

**ENHANCING TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY FOR SUPPORTING
VISUALLY- IMPAIRED LEARNERS IN LESOTHO SCHOOLS
THROUGH SCHOOL SUPPORT NETWORKS**

by

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**Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree**

Master's in Education

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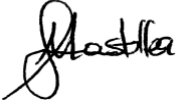
JANUARY 2020

DECLARATION

I, **Lintle Lydia Mosola**, student number 2015311117, declare that this dissertation, submitted for the qualification of Master's in Education (Inclusive Education) at the University of the Free State is my own independent work.

All the references that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that this work has not previously been submitted by me at another university or faculty for the purpose of obtaining a qualification.



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Ethical Clearance number: UFS-HSD 2019/0013/0705



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ABSTRACT

The inclusion of visually-impaired learners in mainstream schools continues to be debated among many researchers as it places many challenges on the current functioning of the schools. These include the lack of teacher-training, high student-teacher ratio and a tertiary education curriculum which fails to equip teachers with basic skills for utilising assistive devices in teaching these learners. Despite efforts that the Government of Lesotho instituted according to many national and international policies in ensuring inclusion of people with disabilities, only a few schools accommodate visually-impaired learners. This is exacerbated by the fact that teachers remain academically and psychologically underprepared to accommodate these learners in their classrooms. Since teachers are positioned as the key implementers of inclusive education, it is therefore assumed that teachers' self-efficacy is an important ingredient in embracing inclusive education. Considering this situation, the study drew from both a self-efficacy theory and an asset-based perspective to understand teachers' self-efficacy and how school-support networks could be used to enhance teachers' teaching-learning skills and knowledge regarding visually-impaired learners. This study was informed by a critical paradigm and situated within qualitative research. The visual participatory methodology was used to generate data using a purposive sampling technique to select participants with experience of interacting with learners with visual impairments in Lesotho (n = 21: 7 teachers of the visually impaired learners; 7 learners with visual impairment; 7 parents of learners with visual impairment). Participatory methods such as *lesokoana* were used as well as focus group discussions, where each group was asked to discuss the need and availability of school-support networks to improve the quality of educating learners with visual impairments. Also, teachers compiled a collage indicating the challenges and enabling factors concerning their self-efficacy. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that there are school networks that support teachers in dealing with visually-impaired learners, even though their engagement is perceived to be on an informal basis. The study recommends that schools should develop an asset-based map and establish school-support network committees that will engage in effective ways to support teachers.

KEYWORDS: Asset-based approach, collage, self-efficacy, visual participatory methodology

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LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

MOET: Ministry of Education and Training

LNFOOD: Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled

GOL: Government of Lesotho

LNLVIP: Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organisations

VI: Visually Impaired

UN: United Nations

IE: Inclusive Education

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE INQUIRY

1.1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH INTEREST

Teachers in post-colonisation Lesotho have had to deal with the restructuring of basic education on several occasions. Each time changes were made, teachers shouldered the high expectations of various stakeholders such as curriculum developers to implement these new policies effectively. The current discourses of inclusive education, and care and support of learners experiencing various barriers to learning, position teachers as key agents to implement these changes effectively (Mpya, 2007; Stidham-Smith, 2013; Unianu, 2013). The teachers in Lesotho are no exception in this case as the country is a signatory of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities which agitates to include people with disabilities in mainstream society (Mosia, 2014).

The roles and responsibilities of the teachers in mainstream schools in this case include creating inclusive-friendly classrooms, providing care and support to all children (Winter & O'Raw, 2010) including learners with visual impairments. This is strongly advocated by the Ministry of Education and Training which also recognises the need for support for learners by equipping them with appropriate life and education skills regardless of their disabilities (MOET, 2005). This requires teachers who are committed to assist such learners, even though education restructuring manoeuvrings, at both international and national level, are complex and challenging. In this case, the teachers' self-efficacy is an important ingredient for embracing such changes in an effective manner.

