and the confidentiality of the interview (see **Annexure E**).
4. The researcher explains the goal of the interview and safety with the interviewee.
5. He/she contacts the respondent to schedule an appointment and have agreement on the venue of the interview. (The place must be quiet, comfortable, free of distractions and neutral).

6. The researcher must keep on contacting the participants time and again to confirm whether they understood the date and location of the interview well.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Mohlouoa (2014:60), data analysis is the period when a great amount of gathered data is broken down into handy themes, patterns, trends and relationships, which would be followed by analysis, summarization and interpretation in a qualitative study. Mouton (2014) says, in qualitative research data analysis is mainly done to understand various elements of data established during the identification of the relationships between constructs and concepts.

In this study, data were organized, arranged and prepared for analysis far longer than was expected. The researcher gathered data from in-depth individual interviews which lasted between 30 to 40 minutes and were recorded in through voice recording by the permission of the participants. Data were collected from 10 participants into two selected primary schools in Maseru district. The schools were named “school A” and “school B” for the purpose of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.8.1 Thematic data analysis

In this study, the researcher adopted the thematic analysis method for data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Kipfer, 2015; Mouton 2008), following the six phases or features of thematic analysis namely: (1) researcher familiarizing himself with the data, (2) generating initial codes (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) refining and naming the themes that were commonly evident throughout the data and (6) moving to report writing.

Similarly, data were analyzed by following the thematic data analysis steps suggested by Leedy and Ormrod (2010). Firstly, the researcher arranged specific facts about the case in a logical order and identified the categories of data. As a result, it was easier for the researcher to cluster data into meaningful groups. This was followed by examining specific data for specific meaning and the meaning was then analyzed in relation to the research problem. The researcher carefully identified the patterns, referring to themes underlined. The next step was

to make an overall analysis and draw up generalizations (Kayumbu, 2017:56). The last step was to make conclusions and recommendations from the gathered data.

After the data had been collected, the researcher started the process by listening to the recorded interviews data more often before transcribing the interviews. In most cases, interviews were conducted in English but the interviewees were free to answer in Sesotho and the transcription was directly made in English. The researcher then asked for help from a colleague who was fluent in English and Sesotho to make thorough checking and edit the translations.

The researcher also checked the themes against extracts of data which were generated. This was followed by grouping a number of potential themes together for a broad theme (Nene, 2017:52). The researcher then formulated three major themes. Each theme had sub-themes clustered under it, and supported using examples obtained verbatim from the interviews. The researcher then identified themes based on the commonality of participants' perceptions and their appropriateness. The themes directly responded to the research objectives of the study. All data were then saved in the documents such as separate files or encrypted files, and the researcher had to print them as hard copies to work on.

3.9 METHODS OF DATA VERIFICATION

3.9.1 Credibility and Trustworthiness:

When qualitative researchers talk about “credibility and trustworthiness”, they mean its validity and reliability (Nieuwenhuis, 2014). Qualitative research is characterized by authenticity, credibility, transferability, dependability and the conformability of a study (Nieuwenhuis, 2014). Nieuwenhuis (2014) further says the end results of semi-structured interviews are clearly judged based on the norms of methods of verification. According to Rafoneke (2017), in order to ensure credibility, data gathering procedure should be explained in detail and “the participants have to be assured that special attention would be paid by carefully listening to them during interviews.”

In this study, the researcher guaranteed the participants that pseudonyms would be used to protect their identity, data were presented in a transparent manner and biases were noticed. Credibility is described by Anney (2014) as the confidence placed in the truth of the findings of the research and the origin of the data collected from the participants. Again, credibility and concern with conformability all matter in qualitative research (Yin, 2014). The purpose of this research was to explore collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. So, in order to ensure trustworthiness in this study, the following issues of trustworthiness were considered:

3.9.2 Transferability

According to Mohlouoa (2014:63), transferability is the degree in which the research findings can be transferred to other settings and contexts. In this research project, the researcher described all research processes and context and had detailed, adequate and thick description of methodology in terms of data collection and analysis in the study. In order to enable other researchers to make judgments about the findings of this study and use it to other research studies, Selepe (2016:39) indicates that transferability must be applied. “Transferability in this qualitative research required the researcher to describe the research so that the findings of the research could be transferred accurately” (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014).

3.9.3 Dependability

According to Selepe (2016:39), a dependable study should provide an opportunity to be audited. The researcher had to check the similarities and the differences between the responses of the school board thoroughly. This also helped the researcher to identify the contradictions between what the participants said and what they did towards the problem that encountered by CwPDs in the school. Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2014) say that dependability is also defined as the data stability overtime and in a certain condition. There is need for a researcher to be accountable for how the change in research affects the way the study was approached (Mohlouoa, 2014:63). In this research project, the researcher collected data from the members of school board and described the changes that occurred in the setting.

Thus, the dependability of high-quality qualitative research project relied on rigour, reliability and validity (Yin, 2014).

3.9.4 Conformability

“This is the process to establish whether the researcher has been biased during the research process” (Anney, 2014:279). A qualitative study’s conformability is defined as the stage at which the results have to be confirmed by others. The results will have to be checked throughout the study project. According to Mqulwana (2010:62) “...at the end of data collection then audition has to take place and analysis procedures.” Then, the judgments have to be made about the potential bias or any distortion. In this study, the researcher had to confirm the research findings with different resources to build the literature review and the research project. The researcher discussed the analysis and findings with the supervisor, and the finalization was made afterwards. This was done to lessen bias in the study.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is everybody’s fundamental right to be treated in an ethical manner (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014). It is important that every researcher treats his or her participants following ethical aspects and the research principles. The researcher was aware of the general agreement which was made to conduct the research. The following ethical conditions were relevant and considered in conducting this study project.

3.10.1 Permission to conduct a study

The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the University of the Free State to do research in the primary schools before conducting the research and was granted. Permission was obtained from the Ministry of Education and Training district office and selected school before the research was undertaken. The researcher wrote a letter to the principals of the schools requesting to conduct the study. The researcher personally approached the school principals and informed them about the study, made arrangements.

The reason for asking permission was because research has to be conducted in an ethical manner to enhance validity and trustworthy. The next step was to have a meeting with the participants (school board), teachers, principals, parents, pastor and school proprietor to inform them about the research that would be conducted. Meeting was held in the form of group and individual meetings even though data would be conducted using individual interviews. The confidentiality forms would be signed by the participants.

3.10.2 Informed consent

Participants were first briefed about the implications of the consent letter. Participants' names were not recorded anywhere and no one was able to connect them to the answers given. Participants' answers were given a fictitious code number or a pseudonym and would be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Participants' anonymous data could be used for other purposes.

The researcher ensured that informed consent forms were given to all participants to give their voluntary consent to participate in the study project. Pseudonyms for the schools and participants were utilized when reporting the findings to maintain confidentiality for the participants' protection (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to do so. Participants were also told that the final product of this research project would be kept in the library of UFS as archives.

3.10.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is known as the form of accessibility of information only to those who have a right and authority to have the access (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014). All information and findings of the study was kept entirely confidential and would be disclosed at any time to those who had authority to have it. The researcher and the participants had a clear knowledge of confidentiality and privacy of the research findings and results (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014). As a result, confidentiality was an agreement between a researcher and a participant that a researcher will be trustworthy in the research.

3.10.4 Anonymity

The researcher did reveal responses of participants and there were no spaces for names, surnames, name of the school, or address as personal information. All necessary measures were taken by the researcher to ensure that no participant was harmed in any way by the research. The researcher allowed participants to view the letters of informed consent. Participants were allowed to have access to the permission letters granted by the respective Ministry of Education and Training, allowing me to conduct research. The researcher then explained to participants the significance of the forms from the (MoET) and the stipulations of what was allowed or not during the research process.

3.11 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in two primary schools. The limitations related to availability of school board members as some were at work and got late to the appointments made. Only selected school board members were involved in the interview.

3.12 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, research methodologies, ethical considerations and the trustworthiness of data were discussed. In the next chapter data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings is made.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

“The key of successful dropout prevention efforts is understanding the early signs of risk and responding at the earliest opportunity.”

(Goss &Andren, 2014)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, data were analyzed, interpreted and discussed. The essence of the participants’ responses is described in specific themes that emerged. Data were collected individual interviews from two primary schools in Maseru district. In this study, the selection of 10 participants was to explore the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in Lesotho primary schools. The reviewed literature and the theoretical frameworks adopted in this empirical study supported the discussion of the findings. At the end of the chapter, a brief summary is provided.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

According to Mohlouoa (2014:60), data analysis is the process whereby a great amount of data is broken down into handy themes, patterns, trends and relationships to analyze summarize and interpret them. Qualitative data analysis process is not straightforward and it requires a researcher to understand how to make sense of the data presented (Mouton, 2014). As a result of this, in this study, the researcher was required to organize, arrange and prepare data for analysis.

The researcher gathered data from in-depth individual interviews which lasted between 30 to 40 minutes. These were voice recorded by permission of the participants and mutual agreement was made on suitable times, date and locations to suit each participant. Data were collected from 10 participants in two selected primary schools in Maseru district. The schools were named “school A” and “school B” for the purpose of confidentiality and anonymity.

4.2.1 Generation of themes

While there can be various ways of analyzing qualitative data, in this study, the researcher adopted thematic analysis for data analysis. Braun and Clarke (2013), Kipfer (2015) and Mouton (2008) indicate that thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic method used to identify, analyze and report themes (patterns) within data, especially due to its flexibility. The transcriptions were verbatim and were translated to English.

In this research, the data collected through interviews have been analyzed by following the guidelines recommended by Leedy and Ormrod (2010). Firstly, the researcher started by re-reading the data several times to identify points of interest. The researcher arranged specific facts about the case in a logical order and identified the categories of data. As a result, it was easier for the researcher to cluster a combination of codes that were identified in the data into meaningful groups. This was followed by examining specific data for specific meaning, and the meaning was then analyzed in relation to the research problem.

The researcher carefully searched for patterns (from codes to themes) by combining initial codes to over-reaching themes. This means, the patterns that presented themselves in the data were then linked into relationships that existed amongst the cases, and themes emerged from these patterns. The next step was to make an overall analysis and draw up generalizations (Kayumbu, 2017:56). The last step was to make conclusions and recommendations from the gathered data.

The researcher then checked the themes against excerpts of data. This was followed by grouping a number of potential themes together into broad themes (Nene, 2017:52). The researcher also formulated the three major themes. Each theme had sub-themes clustered under them and supported using verbatim examples obtained from the interviews.

The researcher then identified themes based on the commonality of participants' perceptions and their appropriateness. The themes directly responded to the research objectives of the study. All data were then saved in the documents such as separate files or encrypted files and the researcher had to print and work on as hard copies.

Table 4.1: Themes found in the study

THEMES	SUBTHEMES
<p>1. Collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout as revealed in their duties and responsibilities: the perceptions of the school board members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of learners' intrapersonal skills (develop learner's self-concept) • Equal contribution in providing care and spiritual support • School board members as advocates (put learners at the center) • Involvement of other professionals
<p>2. School board's effective strategies to mitigate dropout among children with physical disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving feeding (nutrition) • Early identification of academic progress and provision of peer tutoring support • Adaptation of child-centred curriculum and fostering entrepreneurship skills • Involving learners and their parents in decision-making • Raising disability awareness campaigns
<p>3. Creating conditions conducive to academic performance of children with physical disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering access to physical environment • Engagement with departmental legislations and policies • Training of school board • Changing attitude towards CwPDs • Unveiling the challenges in the mitigation of dropout of CwPDs and find solutions

4.3 INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In this part, the researcher used the three themes as shown in the above figure, as headings to present data. Data were analyzed and interpreted for their meaning in answering the research and sub-research objectives. In doing so, some verbatim quotes by the participants are presented in order to analyze and interpret the true reflection of the experiences of the participants.

4.3.1 Themes

- Collaborative school board roles in mitigation of dropout as revealed in their duties and responsibilities: the perceptions of the school board members.

- School board’s effective strategies to mitigate dropout among children with physical disabilities.
- School board’s creation of conditions conducive to academic performance of children with physical disabilities.