According to Iroegbu (2015), self-efficacy is referred to as the confidence or the belief in one's perceived capability to perform behaviour or tasks or produce particular skills successfully. Similarly, Yadak (2017) defines self-efficacy as the belief that one has about one's capability to carry out a task; this involves the use of emotional and cognitive abilities to address problems, tasks or situations to achieve a goal regardless of the environmental barriers. Teacher self-efficacy is one of the vital factors in determining the success of learners in schools. This is emphasised by Hofman (2014) who suggests that educators with high levels of self-efficacy are able to make use of adequate teaching strategies that increase independence for learners with disabilities, in addition to employing appropriate classroom management approaches to solve problems. Moreover, they keep learners

focused on the given task by introducing innovative teaching strategies to bring about meaningful change in the classroom. Other scholars, such as Haegele, Kirk and Zhu (2018) have argued that self-efficacy is context-specific, depending on the activities in which people are engaged. For example, a confident teacher in an urban middle school may feel anxiety when the opportunity of teaching in a rural middle school arises. A teacher who has not been trained in special or inclusive education may feel inadequate and lack self-esteem in teaching learners with visual impairments. Hence, to be successful in supporting learners with visual impairments, teachers have no other option but to acquire some competencies of inclusive education (IE) practices to improve their confidence to effectively support learners with visual impairments in their school contexts.

Regrettably, there is a plethora of research that reveals a bleak response to the inclusion of learners with disabilities in Lesotho schools. For example, researchers have reported that many teachers have been inadequately trained to teach learners with various disabilities (Matlosa & Matobo, 2007; Urwick & Eliote, 2010). One of the most challenging barriers in teaching learners with disabilities was noted by some researchers as being the lack of basic resources in the classroom (Moloi, Morobe & Urick, 2008; Mosia, 2011, 2014). Also, teachers in Lesotho often feel that large class sizes make it difficult to teach learners with multiple learning disabilities (Seotsanyana & Matheolane, 2010). As a result, most learners with disabilities, including those with visual impairments, tend to drop out of schools because the support they receive is limited (Suhlane, 2017). Along with their training career, teachers have found that the higher education curriculum overlooks the importance of incorporating curriculum content regarding the use of assistive devices in teaching (Matlosa & Matobo, 2007). It could be argued that training teachers on how to use assistive devices may strengthen their self-efficacy towards supporting learners with visual impairments.

Given that the implementation of inclusive education in Lesotho presents many difficulties, especially for the teachers in mainstream schools, this process coincides with new requirements on teachers' skills and self-efficacy, especially for supporting learners with visual impairments in the mainstream school context. Researchers have underlined the importance of strengthening teachers' self-efficacy by providing job resources (Neve, Devos & Tuytens, 2015). Additionally, feedback and self-reflection increase teachers' self-efficacy (Hemmings, 2015). The identification of various sources that support teachers' self-efficacy is crucial in providing effective support for learners with visual impairments.

Hence, this study underscores teachers supporting learners with visual impairments interact with their experiences, other teachers, the members of the school management team, the physical environment of the school, inclusive education policies and other stakeholders beyond the school context. In undertaking this study, the researcher regards the term "school support networks" as encapsulating the wide variety of formal and informal opportunities for enhancing teachers' self-efficacy for supporting learners with visual impairments in the mainstream schools in Lesotho.

Against the background of these debates and the lack of research on how teachers' self-efficacy is affected by the ongoing curriculum changes in Lesotho, the researcher became interested in exploring how teachers' self-efficacy could be enhanced using the school support networks so that they might be able to offer effective support to learners with visual impairments in mainstream schools in Lesotho.

1.2. RESEARCH INTEREST OR PROBLEM

After the adoption of UN policies by the Government of Lesotho, efforts were made to incorporate learners with disabilities to be taught in mainstream schools (alongside learners without disabilities). However, some teachers are still not ready academically and psychologically to teach learners with special education needs. Matlosa and Matobo (2007) mention that in-service teachers show frustration in teaching learners with visual impairments as a result of inadequate training, while some teachers even forget such learners exist in their classrooms (Mosia, 2014). Teachers are faced with a huge challenge in dealing with these learners because they are not aware of the extra responsibilities and roles they now have to play in the classroom. Therefore, there is a need to navigate strategies to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in supporting these learners.

1.3. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Through the researcher's experience and observation in working with pre- and in-service teachers, it has been discovered that teachers lack confidence in dealing with visually-impaired learners. They tend to be critical and reprimand learners with visual impairments because they do not understand the educational needs of these learners. In addition, there are very few schools in Lesotho that accommodate learners with visual impairment. This

raises the concern about the challenges faced by those learners who are unable to be enrolled in such schools.

1.4. PARADIGM AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.4.1. Critical Paradigm

This study was located within a critical paradigm characterised by concerns of addressing issues of discrimination and matters that are side-lined by society, especially regarding the matter of inclusive education. This paradigm is relevant to the study as the researcher intends to address the vulnerability of learners with visual impairments in society while using the principles of a Basotho game that was played a long time ago as a method of data generation. Freire (cited in Scotland, 2010) perceives critical theorists as working towards making social changes. Mack (2010) adds that research conducted using the critical paradigm advocates for the emancipation of people in a democratic society by challenging the reproduction of social discriminations. Moreover, both the researcher and the participants are of great importance in the social construction of knowledge where they will critically analyse it and recreate more knowledge (Scotland, 2012). In this regard, the researcher worked with the participants, not on the participants, to investigate if they understood their roles and responsibilities in working with visually- impaired learners, in addition to exploring how their self-efficacy can be enhanced to transform their educational practices.

1.4.2. Self-efficacy Theory

The self-efficacy theory of Alberta Bandura (1997) involves human behaviour that originated from the social cognitive theory. Self-efficacy is defined as one's belief in one's capability of performing a task concerning one's sense of confidence and competences (Bandura, 1997). This theory views a person's capabilities as affecting his or her feelings, thoughts, motivation and actions. According to Bandura (1995), the self-efficacy framework provides a synopsis of relevant sources of efficacy beliefs for a person to succeed in a task which includes: the actual performance of a task (referred to as the mastery of experiences); the observation of others (vicarious experiences); the affective state (psychological and emotional states); and the influence of others to strengthen the

confidence (forms of persuasions). This multi-dimensional nature of the construct of efficacy belief theory is suitable for this study to demonstrate how categories of efficacy belief can assist in understanding the nature of teacher support in enhancing teachers' competences.

1.4.3. Asset-based Approach

The research also adopted an asset-based approach which was created by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) in developing communities through the use of available resources or assets. This approach is driven by the belief that people have different capabilities; therefore, these can be used as resources to solve community problems (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). Since schools form part of communities, this approach is suitable for the study to tap into the available resources that can be beneficial to enhancing teachers' self-efficacy. This theory which emphasises the importance of everyone's input in solving existing problems (Mhlongo, 2017), was employed because I, as the researcher, acknowledged the fact that different stakeholders in education possess different skills and talents, hence they can be used as the resources in enhancing teachers' self-efficacy.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question is:

How can teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments be enhanced through school support networks?

The main research question will be addressed by exploring the following sub-questions:

1. How do teachers conceptualise self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments?
2. What are the enabling and deterring factors affecting teachers' efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments?
3. In what ways could the school support networks enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments?
4. What aspects of the school support networks do teachers of visually-impaired learners identify as being most valuable?

5. What aspects of the school support networks do teachers of visually-impaired learners identify as being most challenging?

1.6. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.6.1. Aim

The research aims to explore how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments through school support networks.

1.6.2. Objectives

The objectives of the research are:

1. To explore how teachers conceptualise self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
2. To identify the enabling and deterring factors affecting teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
3. To examine the ways in which school support networks could enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
4. To explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as the being most valuable; and
5. To explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually-impaired learners identify as being the most challenging.