Themes are discussed in detail in the section below:

4.4 THEME ONE: COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL BOARD ROLES IN MITIGATING DROPOUT AS REVEALED IN THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

➤ The perceptions of the school board members

In this theme, the researcher began by asking the participants to talk about their view and understanding of collaboration, as well as what collaborative roles they have to mitigate dropout among children with physical disabilities in their school. Many participants’ responses were shared based on their collaborative roles and responsibilities. Sub-themes emerged from the aforementioned theme and the researcher decided to categorize them as school board’s development of learners’ intrapersonal strength (develop self-concept and confidence), equal involvement of school board members to provide care and spiritual support, school boards as advocates (keep CwPDs at the center), and the involvement of other professionals in mitigating dropout among CwPDs. These are revealed in the following section:

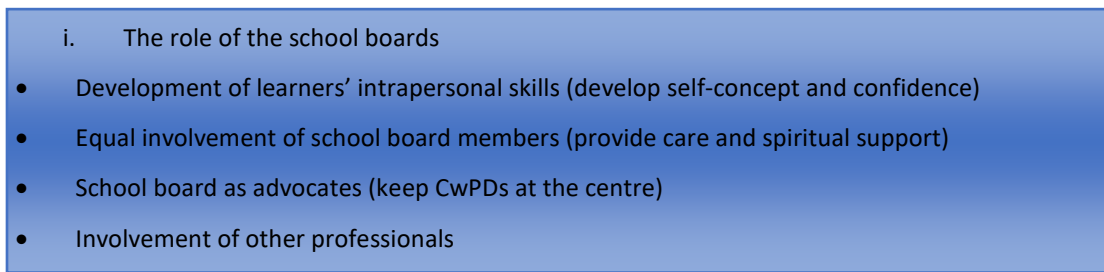
- 
- i. The role of the school boards
 - Development of learners’ intrapersonal skills (develop self-concept and confidence)
 - Equal involvement of school board members (provide care and spiritual support)
 - School board as advocates (keep CwPDs at the centre)
 - Involvement of other professionals

Figure 4.1: school boards’ collaborative roles and responsibilities in mitigating dropout among CwPDs, the researcher’s own constructed diagram.

4.4.1 Development of learners’ intrapersonal skills (self-concept and confidence)

From the interview process, the school board members noted that they worked collaboratively as a team to assist children with physical disabilities to develop self-esteem, self-concept and confidence in school. The responses from the participants showed that CwPDs frequently reported not doing well in their class work and being denied justice, discriminated and

stigmatized. Being counselors to their learners (CwPDs) during the times of grievances gave CwPDs the opportunity to accept themselves and feel valued, thereby building self-concept and confidence. The participants revealed the development of intrapersonal skills as follows. Participant 1 commented that:

“When CwPDs have positive attitude, they see themselves as strong, competent and in control of their lives. But all of this becomes much possible if we as school board members become the problem solvers, motivators and their comforters, as a sign that we are playing a positive role in their lives.”

One of the participants, ‘6’ indicated that CwPDs perform well in their studies, which make them happy. School boards acknowledge CwPDs when they perform well in their academic work in the school. Participant 6 indicated that:

“If CwPDs are performing well and us as school board members give them award and tell them that, we do acknowledge that, they become happy and proud. They show more interest in their academic work and this is a sign that they are having self-confidence.”

During the individual interview the following excerpt by participant 8 showed that school boards performed roles of counseling. Participant 8 said:

“When CwPDs have stress and grievances from their homes and sometimes being denied justice and be discriminated by their peers, we provide them with counseling. Counseling helps CwPDs to accept themselves and feel valued.”

Participant 9 responded by saying:

“We always encourage CwPDs to become sure of themselves, worth and appreciate others in school. The encouragement and motivation we give to them time to time help a lot in boosting their self- concept and self-esteem.”

The data from the participants revealed that effective collaboration helped them to enable CwPDs to build resilience, self-confidence and self-concepts within themselves. The finding revealed that participants indicated that they counseled, appreciated and encouraged CwPDs

to become sure of themselves in times of hardships and CwPDs became competent in their studies when they knew that they were appreciated and considered. This finding was similar to one in the study of Mosia (2017), which showed that children with disabilities' needs are unique and it is important for the school managers to make CwPDs feel part of the school so that their self-esteem can be improved. This is similar to the finding of Clase, Kok & Van der Merwe (2007:235) that the mutual collaboration and trust between partners in a school has great impact on the success of education and increased learners' self-confidence. In this regard, the participants considered themselves as the problem solvers, motivators and the comforters of CwPDs' problems as Galetuke (2017) notes that there is a need for school board members at the school level to appreciate, motivate and support learners. The above discussion indicates that school board's collaboration leads to the support for CwPDs, which in turn, boosts these learners' self-concept, self-esteem and self-confidence to develop in the school.

4.4.2 The school boards as advocates [keeping CwPDs at the center]

All the participants agreed that they collaboratively focused on keeping CwPDs at the center to meet their academic, personal and emotional needs in order to mitigate dropout in primary schools. The data showed that 'Keeping CwPDs at the center' focused on listening to CwPDs' voices. Being active listeners is embedded in participants' collaborative roles and responsibilities as advocates of CwPDs' well-being. Keeping CwPDs at the center is a learner-centred practice aimed at providing opportunities for CwPDs to talk about their demands, feelings, wishes, interests, and experiences in mainstream school. The participants' responses also revealed that by listening to CwPDs' views, understanding and respecting their needs as individuals, they encouraged CwPDs to come to school regularly. The participants responded as follows. Participant 6:

"...We are careful about 'keeping our CwPDs at the center'. This practice is done by listening to their voices, showing respect to them as the individuals and taking the personal interest or feeling in them."

One of the participants '5' indicated that CwPDs perform well in class and try to impress people when their voices are heard, and therefore, need to be given a chance. The following excerpts show how participants expressed themselves. Participant 5:

"...CwPDs feel happy and special when they are listened to and in return, they work very hard to earn good marks in classroom make all people around them happy. CwPDs always have experiences that expand once they are given a chance to talk about them."

On a similar vein, participant 9 highlighted that:

"It is all about giving CwPDs our time when they come to us to tell little stories about the experiences they have and so on. They have something or a story to narrate irrespective of their form of disability. It is very significant for us to listen to their demands."

The findings in this study revealed that collaboration of school board members is required for good practices such as 'keeping CwPDs at the center'. Many participants' responses were clear that keeping CwPDs at the center meant they understood, listened and respected their feelings, wishes and needs as individuals. As a result, school boards are considered to be the advocates of CwPDs' holistic well-being. The participants revealed that their advocacy was based on working as a team to support the social, emotional, mental and physical well-being in order to mitigate dropout among CwPDs. This finding resonates with Liphapang's (2015) study which found that empowering schools through School Governing Bodies (SGBs) has been perceived as a way to encourage innovation and combat abuse, social inequality and segregation in education. When CwPDs are listened to, they are motivated, encouraged and comforted. The findings in this study resonate with those of Nene's (2017) study which showed that teachers in the school board act as the advocates and agents of care and support when listening to each learner's voices.

Nene (2017) noted that learners should be listened to so that the productive learning can be created. The data revealed that CwPDs always have experiences that expand once they are given a chance to express their feelings of emotional or physical abuse. The data also revealed that CwPDs have little stories to narrate irrespective of their form of physical disability. The

data showed that participants advocated CwPDs' wellbeing by starting a book club, visiting CwPDs at home, and encouraging their full inclusion in the regular school.

4.4.3 School board's equal involvement in providing care and spiritual support

The findings revealed that many participants identified the importance of equal involvement of school board in providing care and spiritual support as an attempt to mitigate dropout among CwPDs. This power sharing role is not a surprise because the Lesotho Education Administration Act, 4 (2) of 2010 stipulates that "teacher and school boards shall ensure that learners, including CwPDs, are provided with opportunities and facilities to develop them physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in healthy and normal manner." The data showed that school board members inspired and taught CwPDs how to pray and read the scriptures daily. They advised CwPDs to take prayer as a pillar to support themselves in the school, hopefully in confronting any challenges in their lives. In this regard, participants' responses were as follows. Participant 2 noted:

"We regularly visit this school and pray together with CwPDs and their teachers, this motivates and refreshes CwPDs and their teachers before the classes start. Every member of the school board is equally involved in motivating CwPDs to pray and read the Bibles. This is because some members of us are specialists of religious studies."

Participant 6 was also on the view that:

"...CwPDs can volunteer to pray in front of other learners in the classroom or at the assembly because they are excited and feel appreciated."

Similar, participant 9 revealed that:

"We taught them how to pray and put their needs together with their poor families to almighty God every morning, at lunch and afternoon."

Another participant, participant 8, noted that:

"We have instilled into CwPDs values such as hope, discipline and respect of a prayer. I remember one morning when one child with physical disability reminded others that

they could not start their day without reading the bible and praying. CwPDs are now encouraged and know that prayer is a vital weapon that can battle the challenges they have in their lives.”

The findings from the study indicated that the participants visited the school and prayed together with CwPDs and their teachers. This motivated and refreshed CwPDs and their teachers before the classes resumed. The findings are similar to those of Nene (2017:64) study which revealed that the availability of religious education teachers in schools can contribute to teach children how to pray, and encourage and motivate them to face challenges in life. Other participants indicated that they taught CwPDs how to pray and put their needs and those of their poor families to God every morning, at lunch and afternoon. Furthermore, this helped CwPDs to be brave enough to volunteer to pray in front their peers in the classroom or at the assembly without any fear because they are excited and feel appreciated. Galetuke (2017) and Van Zyl (2013) agree that when some members from other schools and the parents are involved in the school governing body, they can bring fresh ideas and other forms of support (spiritual or emotional support) to learners. This is because some members who are elected in a school board are already the specialists and experts of bible study. A similar point is indicated by Deal and Peterson (2009) who highlighted that school leaders are advised to involve activities such as bible studies that will motivate learners to pray and read the word of God (bibles) in schools.

4.4.4 Involvement of other professionals

In mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in schools, it is required that school boards work together with other professionals such as community-based expertise or practitioners in order to achieve a common goal and for the purpose of referrals. However, due to the nature and extent of dropout among CwPDs in primary schools, there are many other stakeholders who assist school boards with expert advice on some aspects of physical disability in mitigating dropout in schools. The school board's relationship with other professionals is important in bringing positive outcomes for CwPDs as “it takes the whole village to raise a child”. The following responses from the participants indicated the need to involve other

professionals to assist schools with the support structures to mitigate dropout among CwPDs. Participant 1 stated that:

“...I am very keen to help teachers master their duty of helping CwPDs by involving psychological counselors who keep on nursing emotional problems that CwPDs and teachers to be confident and CwPDs accept their disability.”

Asimilar opinion was also shared by participant 5 as he described his role as a school board member and a mediator. He believed that the performance of learners, including CwPDs, was influenced by the kind of members serving in the school board and their relationships with other stakeholders.

“Our CwPDs performed well in 2018, I believe the type of members serving in the school board including myself, understands our roles and responsibilities. This is because I am a mediator and a unifier between my school and the other professions, especially in the health and educational outcomes of CwPDs.”

However, due to the nature and extent of physical disability such as health and neurological impairments in primary schools, participants’ responses showed that they were keen to consult doctors and therapists. Participant 8 was confident about the activities that doctors and therapists performed. Participant 8 noted that:

“...CwPDs needed medical checkups from time to time. Our main task is to work together with doctors and the therapists. They help with activities such as medical supervision, evaluating the motor functioning, preparing CwPDs for self-care activities and staff training.”

From the findings, it was obvious that school boards needed to work with other professionals for the purpose of referrals, staff training and further assessment or expert advice on some aspects of physical disability. Professionals such as health professionals could discuss the problems of CwPDs with school boards and the staff in the school. The findings resonate with data from Save the Children (2013) which showed that transferring of sick children with disabilities (CWDs) from the school to hospitals should be done using the right procedure.

Therefore, health professionals should specify the type of drugs or medication required to be given to CwPDs in a day, and the strategies on how to handle them. The findings also resonate with Sitienei and Mulambula's (2012) observation that referrals are needed for CwPDs who have health impairments such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, tuberculosis and heart disease. According to the participants, CwPDs performed well in previous years because of the type of members serving in the school board who understood their roles and responsibilities in involving other professionals in the school. A study by Kipfer (2015:1) showed that "when CwPDs are admitted in Ontario schools, they are often referred for a psycho educational assessment by the special education services and school boards."

4.5 THEME TWO: SCHOOL BOARDS' EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES IN MITIGATING DROPOUT AMONG CwPDs IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

In responding to the research question on the strategies used by school board pertaining to the mitigation of dropout among children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in Lesotho primary school, all the participants found the following strategies to be efficient and effective in helping them to cope with CwPDs and mitigate dropout. These are grouped into five distinct sub-themes: improving feeding (nutrition), early interventions and provision of peer tutoring support, adaptation of curriculum, learning materials, and fostering entrepreneurship skills, raising disability awareness campaigns, and involving learners and their parents in collaborative decision-making. These sub-themes were discussed in detail below:

- Improving feeding (nutrition)
- Early identification of academic progress and provision of peer tutoring support
- Adaptation of child-centred curriculum, learning materials and fostering entrepreneurship skills
- Involving learners and their parents in decision-making
- Raising disability awareness campaigns

Figure 4.2: school board's collaborative strategies used to mitigate dropout among CwPDs in primary school developed by the researcher.