1.7. DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

A qualitative research approach was employed in this study. Sharp (2012) states that research undertaken using a qualitative research approach is usually treated in the form of words instead of numbers; hence, the researcher preferred this approach as appropriate because it is located in the area of psychology of education. Leedy and Ormrod (2013) emphasise the essentiality of using qualitative research approaches in the field of education because these are subjective in nature. In addition, one of the ideals of using qualitative research is capturing first-hand information about the phenomena being studied in their natural settings (Mhlongo, 2017). Therefore, because the participants in

this study were not perceived as mere sources of information, rather as human beings with feelings, motives, and ideas, the researcher adopted this approach.

Since I planned to undertake a detailed examination for an incisive comprehension of the phenomenon (i.e. teachers' self-efficacy in working with visually- impaired learners), I decided to employ a participatory visual method as it facilitated both the researcher and the participants to be actively involved in the process of research. Participatory visual methods are perceived as creating collaboration among the research participants (Mhlongo, 2017). This technique was appropriate as the researcher embraces the African adage, "*lets'oele le beta poho*", meaning teamwork is of great importance in working towards achieving set goals. The selection of strategies to be incorporated is based on the research participants' time and location (Blackbeard & Lindegoger, 2015).

1.8. DATA COLLECTION

The research used the following strategies of generating data: "*lesokoana*", a focus group discussion, and a collage-creation activity.

1.8.1. *Lesokoana*

"*Lesokoana*" is the rain race (game) rooted in Basotho culture that was played by women and girls in dry seasons in Lesotho to make it rain (Mats'ela, 2001). In this game, "*lesokoana*" which was stolen from a chosen household in a particular village would be passed from one person to the next until it reached its final destination; that is, another village (Nkhono-Mantho, 2018). The researcher, therefore, adopted the principles of "*lesokoana*" as a method of data generation, where there was a flow of information from one participant to the next - and in this case, the researcher was both the starting and the ending point. The "*lesokoana*", wrapped in paper, was handed over to the first teacher participant to write his or her views, and then passed from one participant to the other. The researcher was handed the collection of written ideas from the last participant. This method was appropriate for the study as one of its aims is to bring people together to achieve the desired goal.

1.8.2. Focus Group Discussion

A focus group discussion was used to collect data as it facilitated an open discussion between the researcher and the participants. The group had only seven participants to ensure full participation by each one in the group. An informal debate among nominated individuals in a group about a specific issue provided rich information in a short period of time (Mhlongo, 2017). Liamputtong (2011) adds that in a less structured setting, people can clarify their points of view, if needed. The researcher, therefore, interviewed a selected group of 7 teachers, 7 learners with visual impairment, and 7 parents separately to explore how the teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting learners with visual impairments.

1.8.3. Collage

The incorporation of a collage-creation activity was useful in allowing the participants to connect their self-efficacy with their teaching practices and experiences concerning learner-support by using specific words to state their views. Collage is an innovative way of gathering information on a particular theme or topic through the use of photographs, pictures, coloured papers, words, symbols and other artifacts (Khanare & De Lange, 2017). This is regarded as the most appropriate way for some people to communicate their feelings, ideas and moods (Mayaba & Wood, 2015). The use of pictures or visual representation of other themes provided a deeper understanding when compared to oral feedback from the participants.

1.9. RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Lesotho is divided into ten districts, and according to the MOET (2010), the schools are categorised into three types: public, independent and special schools. Maseru District was purposively selected to carry out the study at one public school in Maseru that accommodates learners with visual impairment. Johnson and Christensen (2012) state that by purposive sampling, the researcher chooses the respondents based on specific features. This method is mostly used in qualitative research studies as it provides the researcher with relevant and rich information (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). Therefore, the researcher purposively selected seven teachers from the same school, as well a group of

seven learners with visual impairment, and parents of the visually impaired learners to ensure full participation in the process of research. Guest, Namey and McKenna (2017) stipulate that seven members in a group can provide the necessary information needed for an enquiry. Using this type of sampling assisted the researcher in comparing phenomena with similar characteristics to the one under study.