4.5.1 Improving feeding (Nutrition)

All participants' responses noted that improving healthy eating habit in the primary schools was one of the collaborative strategies they used to mitigate dropout of children with physical

disabilities (CwPDs). The participants revealed that most CwPDs came from poor families that struggled to support them with healthy food to be physically fit and perform well academically. The data showed that some CwPDs are affected by health conditions that interfere with their learning, so they need to eat healthy food to reduce the risk diseases and frequent absenteeism to school. The improvement of nutrition was shown by participant 2 who highlighted that:

“Most of children with physical disabilities are raised by poor families who cannot afford to give them healthy food and it is our duty to assist and encourage healthy eating habits among them so that they can stay healthy.”

A similar opinion was also shared by participant 3 who agreed that:

“When CwPDs eat well, they do not get sick easily. We work together with their parents and teachers to encourage and volunteer to give them healthy food. This can reduce the risk of diseases, frequent absenteeism and the dropout.”

Participant 5 also noted:

“Some of CwPDs have to take medication three times a day and it becomes difficult when they do not eat the healthy food. Some of them are affected by health conditions that interfere with their learning and they sleep in the classroom because they come to school hungry.”

However, one participant had a negative stance about the school feeding scheme from the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) which did not give enough food to learners. The remarks made by participant 7 were that:

“...the school feeding scheme was in a financial crisis in from 2018. Until now, learners do not give enough food...Most of the learners including CwPDs who used to survive with the meal from that feeding scheme had to drop out from school in large number. Other agencies such as NGOs have to help us to fulfill this dream.”

The findings from the above responses indicated that the participants agreed that they effectively worked together to improve nutrition of CwPDs in order to mitigate dropout among

CwPDs in primary schools. This strategy was used by the school board to encourage and motivate a healthy eating life style and habits in the CwPDs. Nene (2017) identified that more assistants and food were needed to ensure that vulnerable children including CwPDs who come from poor households are supported. Nene (2017) further highlighted that poor nutrition affects learners' academic performance negatively. This is similar to Sitienei and Mulambula's (2012) that it is important to immunise and give proper nutrition to CwPDs in order to prevent disabilities or diseases. The study revealed that CwPDs received insufficient food from the feeding scheme given by the MoET in Lesotho. The participants' responses also indicated that they needed help from the NGOs to assist CwPDs with healthy food and encouragement of healthy eating habits, to avoid them from dropping out. Somers, Owens, and Piliawsky's (2009) study revealed that the individual who drop out of school costs estimated billions of dollars.

4.5.2 Early identification of academic progress and provision of peer tutoring support

All the participants' responses acknowledged the need for working together with principals and teachers to identify the academic progress and the related indicators such as learning disabilities (LD), attendance and learning behavior of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) as early as possible. Data from the participants' responses revealed that early identification of CwPDs' academic progress helps the school board to institute an intervention plan such as peer tutoring support for CwPDs who developed slowly or struggled in their achievement and progress over several times. They should not delay the process until CwPDs fail. The participants recommended early identification and support. Participant 7:

"We visit the school and make intervention plan or construct short-term strategy such as identifying academic progress of CwPDs as their teachers give them tests of word reading, mathematics, spelling, and knowledge of letter sounds and letter names."

In a similar vein, participant 4 outlined that:

"We encourage the main teachers to first make the screening for early academic learning difficulties in the classroom and gauge CwPDs who are at-risk dropping out of school, poor attendance and learning behavior even though it is challenging."

Participant 6 commented that:

“I noticed that if CwPDs are not identified early, their learning difficulties escalate and this leads to more CwPDs exhibiting behavior problems and dropping out of school.”

Participant 8 indicated that they work together with the teachers to engage children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in academic work using peer tutoring as one of the strategies meant to prevent them from dropping out of primary school. Participant 8 indicated that:

“We work together with the teachers to engage CwPDs in academic support using peer tutoring to increase their level of academic achievement.”

Participant 9 said:

“We do give young CwPDs an opportunity to be tutee and other old children to be the tutors to help them to effectively develop skills such as study skills, social skills and communication skills.”

Another participant ‘10’ pointed that:

“...when CwPDs are engaged in peer tutoring, it gives them a room for shy CwPDs to express themselves and it promotes their sense of self efficacy, self- confidence and boost their resilience.”

The findings from the verbatim quotes of the participants revealed that school boards visit schools and worked together with the principals and the classroom teachers to identify learners’ academic progress, target poor attendance and behavior of CwPDs early, and make intervention plans. The study by Doncheva (2018) concurred with the above findings, as it reveals that the early identification of academic progress is needed for provision of general support for child development in the school. Furthermore, the participants revealed that they identified academic progress of CwPDs as the teachers give them the tests of word reading, mathematics, spelling, and knowledge of letter sounds and letter names. The findings are similar with the Save the Children (2013) findings which indicated that informal evaluation of the child’s learning process should be done if no progress is noticed, and when the school

suspects a child is having barriers in learning. Furthermore, participants showed that school boards enable CwPDs to develop self-confidence and self-esteem as they work together with the teachers to engage them in peer tutoring and increase their level of academic achievement. A study by Topping (2015) concurred with the findings of this above, as it highlighted that “...peer tutoring focuses on subject-specific contents to improve formal academic achievement.” The study by Nene (2017) also indicated that the participants felt that group work and peer tutoring are important strategies that help the learners’ who struggle with academic achievement by increasing their instructional time.

4.5.3 Adapting child-centred curriculum, learning materials and fostering entrepreneurship skills

Most of the participants acknowledged that effective school boards influenced teachers to adapt child-centred curriculum, learning materials and foster entrepreneurship skills for CwPDs in order to respond to their needs from subjects like Social Sciences (hereafter SS). In particular, the participants’ responses revealed that equipment should be adapted to help CwPDs to manipulate environment, increase mobility and communicate with everyone involved in the school. Some of the participants suggested that the curriculum should speak about fostering in CwPDs, certain critical skills such as entrepreneurship and influence their future after school. The findings also pointed out that the child-centred curriculum adapted from primary schools should help CwPDs to acquire a variety of entrepreneurship skills on how to start their own businesses, create jobs and generate cash. Participant 1 said:

“...we influence teachers to adapt child-centred curriculum in order to respond to CwPDs’ needs such as acquisition of various entrepreneurship skills on how to start their own businesses, create jobs and make money.”

Participant 2 added that:

“We always encourage teachers to shorten the assignments, allow extra time in subjects like Social Sciences (hereafter SS) and modify the environment to the best of CwPDs’

needs and this really promotes more participation of CwPDs and effective learning of entrepreneurship skills.”

Participant 6 noted that:

“We are well informed and committed to see when assessment is adapted for CwPDs and how the teachers use teaching styles in teaching Social Science subject in the mainstream classroom.”

The common view of participant 10 as a teacher and a member of school board is that in his school, CwPDs learnt practical skills and social skills and did like entrepreneurship activities in Social Science subject at first and did not understand them and wanted to drop out of school until he motivated them. Participant 10 said:

“Truly speaking, CwPDs did not like entrepreneurship activities in Social Science subject at first and did not even understand them. This was because some of us mainly the teachers do not make use of different materials and activities (tasks) and made CwPDs to be unable to cope with the amount of time given when acquiring entrepreneurship skills and many CwPDs wanted to give up until we motivated them.”

Participant 4 recommended more basic resources such as textbooks, computers, writing tools, desks, adaptive and additional assistive technology devices, to help CwPDs do the activities that they usually do not do. He highlighted adaptation of equipment as one of the strategies used to mitigate dropout among CwPDs in the primary schools. Participant 4 said:

“We should adapt equipment (assistive technology devices) wheelchairs, a walker or crutches, more basic resources such as textbooks, computers, writing tools and desks for CwPDs to manipulate environment, increase mobility and communicate with everyone involved in the school. This strategy is a key to mitigate dropout rate of CwPDs.”

Participant 3 also added that:

“...it is difficult to adapt the curriculum because materials are very scarce in our schools and the government delays to supply us with textbooks for CwPDs to participate. Just imagine, to date, we do not have textbooks for grade 7 learners.”

Participant 7 said:

“We have to raise funds and each learner pays R1.00 on selected Fridays and the money that we collect we buy teaching and learning equipments so that CwPDs can participate and learn the course materials in different ways regardless of physical disability.”

To sum up, most of the participants highlighted that they influenced teachers to adapt a child-centred curriculum because teachers were incompetent and make CwPDs unable to cope with the amount of time given when acquiring entrepreneurship skills. Selepe (2016) posits that the main problem in the implementation of the Lesotho integrated curriculum is that most of the primary school teachers struggle to work with the pace of disabled learners and the assistive technology devices are scarce. Flora (2015) suggests that curriculum should be adapted and skills should be broken into smaller steps for CwPDs. This should be done considering that some learners, mainly CwPDs, are unable to hold pencils or may require need extra time to learn entrepreneurial skills better. Mercy Corps (2014c) concurs that young people, CwPDs included, need child-centred curriculum which is more recreational and entrepreneurial activities. School boards play a leading role in giving advice and support on curriculum matters (Mathipa, Magano, Mapotse, Matlabe & Mohapi, 2014). There is need to raise funds in order to buy teaching and learning materials for CwPDs.

4.5.4 Involving learners and their parents in decision-making

Parents of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) are regarded as equal partners in the education of their children and in collaborative decisions regarding placements, referrals and assessment (MoET, 2018). According to participants' responses, inclusion of CwPDs and their parents in collaborative decision-making presented itself as an effective strategy because parents promote positive attitudes towards education, and ensure that children with disabilities are enrolled and retained in primary schools. Participant 4 noted:

“It is true that, we need to involve parents and CwPDs in decision making. In this way, they will volunteer inschool activities. Parents promote positive attitudes towards their children’s education and ensure that CwPDs are enrolled and retained. When CwPDs see parents at school they are motivated to learn.”

Apart from that, participant 4 thought that the involvement of CwPDs and their parents would help CwPDs to know more about the programmes or activities that are implemented and CwPDs will take the responsibility of their education and feel free. He said,

“CwPDs will know more about the programmes or activities aimed at developing friendships with their peers and take responsibility of their education...they feel free to learn. We also work as mutual partners and advocates for CwPDs and their parents and offer free training to parents of CwPDs.”

From his statement, participant 4 made it clear that when parents are involved in decision making, they contribute to students’ academic success in all areas. He further indicated that CwPDs are informed more about the programmes or activities aimed at developing friendships with their peers, so that they may not worry about safety. Participant 5 realized that some parents of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) do not care about their children’s education because they are busy and reluctant to attend meetings. This shows that they have minimal support. Another participant named 5 also said:

“Some parents of CwPDs do not care about education of their children because they seemed to be busy and do not attend meetings at school, so they just have a minimal support, so we need to involve them...”

Participant 10 further showed apart from parents being busy, they live in communities that consider disability as punishment from the ancestors and bad luck in their culture. So, the shame forces such parents to divorce themselves from the education of their children whose children are physically disabled do not come because of fear and shame. Some keep CwPDs at home to protect them. Participant 10 indicated that:

“Sir...parents who have CwPDs in schools do not come school when we invite them because of fear and shame. This is because physical disability is still considered to be a punishment from the ancestors and a bad luck by other people. Some parents keep CwPDs at home to protect them...”

The data from this study showed that some parents keep CwPDs at home to protect them. This finding resonates with Nyandoro, Mapfumo and Makoni’s (2013) point that parents do not understand their roles in the school development. Similarly, participant 6 commented that:

“...When CwPDs are included in all aspects of decisions-making that concern them, they are less likely to drop out because their self-esteem is developed.”

Participant 2 highlighted a different opinion. He indicated that CwPDs should not be involved in board decisions, more especially at primary level because they are young, immature and incompetent to decide and judge anything and therefore, their parents are the ones who can be involved. Participant 2 said:

“I do not think it is a good idea to involve CwPDs in the school board more especially in primary schools as they are still immature and incompetent to make decisions or judgments.”

From the above quotes, it is apparent from majority of the school board members that there was a great need for both CwPDs and their parents to be involved in decision-making in the school. Save the Children (2013) and Kayumbu (2017) noted that CwPDs must be involved in accordance with their capabilities and development. The data from the school boards’ responses revealed that when CwPDs are included in all aspects of decision-making that concern them, they are less likely to drop out because their self-esteem is developed. Grant (2015) says CwPDs should take part in school governance and be treated with respect and their voices or ideas should be heard. Some participants’ responses revealed that CwPDs should not be involved in the decision making because they are still young and incompetent. Matalasi (2000:54) agrees that learners should neither be involved nor consulted in the decision making as they are future leaders who still need to be guided and supported by the adults. Contrary

with the findings of this study, the findings of Heystek (2014) and Sinalumbu (2013) revealed that parents dislike taking part in decision-making in matters that are sensitive concerning CwPDs. Badenhorst and Koalepe (2014) observe that parents do not trust schools due to poverty and have a fear of inferiority. This finding correlated with the findings of Pelentsov, Laws and Esterman (2015) who found that parents, as caregivers of CWDs need information about the progress of their children from school.

4.5.5 Raising disability awareness campaigns in the primary schools

The majority of participants at all levels identified that CwPDs were still subjected to mockery and emotionally abused by parents, teachers and other children being one of the major reason for them to dropout of primary school. Some participants highlighted that due to cultural issues, CwPDs were treated as objects of pity, parents protected and kept them at home until they were old and those who were admitted had poor attendance because their parent were overprotective. Most of the participants agreed that they needed to raise disability awareness campaigns as one of the strategies to mitigate dropout among CwPDs in the primary schools. The participants' responses on disability awareness campaigns issues are indicated below. Participant 1 noted that:

"I believe that disability is still considered evil or a bad fate in our school as far as our culture is concerned... this is because CwPDs are still subjected to mockery and abused emotionally by many people including parents, teachers and other children being one of the major reason for them to dropout of primary school."

In agreement, participant 3 commented that:

"We (school board) have to work as a team to raise disability awareness campaigns in our school and the community as well. Parents need to be taught to admit that their CwPDs have disabilities not a shame in the family so that they cannot hide them."

Participant 8 adds that:

“We need to instill in teachers that the education of CwPDs is the responsibility of all stakeholders and stop to consider them (CwPDs) as time consumers or children who will disrupt their class.”

Similarly, participant 9 affirmed that:

“It is culturally hard for CwPDs to be admitted by their peers in the school. Therefore, disability awareness campaign is needed every year to encourage new students to welcome CwPDs in the school.”

It was widely agreed among all the participants that there was a need for a sustained disability awareness campaign in the primary schools, to breakdown discrimination and stigma, change the attitudes and cultural values that contribute to dropout among CwPDs. These findings were in line with the findings by (UNICEF, 2015), which showed that an estimated 17 percent of students do not feel welcomed and comfortable to sit next children with disabilities CwPDs. The findings of this study resonates with those by Nene (2017), that learners need to be made aware of the morals and values in their culture to shape their moral development, and be taught to accept other people regardless of their disabilities. The findings in this study also highlighted that participants need to instill in teachers that the education of CwPDs is everybody’s responsibility. Save the Children (2013) says school boards should contribute in raising awareness on the responsibilities on towards CwPDs to teachers and the rest of other school members. Furthermore, participants’ responses revealed parents need to be taught to admit that their CwPDs have disabilities, not be ashamed so that they cannot hide them.

4.6 THEME THREE: CREATING CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

In response to research question three on how school board members can create conditions conducive to academic performance of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in Lesotho primary schools, the majority of the participants acknowledged that CwPDs’ contact with appropriate resources helped them to develop self-esteem and build resilience. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the participants acknowledged that both psychological

and physical school environment must be healthy and safe to all learners, including CwPDs. Many participants came up with various notions that the researcher categorised into the two sub-themes namely: access to physical environment and engagement with Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) policies and programmes. The sub-theme that appeared from the participants' responses is explained below:

- Access learners to physical environment
- Engagement with department legislations and policies
- Training of school board
- Changing attitudes toward children with physical disabilities(CwPDs)
- Unveiling the challenges in the mitigation of dropout of CwPDs and find solutions

Figure 4.3: School boards' creation of conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs, the researcher-constructed diagram.

4.6.1 Access learners to physical environment

The participants mentioned that there are still bottlenecks in terms of physical access in regular primary schools that provide education services for all learners including children with physical disabilities (CwPDs). Participants highlighted that physical barriers such as access to medication, transportation and buildings (uneven terrain and staircases) make it difficult for them to assist CwPDs. The pictures were taken from one of the primary schools that the researcher visited. Participant 5 expressed that:

"...most of the classrooms are upstairs and it is not easy for CwPDs to access such classes. There are no pavements for wheelchairs to move. It is worse during rainy seasons. This is a clear indication that infrastructure is not appropriate for wheelchair users or crutch users. Those with severe physical impairments are not admitted and continue in special classes at the centres."



Figure: 4.4: shows that CwPDs have to climb the stairs to reach the classrooms

The findings from the participants' responses indicated that CwPDs have to climb the stairs to reach the classrooms. The data in this study found that there was a poor infrastructure in primary schools. This is in line with Western Cape Government (2016:12) study which showed that physical barriers act as the main obstacle to the inclusion of CwPDs to the facilities such as clinics and schools. Participant 10 expressed that:

"Our classrooms are constructed in a way that the doors are not broad enough to cater for CwPDs"

Participant 2 also noted that:

"...there is no space for CwPDs in the classrooms. Everything is overcrowded there... with lack of quality furniture".



Figure: 4.5: shows the broken desks, lack of furniture and old classroom walls and floor.

The figure above shows the old desks which are fixed with wires which are a risk for CwPDs to use. Most of the children have to sit on the floor instead of sitting on the desks to reduce the load and there is a lack of enough chairs and tables in the classroom. The researcher entered the classroom and found the cracked walls, damaged roof and potholes on the floor. Participant 4 said:

“...sometimes a child with physical disability has to go to the clinic for consultation or he may get sick in the school. To take a child to that place forces us to hire a bigger taxi or cab (4+1) which will cost R150 which we sometimes do not have. Some community parents volunteer to offer their cars free to be used.”

Similarly, participant 8 commented that:

“...there is lack of mobile clinics for everyday referral near the school. Sometimes CwPDs are not admitted in the school due to fear of appropriate resources for their type of disability in the school.”

The majority of participants at all levels showed that poor infrastructure was a problem that led to poor academic performance and dropout among CwPDs in the school. In order to improve accessibility of CwPDs in the regular classroom, it is important to ensure that resources are available (Kluits, 2017:119). All the participants expressed that there is a need for broad corridors, finance, mobile clinics, space and classrooms, new buildings and desks for wheelchair users. Therefore, the participants found it difficult to care for CwPDs in Lesotho primary schools. The findings of this study resonate with those of Mosia (2017) study that some buildings are not accessible by wheelchair users in the institution as they still have stairs. Dingana (2012:115) says that persons who take care of CwPDs need transport facilities in case of emergency. Jeong, Myong and Koo (2015:619) states that school boards are face financial, emotional and physical obstacles as a problem when caring for CwPDs in the schools.

4.6.2 Engagement with department legislations and policies

Although there are different policies in place that emphasize support services to mitigate dropout among CwPDs, primary schools have problems of legislation and policies for schools to be run smoothly. The participants were asked whether their schools had any disability or inclusive education policy that could foster the safe and healthy environment for academic performance of CwPDs. The participants revealed that they did not have clear policies and programmes in the school that showed respect, shaped behaviour, fostered the school

connectedness and address CwPDs' problems. One participant claimed that she was unaware of such disability policies. Participant 2 noted:

"I am not aware of the disability policies or inclusive education that could foster safe, conducive and healthy environment for best academic performance of CwPDs."

Similarly, participant 7 also affirmed that

"...there is no specific policy that can address CwPDs' problems in the schools."

One of the participants revealed that, exposing CwPDs to different policies and programmes such as individual education programs [IEP], life skills and self-skills, medical intervention programmes is another way of encouraging them to feel connected to their school. Participant 8 indicated that:

"I think we need to expose CwPDs to various policies and programmes including individual education programs [IEP], life skills and self-skills, medical intervention programmes to encourage them to feel connected to their school and they are likely to succeed academically, have good attendance and transit to high school level."

Participant 6 also added that:

"The clear school-based policies and programmes are needed in order to fulfill our roles and responsibilities such as, prevention of marginalization and discrimination based on disability, modifying curricular that supports learner-centred or Universal Design for Learning (UDL), empowering teachers and providing resources to CwPDs."

Participant 9 showed that although there are existing legal and policy frameworks that have realized the need for provision of education for all students (EFA), including children with disabilities (CWDs), there are still existing punitive disciplinary policies and practices such as, corporal punishment, suspensions and expulsions which undermine efforts to construct safe and healthy school environments for CwPDs in the school. Participant 9 noted:

“...our schools still have punitive disciplinary practices such as corporal punishment, suspensions and expulsions in the school which I think they undermine our efforts to create conditions conducive to academic performance of learners such as CwPDs.”

He further said that they started the process of developing school-based policies to support CwPDs as a strategy to mitigate dropout among CwPDs:

“We had a meeting before the first semester started this year where we wanted to discuss about how we could implement our own policy on disability support and strategies to curb dropout among CwPDs and other disabilities in our school but we did not reach the conclusion.”

From the participants’ responses, it is clear that schools need clear school-based policies and programmes in order to create conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs in the school. The decisions that school boards make regarding the established national, department, school and classroom policies on disability and other policies such as attendance and discipline affect CwPDs enormously. The majority of the participants revealed that they needed to expose CwPDs to various policies and programmes such as individual education programs [IEP], life skills and self-skills programmes. Some participants argued that there are still punitive disciplinary policies and practices such as corporal punishment, suspensions and expulsions in the school which undermined efforts to create conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs.

4.6.3 Training of school boards

Participants’ responses exposed that they needed to meet the needs and learning styles of CwPDs in school through acquisition of training. Participants’ responses acknowledged that they did not have knowledge and skills to deal with challenges faced by CwPDs. The training would equip school board members with several strategies that can be used to assist and support CwPDs. One participant responded that they were not trained when they were elected. Participant 3 noted:

“I think we need training workshops once we are elected to acquire skills and knowledge and be conscientised about the policies and intervention programs that can help to mitigate dropout among CwPDs.”

Participant 5 also revealed that:

“Training program is conducted in special centres not in public schools and the follow up support for the school board on return to their regular schools. School board training must be considered as a priority and must not focus on one type of disability. Furthermore, the training must be in Sesotho so that all school members can understand easily.”

Participants showed a somewhat surprising factor in school boards’ lack of knowledge and skills. Participant 4 said:

“We fail to solve problems such as large class sizes, school climate, truancy and inappropriate caring for CwPDs who feel isolated in school. It is true that as school board members we have weak connection to teachers, parents and students, but in most cases, the problem is that we do not know our job description because we are not trained to do this job.”

School boards’ responses exposed that they failed to address the needs of CwPDs because they did not have knowledge and skills. This finding resonates with Liphapang’s (2015:56) study which showed that the unskilled school boards forced principals to admit too many learners in order to have large schools obvious of lack of classrooms and other resources. The data also revealed that the training program of school boards was conducted in special centres not in public schools, and there was follow up support for the school board on return to their regular schools. School board’s training must be considered as a priority and must not focus on one type of disability. Furthermore, the training must be in Sesotho so that all school board members can understand. They mentioned that the problem was that they did not know their job description because they were not trained for the job. It is clear that school board members

did not have alternative measures to mitigate dropout because they were not trained about their job, and lacked knowledge about their job description.

4.6.4 Changing attitudes towards children with physical disabilities

All the school boards mentioned that they did not have problems accommodating CwPDs in the schools. The data shows that they changed their attitude towards CwPDs. It is their job to help CwPDs as embedded in their roles and responsibilities. Participant 3 said:

“We do not have a problem to accommodate CwPDs in the school. It is their right to be educated in primary school and it is our job to see to it that we help them.”

Most of the participants commented that they could handle CwPDs but they encountered some difficulties. Participant 5 expressed that:

“We (school board) handle children with physical disabilities by visiting school regularly and try our best to assist them but with little time to give ‘individual attention’ due to overcrowded classrooms and sometimes school teachers do not accept us saying we waste their time of teaching.”

School board members felt that they did not have any problem to accommodate CwPDs in the school. Some mentioned that they tried their best to assist CwPDs but complexity of intertwined factors such as overcrowded classrooms and little time prohibited provision of the “individual attention” during their visit to school. Therefore, they believed that they need a lot of time to handle CwPDs. School boards mentioned that teachers do not accept them. In general, school board’s positive attitudes are regarded as conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs.

4.6.5 Unveiling the challenges in the mitigation of dropout of CwPDs and find solutions

All the participants agreed that in order to create conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs, school boards needed to identify the numerous challenges and consider the support activities that respond to the challenges in the school. Some of the major

challenges which were mentioned by the school board members were social problems, barriers in the Lesotho education system itself including:

- extreme hunger and poverty of learners
- minimal parental involvement and support
- absenteeism
- insufficient of support from the government
- Children with physical disabilities, who were being criticized, discriminated, rejected and labeled by their peers.

Challenges that emerged from the participants' responses will be discussed next.

4.6.5.1 Extremehunger and poverty rate

One of the main challenges that school board members was facing, was CwPDs who come from poor family background. Most of the participants' responses indicated that extreme poverty was a source of many problems such as absenteeism of CwPDs and the minimal support from the parents. It precluded school attendance mostly on CwPDs. They stated that due to poverty, CwPDs make decisions to dropout of primary schools. During interviews with the school board members, there was a noticeable small number of CwPDs in the schools and participant 1 noted:

“The rate of drop out among CwPDs is very high due to high poverty in the school but we try our best to control it when CwPDs are still in our school and it is costly to assist them once they have dropped out.”