1.10. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The researcher analysed the data using the thematic analysis approach. Clarke and Braun (2017:297) state that "[t]hematic analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (themes) within qualitative data". The recorded interviews were transcribed, and the researcher was able to identify the information that was of interest. This was followed by a coding arrangement that made it possible for relevant information to be traced within a text with ease. This data was later extracted, categorised, grouped into themes and sub-themes, and finally analysed to reach meaningful findings (Sharp, 2012). This method is regarded as being the most suitable for a study that seeks to study a phenomenon using an interpretation of the events (Ibrahim, 2012). Intertwined with these processes, was to describe the different aspects of the study, including the settings, the individuals being studied, the viewpoints of the research participants, and the purpose of the activities that occurred. The researcher interpreted, recorded, and explained what was obtained in the process of the inquiry; therefore, to ensure clarity, the researcher during the final stages of the research, coherently and logically presented the findings to the stakeholders.

1.11. VALUE OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

Teachers are regarded as the key elements in education according to the current discourses on inclusive education. However, careful consideration has not been paid to how school support networks can contribute to enhancing teachers' self-efficacy for supporting learners with visual impairments. Teacher support has been identified as having an impact on teachers' self-efficacy or performance in their classrooms (Ajuwon, Sarraj, Graffinn-Shirley, Lechtenberger & Zhou, 2015). Therefore, the findings of the study are useful for different stakeholders, including institutions of higher learning in restructuring the curriculum, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), school

administrators and non-academic workers at schools, parents and other stakeholders, in navigating ways to support teachers who have visually-impaired learners in their classrooms. Also, the study contributes to the existing literature on participatory methods, especially "*lesokoana*", as a way of generating data.

1.12. TRUSTWORTHINESS

The researcher took into account the integrity of the study by ensuring that it provided results that are authentic and noteworthy. The pillars of trustworthiness were outlined by Creswell (2012) as dependability, credibility, confirmability, transferability. This was to ensure that if the study was repeated with the same tools, it would provide the same results; that is, it measured what it was supposed to measure, it revealed all the steps undertaken in the process of research, and it determined the external validity of whether the findings can be applied in another situation (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

1.13. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher requested permission from the university's Faculty Ethics Board before commencing with data collection. The researcher also requested permission to conduct the study in the selected school from all the relevant authorities. Participation was voluntary and participants' rights were respected. The researcher asked for permission via written consent to photograph the activities done by the participants. The confidentiality of the participants' personal information was assured.

1.14. LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

The study consists of six chapters:

Chapter 1 presented the orientation to the enquiry or study.

Chapter 2 unpacks the relevant literature on visual impairment found in mainstream schools, legislation, current teachers' practices and perspectives regarding disabilities, teachers' self-efficacy, and the teachers' support through school networks for supporting learners with visual impairment.

Chapter 3 unfolds the theoretical framework adopted to guide the study. Theoretical triangulation is highlighted as the researcher employs two theoretical frameworks; namely, the self-efficacy theory and the asset-based theory, to understand how school support networks can contribute towards enhancing teachers' self-efficacy.

Chapter 4 deals with research methodology and design guiding the study, thereby highlighting the location of the study, the selection of participants and the procedures of data collection and analysis. A detailed description of how trustworthiness is ensured is given by outlining ethical considerations.

Chapter 5 focuses on data presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research findings.