The participants' responses showed that the most common challenge presented in the data was that of high poverty rate. Participant 9 seemed to be worried and realized the challenge of CwPDs who come to school without eating and vulnerable. These children come to school without eating due to poverty at their homes. She has a serious case study of a boy who came to school starving.

“One boy who was physically disabled, Teboho (not his real name) told to me that he has put his hope to the food he got daily at school during lunch time because at his home there was no food and he left his mother who was HIV positive on bed at home and it was quite sad to see that most of our children come to school with empty stomachs and I decided to come to school with extra food for him. Unfortunately, his mother died last year and he became absent for two weeks or more until he totally left the school and became a head of the family. Remember a child is already physically disabled for that matter.” She said this with tears gushing on her cheeks.

Participant 4 believes that they took a quick action such as intervention programs in the school.

“We constructed intervention programs as a response to the problem in the school. For example, we always asked parents whose children have finished grade 7 to donate the things like the used school uniforms and food. We do activities such as back to school and the money we collect is donated to the needy children. My main task is to work with the principal and the staff to eliminate poverty rate in the school. Therefore, I am a helper (good Samaritan).”

One participant acknowledged that poverty was the source of challenges such as minimal parental support and involvement as well as absenteeism. Participant 6 said:

“I think poverty becomes the source of absenteeism of CwPDs and the minimal support from the parents. For example, we have the cases where the poor parents struggled with psychology problems due to poverty and problems in their marriage. They neither collaborated with school board and therapists nor attended any parents meeting. This appeared to stem from poverty at home.”

The majority of the participants' responses revealed that there was a high rate of drop out and absenteeism among CwPDs dropout due to factors such as poverty and hunger, whereby most of CwPDs come to school with empty stomachs. A study Feldman, Smith and Waxman (2017) makes the same point that “...there is a complexity of intertwined factors such as poverty, which propel students towards dropping out.” The findings show that there was also minimal

support from poor parents of CwPDs. The participants revealed that due to poverty, they never showed support to their children. They neither collaborated with school board nor the therapists. The participants revealed that high poverty was worsened by HIV pandemic. For example, CwPDs are affected and are at risk of being infected with HIV/AIDS. When their parents die, they leave the school and become a head of the family. This finding resonates with UNAIDS (2013) report which shows that despite having the third highest HIV prevalence worldwide, Lesotho is also in crisis of extreme poverty and hunger.

It was apparent from the findings that the support activities of school boards, such as donating food to CwPDs, has dominated and been socialized into a system of “ubuntu” culture (O Motho ka Batho). Data shows that school board members further took actions such as asking for volunteering parents to donate uniforms, sanitary pads and food to the school. They also did activities such as back to school and the money collect was donated to the needy children. The school boards showed that to make this possible, they worked with the principal and the staff to eliminate poverty rate in the school, and they considered themselves as the helpers and collaborators as well.

4.6.5.2 Discrimination, labeling, rejection and stereotyped of CwPDs

Most participants felt that CwPDs who experience barriers to learning are often discriminated, labeled, rejected and stereotyped by other non-physically disabled peers. This finding resonates with Mosia’s (2017:151) study which showed that CwPDs were victims of discrimination and bullying. He further states that they feel judged as strange and devalued in the school. One participant asserted that CwPDs are gossiped and are laughed at and there was no deliberate action or attempt on the side of school board to intervene. Participant 9 indicated that:

“I received the complaints from the parents that their physically disabled children are discriminated, rejected, labeled and stereotyped when they wanted to play games in the school, other learners did not play with them as a result of being different. Those learners their non-physically disabled peers said they were incompetent, stupid and

perceived lesser abilities and they called them with names. CwPDs are gossiped, laughed at and there is no deliberate action or attempt on the side of school board to intervene.”

Similarly, participant 5 explained that he once caught a group of boys who were laughing at a girl who had a hump at the back. These boys were calling the girls names because of her height. The girl insulted them as a sign of self-defense. He further explained that,

“CwPDs who experience barriers to learning are often discriminated, labeled, rejected and stereotyped by other non-physically disabled peers in the school. I caught boys who were criticizing a girl who has a hump at the back. These boys were calling a lady with names because of her height and a lady insulted them back.”

One of the participants, during the individual interview, revealed that CwPDs develop poor self-concept when they are discriminated, labeled, rejected and stereotyped in the school. Participant 9 said:

“Most of the times, CwPDs develop poor self-concept when they are discriminated, labeled, rejected and stereotyped in the school and dropout.”

From the above data, it is clear that school boards do not have deliberate action or attempt to intervene when CwPDs are discriminated, rejected, labeled and stereotyped. Sitienei and Mulambula (2012:81) says “...the formation of self-concept should be in the jurisdiction of peers depending on the level of interaction.” The lack of intervention from the school board causes CwPDs to become socially isolated and remain less likely to attend school and complete primary education. Another challenge is mentioned in 4.6.5.3 below.

4.6.5.3 Insufficient support from the government (MoET)

All the participants’ responses showed their concern about the insufficient support they get from the ministry for mitigating dropout of CwPDs. Many participants acknowledged Ministry officials who come to assist teachers and principals do not work with school boards. However, according to the participants, the Ministry officials only come to school to inspect if teachers have the lesson plans, scheme books and classroom registers and they often have improper

communication with school boards. The officials come to discuss with principals when there are allegations of teachers abusing students, and they argue with school boards because they hold different notions on the same issue. Participant6 said:

“...the Ministry officials only come to school to inspect if teachers have the lesson plans, scheme books and classrooms register but do not communicate well with us (school board). The officials argue with us because we hold different notions on the same issue. Sometimes they come and discuss with principals if there are allegations of teachers who abused the students and never comेतous to solve the issues that concern CwPDs.”

Similarly, participant 2suggested that:

“...the government does not extend its financial support in preparation of full and effective participation of CwPDs in our school and this is a challenge to us.”

Participant 10 indicated that:

“Last year, children had to repeat grade 7 because they had severe physical disabilities because no follow up was made by the Ministry officials after CwPDs completed grade 7.”

On a similar note, participant 9 said that:

“I thinkour government needs to have a free secondary education. This means education of CwPDs will be taken to the next level in collaboration with us.”

From the above quotes, it is apparent that the school boards were concerned about few things from the education authorities such as poor communication, lack of funds for CwPDs, and lack of collaboration. In all other regards, they are absent from assisting schools. According to all the participants, the officials only come to school to inspect if teachers have the lesson plans, scheme books and classrooms register but do not communicate well with them. In all other regards, they are absent from helping schools. The findings showed that the officials argued with school boards because they hold different ideas on the same issue. This made it difficult for school boards to assist CwPDs alone.

Kayumbu (2017) observed that effective communication is the most important thing needed to perform tasks. Findings showed that the officials come and discuss with principals if there are allegations of teachers who abused the students and never come to school boards to solve the issues that concern CwPDs. The lack of support they get from the ministry contribute to a failure of CwPDs to transit to secondary schools in large numbers. The participants suggested that the government should involve them when they implement free secondary education. Kayumbu (2017:4) observes that in 2016, free secondary education was introduced in Namibian education system and this should be done in Lesotho education system as well.

4.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has explored the findings and discussions on the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. It presented the data obtained from individual interviews to collect data from 10 participants. During the research study, the three themes were obtained from an analysis of the school boards' responses.

The two cases studies showed that there were effective strategies in place namely: Improving feeding (nutrition), early identification of academic progress and provision of peer tutoring support, adaptation of child-centred curriculum, fostering entrepreneurship skills, involving learners and their parents in decision-making, and raising disability awareness campaigns. These were identified as the most effective in mitigating the dropout among CwPDs in primary schools. These strategies were deemed effective by the majority of participants in the two cases. This chapter provided important information response to the main research question and secondary research questions posed in this study.

The roles of school boards and the effective strategies they used to mitigate dropout will serve as a tool to ascertain whether collaboration is found amongst school board members in the schools, and if so, whether it is effective in the process of creating conditions conducive to academic performance in the mitigation of dropouts. It was, however, noted that what was deemed effective worked for some of the primary schools but not for others. During the

empirical study, the researcher found that some of the findings of this study were similar to the local findings of the study by Mosia (2017) which explored the access to higher education for students with disabilities in Lesotho. He also found the poor influence of the senior management on students with disabilities' welfare, emotional, psychological, as well as academic support. Their effort to address the challenges in the Lesotho institutions was not effective and compromised the welfare of CWDs in the school.

However, the connection between this empirical study and Mosia' study could suggest that more similar studies in other districts could be encouraged to find out if these challenges (dropout) or needs are prevalent in the entire country of Lesotho. The researcher could identify a general gap of collaborative school board roles to mitigate dropout among CwPDs in primary schools from the participants in terms of the needs during the transcribing process.

4.8 CONCLUSION

School board members in Lesotho believed that it is their role and responsibility to mitigate dropout among CwPDs. Data were obtained from the participants' responses and presented in three themes namely; school board's collaborative roles in mitigating dropout among CwPDs, effective strategies used by school boards to mitigate dropout among CwPDs, and creating conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs. On the last theme, the intertwined factors that constrain the mitigation of dropout of CwPDs needed to be identified in primary schools as a sub-theme generated from the study. The school boards also believe that they are accountable for increasing self-esteem, self-concept and confidence in the school. They also acted as advocates, counselors, motivators and problem solvers when they provided opportunities for CwPDs to talk about their demands and feelings. The responses from the participants were also included verbatim to ensure that their voices were presented and not left out. The relevant literature reviewed and the two theoretical frameworks were used as a lens to discuss the findings. The discussion of findings, conclusion and recommendations are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Learners with Special Educational Needs have long been marginalized when it comes to access to education. Therefore, a new direction for inclusive education is drawn up to meet educational and related needs of all learners.”

(MoET, 2018:3)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed at exploring the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools using interviews. In this chapter, a brief summary of the research findings, the general conclusions of the study, the limitations of the study, and the recommendations and the suggestions for the future research are highlighted bringing the study to a close. The researcher is content that the aims and objectives of this study have been achieved.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to explore the collaborative roles of school boards in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. In addressing this aim, the following secondary objectives were used:

- To find out what school boards perceive their roles to be in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools.
- To establish strategies used by school board pertaining to the mitigation of dropout among children with physical disabilities.
- To investigate how school board members created conditions conducive to academic performance of children with physical disabilities.

5.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY BASED ON THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

5.3.1 The findings and Interpretation based on the first objective of the study

- To find out what school boards perceive their roles to be in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in Lesotho primary schools.

5.3.1.1 Development of intrapersonal skills of children with physical disabilities

The study findings indicated that effective collaboration between school board members helped to enable CwPDs to build resilience, self-confidence and self-concepts within themselves. According to the findings, school boards provided counseling to CwPDs and identified their roles as that of counselors, problem solvers, motivators and comforters. However, extreme cases were referred for counseling. This finding resonates with the idea by Fazel (2015) that schools should provide both material and psychosocial support to vulnerable learners including CwPDs.

The school boards also noted that CwPDs' self-esteem needs to be boosted time after time to deal with the feeling of self-pity, aggression and hostility so as to curb dropout in the school. In support of collaboration, Galetuke (2017) affirms the similar finding that the role of school board has moved from traditional concept (medical model) to a more collaborative social model, where CwPDs' problems are considered by all members. The findings showed that school boards who applied strong collaboration in the school achieved success in giving CwPDs the opportunity to relate with their non-physically disabled peers because they become competent, develop positive attitude and become independent in their lives.

5.3.1.2 Equal involvement in providing care and spiritual support

Another important point raised by school boards was that of providing care and spiritual support as one of their collaborative roles to mitigate dropout among CwPDs. The school boards highlighted that teaching CwPDs to pray and read the Bible was an integral part of motivating and refreshing both CwPDs and their teachers before the classes start. This finding is

in line with Mercy Corps's (2014c) idea which showed that CwPDs seek a safe learning environment where all spiritual security and religious beliefs are respected. This was apparent from the participants noting that the equal involvement and the will of all members (role players) to work together to teach and motivate CwPDs to pray and read the word of God (Bible) overcame challenges in the school and in life.

The majority of the participants also highlighted that school boards should proactively communicate with parents to contribute in teaching their children that prayer is an important tool to provide them with sense of safety, and to help them to show love and kindness to other learners. The involvement of all the stakeholders such as parents is also highlighted in the SASA (RSA, 1996b); section 20(a) which stipulates that parents must be involved in the education of their children (Galetuke, 2017). According to Nene (2017), the availability of religious education teachers in schools can contribute to teaching children how to pray, and motivating them to face challenges in life. MoET (2018:16) notes that Social Sciences is a subject which promotes Religious Education aimed at promoting attitudes towards spiritual education of CWDs in Lesotho primary schools.

5.3.1.3 School boards as advocates (Keeping CwPDs at the center)

A crucial finding stemmed from the quotes '*keeping CwPDs at the center*' as a school board's collaborativerole of mitigating dropout in the primary schools. Most participants showed that 'Keeping CwPDs at the center' focused on listening to CwPDs' voices. School boards acknowledged that being active listeners was embedded in participants' collaborative roles and responsibilities as the advocates of CwPDs' well-being. The school boards further indicated that keeping CwPDs at the center was a learner-centred practice aimed at providing opportunities for CwPDs to talk about their demands, feelings, wishes, interests and their school experiences in the mainstream school.

The participants' responses also revealed that, by listening to CwPDs' views, understanding and respecting their needs as individuals, they stayed on CwPDs' back about coming to school regularly. The school boards agreed that their participation offered them an opportunity to

focus on keeping CwPDs at the center in order to meet their academic, personal and emotional needs which encouraged learners to transit to high school level. Nene (2017) found that learners should be listened to so that the productive learning can be created. The data revealed that CwPDs always have experiences that expand once they are given chances to express their feelings of emotional or physical abuse.

5.3.1.4 Involvement of other professionals (community-based experts)

One of the ways that school boards can mitigate dropout among CwPDs is through involving other professionals. The majority of the school board members indicated that involving other professionals such as community-based experts, doctors, psychologists for the purpose of referrals, staff training and further assessment or expert advice on some aspects of physical disability, necessitate establishment of positive relationships with various stakeholders. This finding corroborates the idea of Mohangi and Archer (2015) who states that, community leaders, families, and NGOs, should all contribute towards the process of teaching and learning and addressing barriers to learning.

The health professionals could specify the type of drugs or medication required to be given to CwPDs in a day. The findings of this study resonates with Sitienei and Mulambula's (2012) finding that referrals are needed for CwPDs who have health impairments such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, tuberculosis and heart diseases in order to provide appropriate resources that best corresponds to requirements and preferences of CwPDs. A similar study by MoET (2018) showed that access to quality education for every Mosotho child, including those with physical disability, requires full support from immediate family up to other professionals in a larger community. MoET (2018:3) notes that inclusive education providers create a culture of collaboration in a landscape of mutual respect and equality for all.

When CwPDs see the school boards working together with other professional in their education, their moral support will be boosted and they will feel connected to their school. This also fosters positive relationships between schools and professionals. Some school board members indicated that the psychology teachers, the health professionals and community-

based expertise seemed to be reluctant to discuss with them how to handle CwPDs, and they further failed to provide counseling to teachers and CwPDs in primary schools.

5.3.2 Findings and Interpretation based on the second objective of the study

- To establish strategies used by school board pertaining to mitigating dropout among CwPDs in primary schools in Maseru district.

5.3.2.1 Improving feeding (nutrition)

The findings of this study indicated that school boards understand the strategies of mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs). This was evident from school boards' strategy of improving healthy eating habit; accessing learners the food provided at the school; and providing parents with clear information about food hygiene, active living and healthy food choices.

A study by Chauhan (2015) indicated that schools in India are regarded as the centres that use school feeding programs for appraisal and improving nutrition of learners, including children with disabilities. In this study, the participants regarded themselves as promoters of healthy eating habits in primary school. In other words, they are regarded as the overseers who provided a welcoming eating environment that boost self-concept of CwPDs.

The participants revealed that most CwPDs came from poor homes which struggled to support them with healthy food to be physically fit and perform well academically. Therefore, some CwPDs were affected by health conditions that interfered with their learning, and they needed to eat healthy food to reduce the risk of diseases and frequent absenteeism from school. Somers et al. (2009) observe that individuals who drop out of school cost estimated billions of dollars. Nene (2017) recommends that more assistance and food is needed to ensure that vulnerable children, including CwPDs who come from poor households, are supported. Nene (2017) further highlights that poor nutrition affects learners' academic performance negatively. The study by Sitienei and Mulambula (2012) showed that it is important to immunise and give a proper nutrition to CwPDs in order to prevent disabilities or diseases.

5.3.2.2 Raising disability awareness campaigns in primary schools

Most of the participants agreed that they needed to have disability awareness campaigns as one of the strategies to mitigate dropout among CwPDs in the primary schools. The majority of participants at all levels revealed that CwPDs were still subjected to mockery and emotionally abused by parents, teachers and their peers them to dropout in primary schools. Some participants highlighted that due to cultural issues, CwPDs were treated as objects of pity, and parents protected and kept them at home until they were too old with no access to quality education. Those who were admitted had poor attendance because their parents were overprotective. Therefore, disability awareness campaigns can be useful to instill an understanding of integrating CwPDs in regular primary schools.

The findings of this study resonate with the finding by Nene (2017) that learners need to be made aware of the morals and value in their culture to shape their moral development and be taught to accept other people regardless of their disabilities. The participants agreed that there was a need for a sustained disability awareness campaign in the primary schools, in the streets, radios and televisions, to breakdown discrimination and stigma, change the attitudes and cultural values that contribute to dropout among CwPDs.

5.3.2.3 Early identification of academic progress and provision of peer tutoring support

All the participants' responses acknowledged that they collaborated with principals and teachers to ensure the academic progress, attendance and positive behavior early. The participants agreed that the identification of CwPDs' academic progress helped them to put an intervention plan and use peer tutoring support. It also encouraged open communication in the primary school. The participants' responses showed that early identification of CwPDs' academic progress helped them to intervene when CwPDs developed slowly or struggled in their achievement and progress in relation to literacy and numeracy.

The findings resonate with those of Sitienei and Mulambula's (2012) study, which indicated that the academic performance of CwPDs is poor because they have low self-esteem in the regular classroom. The findings from the participants indicated that school boards needed to work

collaboratively with teachers to engage CwPDs in academic support using peer tutoring as one of the strategies to prevent them from dropping out of primary school. According to Topping's (2015) study, peer tutoring is a strategy that focuses more on subject-specific content to improve learners' academic achievement.

The study findings revealed that one of the conditions conducive to healthy physical school environment was to provide teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, computers, writing tools, desks, adaptive, handouts and additional assistive technology devices to CwPDs, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools. This finding resonates with Kabuta's (2014) observation that many CwPDs depended on family support when families could not afford to buy all the necessary teaching and learning materials for their study. The participants' responses indicated that more assistive technology devices can also help CwPDs to manipulate the environment, increase mobility and communicate with everyone involved in the school.

5.3.2.4 Involving learners and their parents in decision-making

Another important finding was that there was a great need for involvement of CwPDs and their parents in decision-making in the school. For instance, participants indicated that parents promote positive attitudes towards the education, ensure that children with disabilities are enrolled and retained in primary schools. MoET (2018: 16) notes that parents are equal partners in their children's education and make decisions on referrals; placements and assessments of CwPDs. Pelentsov et al. (2015) see parents as caregivers who need to promote positive attitudes towards CwPDs in the school.

Finding indicated that CwPDs' involvement in the decisions implied that they needed to know more about the programmes or activities that are implemented to help them to take responsibility of their education. The data from the school boards' responses revealed that CwPDs should be included in issues that concern them as there cannot be anything about them without them. Kayumbu (2017) agreed that CwPDs must be involved in accordance with their

capabilities and development. Grant (2015) recommends that CwPDs should take part in school governance and be treated with respect and their voices and ideas should be heard.

5.3.3. Findings and interpretation based on the third research objective

- To examine how school board members created conditions conducive to academic performance of children with physical disabilities in primary schools.

5.3.3.1 Access to healthy physical school environment

Most school board members revealed the need for CwPDs to have a healthy physical school environment. Some of the school board members complained that physical barriers such as access to medication, transportation and access to buildings (uneven terrain and staircases) made it difficult for CwPDs to progress to high school level. An overarching sub-theme that emerged from all the participants' responses was that creating access to healthy physical school environment of CwPDs was important in improving academic performance in both schools.

The MDG Final Report of 2015 reveals that Lesotho has shown decisive leadership in the construction of schools to reduce walking distance to school but the number of CwPDs still continues to rise in primary schools, thereby increasing demand and stretching the use of educational resources. The majority of participants more primary schools should be built, which have proper ramps and walkways to accommodate the wheelchair users as an effective strategy to mitigate dropout among CwPDs.

The participants noted the need for broad corridors, finance, mobile clinics, and space for wheelchair users, classrooms and new buildings for CwPDs. Mosia (2017) noted that some buildings in schools were not accessible by wheelchair users as they used stairs. Jeong et al. (2015:619) states that the caregivers face financial, emotional and physical obstacles when caring for CwPDs in the schools. Hamutenya (2013) and Save the children (2013) indicate that adaptation of the physical environment (school buildings) should be guided by Universal Design principles.

5.3.3.2 Engagement with department policies and legislations

Another important point raised by school boards on how they could create conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs was that of engagement with policies and legislations. According to them, programmes such as individual education programs [IEP], life skills and self-skills, and medical intervention programmes encouraged CwPDs to feel connected to their school. The school board members noted that when CwPDs are engaged with policies or programs, they succeed academically, have good attendance, and transit to high school level. It emerged that policies and programmes are also mandated to address all the unpleasant exclusions and to ensure provision of quality education to all learners including CwPDs.

The majority of the school board members indicated that MoET should take a responsibility of mitigating dropout among CwPDs. Participants indicated that they were not aware of any disability policy or inclusive education policy in the school. Furthermore, they highlighted that little has been done to formulate policies and programs to support CwPDs and curb dropout among them, but they never completed the process. LNFOD (2016) reveals that in Lesotho, the Disability Equity Bill has not been changed into law by the parliament. From the data collected in this study, it was apparent that there is need for school board members to put the school-based policies and programmes in place in order to fulfill their roles.

5.3.3.3 Training of school boards

Most participants strongly agreed that they needed to be provided with specialized training in order to address the needs of CwPDs. These findings explained why, according to Galetuke (2017), section 19 of the SASA compel provincial governments in South Africa to provide training to governing bodies/school board. Liphapang (2015:56) posits that the unskilled school boards make mistakes such as forcing principals to admit more learners in order to have a large school unaware that lack of classrooms and other resources can hinder learners including CwPDs' progress.

The data also revealed that the training program of school boards is conducted in special centres not in public schools, and the follow-up support for the school board members on return to their schools is not made. Furthermore, data also revealed that training must be considered as a priority and must not focus on one type of disability. The participants also considered that training must be in Sesotho so that all school members can understand. They also noted that they did not know their job description because they were not trained to do this job.

Kayumbu (2017) suggests that school board training should be an ongoing process which is done yearly. Inappropriately trained school boards are frustrated, unmotivated and experience feelings of guilt and inadequacy in the school. The trained and qualified school board members should attend workshops that will help them to change their attitudes towards CwPDs and be committed to up-grade their skills and knowledge to understand CwPDs.

5.3.3.4 School board's attitudes towards children with physical disabilities

All the school boards were aware that their positive attitude towards CwPDs is very important in accommodating them in the school. School boards responded positively and felt that CwPDs required special attention in terms of provision of learning materials to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They believed that they needed a lot of time and training to acquire skill in order to handle CwPDs.

Kayumbu (2017) posits that school boards can change their attitudes towards learners, mainly CwPDs, and make collective and informed decisions with ongoing in-service training. School boards mentioned that other schools feared to accommodate CwPDs in the school because of high level of overcrowding and that in some school teachers did not accept them. Some participants mentioned that they tried their best to assist CwPDs during their visit in schools.

5.3.3.5 Unveiling the challenges in the mitigation of dropout of CwPDs and find solutions

Although the Lesotho Education Act (2010, section 25), as the legal framework for schools, has clearly stipulated that all school board members should play an active role in overseeing the

management and the proper and efficient running of the school, the finding from the school boards revealed that CwPDs faced negative influences because of their disability. School boards understood what was expected from them as school leaders in terms of dealing with the challenges of educational discrimination, hunger and poverty, and others that continued to place CwPDs at a disadvantage.

It was apparent from the findings that most of the CwPDs came to school on empty stomachs and so dropped out of schools. Apart from that, CwPDs were gossiped and are laughed at, and there was little or no deliberate action or attempt on the part of school boards to intervene in other schools. It was argued that the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Training to intervene in all the intertwined factors (challenges) was limited in Lesotho and this necessitates school board involvement. Participants indicated that they did not receive enough support from the government in terms of allocation of resources, financial support and training to improve the lives of CwPDs in primary schools.

Participants also acknowledged that by creating the conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs, they should provide CwPDs with basic needs that would ensure their survival and development, and ensure that CwPDs are not subjected to cultural practices that may negatively affect their well-being. In other words, they work together with parents and teachers to donate school uniforms, sanitary pads and food. Mavuso and Duka (2014) noted that the favorable relationships in the school are created by an empowered school boards. CwPDs need to be guaranteed equality by school boards and be lifted out of the cycle of poverty, discrimination, labeling and other challenges they face in a formal schooling. Furthermore, in order to mitigate dropout in primary, the school board is mandated to guarantee that all learners, irrespective of their disability, aptitude or ability, have the opportunity to reach their full potentials (MoET, 2018).

5.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This research study sought to explore the collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in Lesotho primary schools. Since a

framework for intervention based on the model of Bronfenbrenner that involved the devolution of authority vested in the community on micro and meso-systemic levels was formulated, empowering schools through school boards is a way to address the needs of children with disabilities.

The Lesotho Education Act (2010,section2[b]) as the legal framework for schools, has stipulated the role of the school as one of ensuring that children who are physically, mentally or otherwise handicapped, are given special treatment, quality education and care required by their condition,as this premise of this study is based on. Whilst there are effective strategies in place for the mitigation of dropout of CwPDs, the collaboration of all school board members in the implementation of these strategies is crucial in determining the effectiveness.

It was found that when school board members work in isolation, they fail to foster resilience and help CwPDs to develop self-esteem, self-concept and confidence in the primary schoolsand dropout remains. In the context of this study, it was found that school board members KeptCwPDs at the center through a learner-centred practice aimed at providing opportunities for children with physical disabilities (CwPDs), allowing them to talk about their demands, feelings, wishes, interests and their school experiences in the mainstream school.

The thirdtheme that appeared in the study revealed that all members of the school board should forge participatory stances towards tackling the impasse of education delivery in primary schools. For example, they should adaptappropriate infrastructure for wheelchair users or crutch users and train school boards to address the needs of CwPDswith policies and legislations. Theseare the important stepping stones towards ensuring that CwPDs learn as effectively as possible.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The followinglimitations are recognized in the study:

- The participants that were selected for the purpose of this research study included principals, teachers, parents, gazette chiefs and school proprietor from two schools in

Maseru District, Lesotho, and the sample cannot be generalized to all the greater Lesotho schools.

- Too many appointments were made between the researcher and the individual participants on the same day, which forced the researcher to spend a lot of money for transport and other needs. This means the research was conducted under time and resource constraints.
- The meetings and the data gathering were delayed by some of the participants who were not ready for the interviews to commence and the researcher had to be patient until such participant was ready. Certain individual interviews had to be re-scheduled due to clashes with school activities that were not evident on the term plan.
- Another limitation was that; some school boards were reluctant to supply information pertaining to their understanding of the current state of dropout of CwPDs in primary schools.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study revealed that the school board members understood their collaborative roles in mitigating dropout of CwPDs in primary schools, as well as their ability to create the conditions conducive to academic performance of CwPDs in primary schools. The following recommendations are made to assist in the effective collaborative roles of school board and successful construction of collaborative strategies that can be used to mitigate dropout among CwPDs in primary schools.

- It is recommended that all the school board members work together as a team to assist children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) to develop intrapersonal skills such as self-esteem, self-concept and confidence in the school through counseling. This means school board will have to understand, listen and respect the feelings, wishes and needs of CwPDs as a result they are the advocates of CwPDs' holistic well-being.
- The Department of Education (DoE) needs to extend its financial support in preparation for full and effective participation of children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in the schools by giving bursaries to CwPDs for them to transit to secondary schools in large numbers and introduce free secondary education.

- It is important that disability awareness campaigns and camping are made, where CwPDs are taken out to interact with other people and be recognized in the schools and the community. Parents need to be taught to admit that their CwPDs have disabilities, and not to be ashamed so that they cannot hide them.
- It is recommended that school boards implement policies and programmes such as individual education programs [IEP], life skills and self-skills, medical intervention in order for CwPDs to feel connected to their schools.
- It is important that school boards involve parents and children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) in decisions making at schools, and give parents the legal right to voice their opinions.
- It is recommended that the DoE work together with school boards to improve nutrition in order to mitigate dropout among CwPDs in primary schools and involve other professionals such as community-based experts, doctors, psychologists for the purpose of referrals of CwPDs.
- It is important for the government of Lesotho to provide formal training for school boards to equip them with knowledge and skills on how to meet the needs of CwPDs. Training must be in Sesotho so that all school members can understand easily.
- The infrastructure such as classrooms, pavements, toilets and ramps for wheelchair users or crutches users and child-centred curriculum with appropriate equipment should be used in primary schools.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE RESEARCH

- This study was conducted in two public primary schools. It would be interesting to conduct a research that would investigate why physically disabled girls are more likely to drop out than boys within a different context, such as a private school.
- There is a need to conduct research that should investigate the efficiency and effectiveness of children with physical disabilities' re-entry policy and over-age enrolment policy in primary schools.

- It would be significant to reproduce the study into how school boards can develop policies with clear define direction of enrolment for parents, teachers and children with disabilities.
- This study was about school boards'voices and the next study could be on teachers' voices based on collaborative teachers' constructions of school-based care and support on CwPDs.

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APPENDIX A: MINISTRY PERMISSION



THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MASERU DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE
P.O. BOX 47, MASERU 100.
22 313 709 / 22 322 755

18 March 2019

The Principal

Maseru 100

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: RESEARCH

"Collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools"

Mr Mohapi Monyane is a student who is conducting a research on the above stated topic. He therefore wishes to carry out a research at your school.

You are kindly requested to provide him with the information that he may require.

Thanking you in advance for your usual support.

Yours Faithfully


MPITI LEMENA (MR)
DISTRICT EDUCATION MANAGER - MASERU



APPENDIX B: THE LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY

Khubetsoana
P.O Box 1518
Maseru 100

12 March 2019

Senior Education Officer
The Ministry of Education and Training
Maseru 100

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

Dear sir/madam

My name is Mohapi Augustinus Monyane. I am a registered student for Masters in Education (M Ed.) in Psychology of Education at the University of the Free State. My student number is: 2007038769. As a requirement for the graduation, I am supposed to conduct a school based research which forms integral component for the completion of my (MEd.) qualification. I have therefore submitted a proposal which has been approved to demonstrate my intentions to fulfill this requirement by conducting research in Maseru District.

In my proposed study, I plan to explore this title: **“Collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools”**. In this study, I am planning to work with two primary schools falling in Maseru District.

I wish to submit this request to the Department of Education in Lesotho to assist me to conduct this study by granting me the permission to use the schools for data collection. I hope the Maseru district of Education will be able to contribute positively in assisting me to complete my study on behalf of the University. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on: +266 51697215, and email: mohapiam@gmail.com

Yours in Education
Mohapi A. Monyane
Cell (+266 51697215)

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF REQUEST FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S PERMISSION

Khubetsoana
P.O. BOX 1518
Maseru 100

21 March 2019

The principal

XX primary school

RE: LETTER OF REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

Dear Sir/madam

My name is Mohapi Augustinus Monyane. I hereby request a permission to do a research in your School. I am a student at the University of the Free State (UFS) enrolled for a Masters in Education in psychology of Education.

To fulfill the requirements of the degree, I need to conduct a research under the topic: **“Collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools”**. This means that I have to do research in some schools including yours. My research project will involve the collaboration of one principal, one educator, one parent, one chief and one church member in a school board. The aim of the study is to explore the collaborative roles of school board pertaining to the mitigation among dropout of children with physical disabilities.

I am ready to observe all the stipulations of conducting research such as among others:

- It is voluntary to participate in the study.
- The information obtained will be handled with the confidentiality and will only be used solely for the purpose of my research.
- Prior arrangements will be made to obtain consent from co researchers.

Yours in Education

MA Monyane Cell (+266 51697215) email: mohapiam@gmail.com

APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA



Khubetsoana
P.O. Box 1518
Maseru 100

23 March 2019

THE INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESESEARCH STUDY TITLED:

‘Collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools’

Dear participants

My name is Mohapi Augustinus Monyane. I am a Masters of Education candidate at main campus of the University of Free State. The research study is currently for the fulfillment of M Ed degree in Psychology of Education.

I would like to invite you to take part in this research project on the above mentioned title. There are many children with physical disabilities who drop out of primary schools in Maseru district of Lesotho. I would like you to participate in this research because you are one of the people who can bring changes in the mitigation of dropout among children with physical disabilities in primary schools.

The aim of the study is to explore the collaborative roles of school board pertaining to the mitigation among dropout of children with physical disabilities. And I believe your experiences as school board members can contribute much to my understanding and knowledge about your collaborative roles in the primary schools. I have clear confidence that the information obtained from this research will be beneficial in identifying strategies to mitigate dropout of children with physical disabilities in primary schools.

I am ready to observe all the stipulations of conducting research such as among others:

- Your participation is absolutely voluntary.
- The information obtained from you will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and will be solely used for the purpose of this research study.
- If you do choose to take part and any issue arises which will make you feel uncomfortable, you may at any time stop or withdraw your participation with no further repercussions.

Yours sincerely

MA Monyane

Cell (+266 51697215) email: mohapiam@gmail.com

APPENDIX E: RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

This informed consent form has two parts:

- The informed sheet to share the information about the study with you.
- Certificate of consent for signatures if you choose to participate.

DATE

26/11/2018

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools

RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Mr. Mohapi A Monyane

2007038769

+266 51697215

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

Faculty of Education

Psychology of Education

STUDYLEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

Dr N. Gcelu

071 044 4316

WHAT ARE THE AIMS / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The aim of the study is to determine collaborative strategies that can be used by school board pertaining to the mitigation of dropout among children with physical disabilities and to examine how school board members can create conditions conducive to healthy school environment of children with physical disabilities. The study seeks to explore the roles of school board in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools. The focus of this study is on collaborative ways of mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in primary schools.

Despite the Lesotho Education Act, Act No. 10 of 2010 that stipulates school boards must promote the education of the people and in particular should ensure, as soon as circumstance permit, that a learner who is physically, mentally or handicapped is given the treatment, education and care in both primary and secondary schools. The education environment in Lesotho is faced by the diverse layers of complexity including high dropout of children with physical disabilities. Children with physical disabilities drop out of Lesotho primary schools without having learnt the basic life skills (Ministry of Education and Training MoET, 2014). Census Bureau (2016) also reveals that every year around 10% of children with physical disabilities from each grade fail to move to the next year despite the presence of functioning school boards in schools, resulting in the high cumulative loss by the final year of the primary cycle. However, less attention has been given to school boards in exercising their collaborative roles and building their leadership skills in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in primary schools.

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

I, Mohapi Monyane, an educator at a primary school in Maseru district, I am employed by the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho. I am studying towards a Master's degree in Psychology of Education at the University of Free State. I am conducting my study on collaborative school board roles in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in Lesotho primary schools as dropout is a serious concern in primary schools.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

This study has received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of UFS. A copy of the approval letter will be obtained from the researcher.

Approval number: UFS-HSD 2018/1537/1604

WHY ARE YOU INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

As a school board member, you will provide information on how school board's collaborated efforts can be used to mitigate dropout among children with physical disabilities in primary schools. Your knowledge and experience as a school board member with regard to mitigating dropout will contribute to the study by providing insight into effective collaborative strategies for mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities through a collaborated effort. The principal researcher will select two primary schools in Maseru district. The sample will consist of one educator, one principal, one parent, one village chief, one representative from the church (proprietor) each SB member per school. Thus, ten participants will form part of the research.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The method of data collection that will be used in this study is in the form of semi- structured interviews. This data collection method will allow me to investigate and probe the responses of various interviewees to acquire valuable information regarding their thoughts, feelings, ideas, attitudes, values as well as concerns. The expected time for the written interview is 25 minutes per participant.

CAN THE PARTICIPANT WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

While I highly appreciate your participation in this study and the valuable contribution you can make, your participation is absolutely voluntary and the information obtained from you will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and will be solely used for the purpose of this research study. If you do choose to take part and any issue arises which will make you feel uncomfortable, you may at any time stop or withdraw your participation with no further repercussions.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

This study will serve to benefit all School Board (SB) members and the Department of Education (DoE). I have clear confidence that the information obtained from this research will be beneficial in identifying collaborative strategies to mitigate dropout of children with physical disabilities in primary schools. This research will be a road map for action and continuous improvement for every school board. It will offer practical advice to enable school boards to fulfill their critical aspect of their public leadership role in primary schools.

WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED INCONVENIENCE OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There are currently no anticipated risks to the study. However, if such a risk may arise during the course of the study, I will make the necessary referrals. While I highly appreciate your participation in this study and the valuable contribution you can make, please feel free to contact me directly in 00266 51697215 if you experience any discontent with the way research is being conducted and you are also free to consult my supervisor in 07 1044 4316 if you experience any unhappiness and uncomfortable.

WILL WHAT I SAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Of course yes! All necessary measures will be taken by the researcher to ensure that no participant is harmed in any way by the research. No participants' names or school names will be disclosed in any way. The researcher will allow participants to view the letters of informed consent. All information will be kept

entirely confidential and will not be disclosed at any time. All participants will receive full anonymity. Participants will also be allowed to have access to the permission letters granted by the respective Departments of Education, allowing me to conduct research. These letters will serve as proof that permission would not have been granted if any unethical practices were involved. I will then explain to participants the significance of the forms from the Department of Education and the stipulations of what is allowed or not during the research process. Participants will also be briefed on the implications of the consent letter. Participants names will not be recorded, anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give.

THE INFORMATION STORAGE

Hard copies of the participant's answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of at least five to six years in a locked cupboard at my place. For future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. This information may be used in the future for Research Ethics Review and or approval from the committee. The interviews will be conducted at times convenient to the participants, probing through pre-set questions, but allowing them to share their perspectives freely. The interviews will be written interviews and will take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete.

HOW INFORMATION CAN BE DESTROYED

After five years, hard copies of information will be destroyed using a paper shredder. No persons will have any access to the information that you will present in the interviews and when presented to my supervisor, pseudonyms will be used rather than actual names of participants.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

Neither financial benefit nor any kind of award will be rewarded to any participant for participating in the study.

HOW WILL THE PARTICIPANT BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Mohapi Monyane via email at mohapiam@gmail.com Should you have any discontent about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr. N. Gcelu on 071 044 431.

DECLARATION

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

NOTE: If you are willing to participate in this research study project, please kindly sign this letter as a declaration of your consent:

I, _____ (participant's full names), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable). I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Thank you for your contribution to this research

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULED FOR EDUCATORS

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME

Gender: Male or Female

1. For how long have you been teaching?
2. What qualifications do you have?
3. How old are you?
 - A. 20-29 C.40-49 E.60+
 - B.30-39 D.50-59
4. Are you a member of a school board?
5. Should teachers be represented in a SB? What are the benefits of being a member of SB?
6. Do you think school board brings any change and improvements in you school? How? State with examples
7. Do you have children with any kind of disability in your school? Mention all the forms of disabilities
8. Should children with physical disabilities be involved in school activities in your school?
9. Are there any cases where children with physical disabilities dropout of the school?
10. In your opinion, are there any challenges or factors that contribute to drop out of children with physical disabilities?
11. What collaborative roles does school board play in your school in mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities in your school?
12. What strategies do educators at the school use to deal with the dropout of children with physical disabilities?
13. Do teachers in the school board have enough education or skills to deal up issues related to children with physical disabilities?
14. How can SB collaborate and create healthy school environment that is conducive to academic performance of children with physical disabilities? Explain in details.

Participant's signature.....Date.....

Researcher's signature: Date:

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW SCHEDULED FOR PRINCIPAL

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME

Gender: Male or Female

1. For how long have you been in this position (principal)?
2. What qualifications do you have?
3. How old are you?
B. 20-29 C.40-49 E.60+
B.30-39 D.50-59
4. Are you a member of a school board?
5. Should principals be represented in a SB? What are the benefits of being a member of SB?
6. Does school board have policy or constitution?
7. Do you admit children with physical disabilities in your school?
8. Do you think school board brings any change and improvements in you school? How? State with examples
9. Do you have children with any kind of disability in your school? Mention all the forms of disabilities
10. Should children with physical disabilities be involved in school activities in your school?
11. Are there any cases where children with physical disabilities dropout of the school?
12. In your opinion, are there any challenges or factors that contribute to drop out of children with physical disabilities?
13. What collaborative roles does school board play in your school in mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities in your school?
14. What strategies do educators at the school use to deal with the dropout of children with physical disabilities?
13. Does a principal in the school board have enough education or skills to deal up with issues related to children with physical disabilities?
14. How can SB collaborate and create healthy school environment that is conducive to children with physical disabilities? Explain in details.

Participant's signature.....Date.....

Researcher's signature Date:

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW SCHEDULED FOR THE PARENT

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME

Gender: Male or Female

1. Where do you work?
2. What level of education do you have?
3. How old are you?
C. 20-29 C.40-49 E.60+
B.30-39 D.50-59
4. Are you a member of a school board?
5. If yes, what position do you hold in the SB?
6. Should parents be represented in a SB? What are the benefits of being a member of SB?
7. How often does SB meet? Which days of the week?
8. Should children with physical disabilities be involved in school activities in your school?
9. Are there any cases where children with physical disabilities dropout of the school?
10. In your opinion, are there any challenges or factors that contribute to drop out of children with physical disabilities?
11. What collaborative roles does school board play in your school in mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities in your school?
12. What strategies do educators at the school use to deal with the dropout of children with physical disabilities?
13. Do parents in the school board have enough education or skills to deal up with issues related to children with physical disabilities?
14. How can SB collaborate and create healthy school environment that is conducive to children with physical disabilities? Explain in details.

Participant's signature.....Date.....

Researcher's signature: Date:



APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW SCHEDULED FOR THE VILLAGE CHIEF

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME

Gender: Male or Female

1. How long have you been a chief?
2. What level of education do you have?
3. How old are you?
 - A. 20-29 C.40-49 E.60+
 - B.30-39 D.50-59
4. Are you a member of a school board?
5. If yes, what position do you hold in the SB?
6. What are the benefits of being a member of SB?
7. Are the SBs provided with clear description of responsibilities that they have to carry out? Give details.
8. In your opinion, are there any issues that children with physical disabilities not be involved in school activities? Explain.
9. What role do you play in supporting children with physical disabilities in the school?
10. Do village chiefs in a SB have knowledge or skills to collaboratively solve problems related to children with physical disabilities?
11. State some activities of school board that can include children with disabilities in the society including school.
12. Are there any collaborative roles and strategies that school board can use to mitigate dropout among children with disabilities in a school?
13. To whom is the responsibility of mitigating dropout allocated?
14. Do you receive any support from other stakeholders at the school when dealing with dropout issues? If yes, what support do you receive?

Participant's signature.....Date.....

Researcher's signature: Date:

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW SCHEDULED FOR REPRESENTATIVE FROM A CHURCH (PROPRIETOR)

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME

Gender: Male or Female

1. Where do you work?
2. How long have you been working?
3. What level of education do you have?
4. How old are you?
 - A. 20-29 C.40-49 E.60+
 - B.30-39 D.50-59
4. Are you a member of a school board?
5. If yes, what position do you hold in the SB?
6. Should a member of a church (proprietor) be represented in a SB? What are the benefits of being a member of SB?
7. How often does SB meet? Which days of the week?
8. What can you say about the SB's involvement in school governance? E.g. how is the SB involved?
9. Should the children with physical disabilities and other forms of disabilities be represented in the SB? State why?
10. Does school board have a policy or constitution? Does it relate to the national disability equity bill?
11. What is your role in the SB as a nominee? Explain.
12. Suggest factors that may strengthen the SB members' collaboration in the school.
13. What collaborative roles does school board play in your school in mitigating dropout of children with physical disabilities in your school?
14. Are there any strategies that school board use in the mitigation dropout of children with disabilities in your school?
- 15 How effective are the above mentioned strategies in mitigating dropout?

Participant's signature.....Date:

Researcher's signature: Date:

APPENDIX K: SAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPT: 12 AUGUST 2019

RESEARCHER: First, I would like you to answer the following questions concerning about what are the collaborative school board roles needed in mitigating dropout among children with physical disabilities in primary schools.

RESEARCHER: For how long have you been teaching?

PARTICIPANT: I have been teaching for 16 years and this is the first school I started teaching since 2004.

RESEARCHER: What qualifications do you have?

PARTICIPANT: I have Diploma in primary Education and B ed. degree.

RESEARCHER: How old are you?

PARTICIPANT: My age...? I am 42 years old.

RESEARCHER: Are you a member of a school board?

PARTICIPANT: Exactly, I am an active school board member..., (Laughter) who has 3 years' experience.

RESEARCHER: 1. Do you have children with any kind of disability in your school?

2. Mention all the types of disabilities.

PARTICIPANT: Yes, we have various kinds of disabilities in our school. These disabilities include, children with hearing disabilities, mild visual disabilities, intellectual disabilities, autism, children with learning disabilities, but children with physical disabilities are the most dominating group and these children are not necessarily needed to be taken to special schools.

RESEARCHER: Should children with physical disabilities be involved in school activities in your school? But before that, do you understand the meaning of the term 'children with physical disabilities' (CwPDs)?

PARTICIPANT: Ok, I understand CwPDs as children who have limitations or restrictions of normal body functioning due to dynamic factors such as diseases, injuries, disorders, traumas, social and physical environments or dysfunction which affects the functional neurological body systems...

Truly speaking, children with physical disabilities (CwPDs) should be involved in school activities in my school. They should be involved in the school board's decision making. This will make them feel connected to the school, encourage and motivate them. I know some people will complain that these children are young, but the fact is, they have to learn to be the leaders of the future from early stage. Therefore, they need to be guided. There is also a great need for the involvement of CwPDs and their parents in decision-making in the school. In this way parents need to promote positive attitudes towards the education and to ensure that CwPDs are enrolled and retained. When CwPDs are involved in all school activities by the school boards, they value the importance of education to attain their future aspirations and take responsibility to construct or take responsibility of their education. Furthermore, they develop mutual respect of their peers and support one another irrespective of their abilities/disabilities.

RESEACHER: Are there any cases where children with physical disabilities dropout of the school?

PARTICIPANT: Yes, most of children with physical disabilities drop out in high rate in our school due to various challenges.

RESEARCHER: You mentioned that most of children with physical disabilities drop out of your school. In your opinion, are there any challenges or factors that contribute to drop out of children with physical disabilities?

PARTICIPANT: Some of them were abused in many forms (emotional, sexual etc), others are from poor homes, and some are discriminated and rejected, so they need to be encouraged and go through counseling of school board or professionals such as counselors. We, (as school boards members) are also able to be counseled within the school. We can be able to solve or focus on CwPDs once our personal issues are solved. Most of the classrooms are upstairs and it is not easy for these children to access such classes. There are no pavements for wheelchairs to move.

RESEARCHER: What collaborative roles do school boards play in your school in order to mitigate dropout of children with physical disabilities in your school? **Probe:** This should be your own understanding of what collaborative roles and responsibilities you consider to be support and care done to children with physical disabilities in the school. Could you further explain that point please!

PARTICIPANT: We work collaboratively to provide services aimed at fostering resilience and helping CwPDs to increase self-esteem, self-concept and confidence in the school. We provide opportunities for CwPDs to talk about their demands, feelings, wishes, interests and their school experiences in mainstream school. Furthermore, we provide care and spiritual support as an attempt to mitigate dropout among CwPDs effective collaboration is needed in building intrapersonal strength in CwPDs. When we work together as a team, we become problem solvers of CwPDs' problems and this contributed in giving them the opportunity to develop competence and confidence.

RESEARCHER: What strategies do school boards at the school use to deal up with the dropout of children with physical disabilities?

PARTICIPANT: We improve healthy eating habit in the school because most of CwPDs are raised by poor parents who cannot afford to give them healthy food and it is our duty to assist and encourage healthy eating habits among them, we also monitor and evaluate CwPDs' progress time after time so that they feel respected, valued and motivated. WeengageCwPDs in peer tutoring as one of academic supports, this help to prevent them from dropping out of primary school because they develop communication, study and social skills by partnering and collaborating with other stakeholders such as teachers. I think we can also provide CwPDs with basic needs that will ensure their survival and development and ensure that CwPDs are not subjected to cultural practices that may negatively affect their well-being.

RESEARCHER: Do teachers in the school board have enough education or skills to deal up issues related to children with physical disabilities?

PARTICIPANT: I do not have enough knowledge and skills to deal up with challenges that are faced by CwPDs. We need to meet the needs and learning styles of CwPDs in school through acquisition of training (workshops). The training will equip me as school boards member with several strategies that can be used to assist and support CwPDs.

RESEARCHER: How can school boards collaborate and create healthy school environment for CwPDs academic performance? Isitconductive for academic performance? **Probe:** explain in details.

PARTICIPANT: I think both psychological and physical school environment must be safe to all learners including CwPDs. Infrastructure must be appropriate for wheelchair users or crutch users. So far, everything is overcrowded, there is a lack of quality furniture and our classrooms are constructed in such a way that the doors are not broad enough to cater for CwPDs. There should be enough space for CwPDs in the classrooms.

RESEARCHER: **Probe:** Is there anything else that you believe I missed out and would like to clarify more?

PARTICIPANT: There is lack of mobile clinics for everyday referral. Sometimes CwPDs are not admitted due to fear of resources in the primary school. Therefore, the construction of appropriate classrooms should be made to the primary schools, there should be no bottlenecks in terms of physical access in regular primary schools and the provision of educational support services of CwPDs should also be available.

Participant's signature.....Date.....

Researcher's signature: Date:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX L: MAP OF MASERU DISTRICT