Chapter 6 concludes the study by presenting a summary of the research findings, the conclusions based on the findings, and the researcher's recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Mariga and Phachaka (2011), 83% of what people learn is through the sense of sight, 11% through hearing, and 3% through the sense of touch. They also point out that people retain 50% of what they see and hear, and 20% of what they only hear. This emphasises the importance of sight that is in line with one African adage that states, "*Mahlo ke liala a ka ts'ela noka e tletse*" meaning (the eyes can see distant objects, even where there is danger, without a person approaching). The American Foundation for the Blind (in Bornman & Rose, 2010) also point out that the sense of sight is one of the most important senses that arouses curiosity, invites exploration and puts together important information efficiently. Therefore, teachers of visually-impaired learners should work tirelessly to ensure that learners receive quality education in schools, despite the learners' disability sometimes being challenging.

2.2 THEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

At this juncture, it is vital to go through different scholarly sources to try to find out detailed information from different authors examining more or less the similar issue in different ways to get a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied. A literature review is an analysis of existing literature of previous research, which will add to understanding the topic at hand if it is conducted and presented in the prescribed manner (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Therefore, the following discussion will attempt to reassess literature allied to the study, and other applicable academic sources will be considered to explore what the recent study tries to examine.

2.3 DEFINING VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Visual impairment is one of the existing problems in the classrooms defined by Bornman and Rose (2017) as a failure to process visual information as a result of physiological malfunctions. Children who have visual problems probably could have missed out a lot of visual experiences as compared to other learners with normal vision. Landberg et al. (2019) state that among other senses, vision is one of the essential senses because 80% of the information a person gathers from the surrounding comes via the eyes. Bornman

and Rose (2017) add that learners with visual problems have difficulty picking up much of what is happening in the environment, thus they have a limited opportunity of exploring the world. Mariga and Phachaka (2011) also define visual impairment in an educational context as an umbrella term that encompasses learners ranging from those with limited vision to those who have total loss of vision and require modification to the environment, as well as the use of assistive devices. Therefore, learners with visual impairment are the ones who have problems carrying out visual tasks or activities, thus teachers must adapt processes of lesson delivery that are inclusive to accommodate all learners.

2.4 CLASSIFICATION OF VISUAL PROBLEMS

Visually-impaired learners belong to a diverse group ranging from those who can slightly see to those who are completely blind. According to Landberg, Kruger and Swart (2019); Mwakyeja (2013); Mariga and Phachaka (2011), visual impairment is categorised into two: low vision, and blindness. Learners with low vision refers to those whose clarity of sight is limited or reduced permanently causing restrictions to perform visual tasks, while blind learners are the ones who cannot see at all and depend on tangible and other assistive devices in their learning (Mariga & Phachaka, 2011). Additionally, Mwakyeja (2013) classifies visual impairment in terms of visual acuity where a normal learner has a visual acuity of 6/6, meaning they can see up to 6 meters from a standing point. Bornman and Rose (2017) further points out that a person's degree of visual problem can range from mild, moderate, severe to profound visual impairment. Therefore, learners' visual problems may differ according to their causes and severity.

2.5 CAUSES OF VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Visual impairment is one of the most common problems that exist in the communities that we live in, ranging from people who have minor visual problems to those who have severe blindness that was present from birth or acquired at a later stage of life. Bornman and Rose (2017) state that refractive error, retinal detachment (a tear in a retina), albinism (lack of melanin in the eye), cataracts (clouding of the lens), and retinitis pigmentosa (degeneration of the retina), are some of the causes of visual impairment. Guo, wang, He, Chen and Zheng (2017) clarify that visual impairment can be influenced by age, socio-economic and educational status, as well as gender. For this reason, visual problems in

school-going children will differ from other groups, such as old-aged people. This is supported by Macheli (2007) who states that the main causes of visual impairment in children include that of disease and poor nutrition. In addition, visual problems are caused by gonorrhoea, dry eyes, trachoma, measles, eye injuries, and brain damage.

According to Mariga and Phachaka (2011) heredity, environmental and other unknown factors contribute to visual impairment. They add that unknown causes of visual impairment can be categorised into two types: preventable and curable. At the pre-natal stage, contributory factors may include exposure to x-rays during the first three months of pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, heredity, poor nutrition by expecting mother, and misuse of narcotic drugs. During birth (peri-natal stage), the factors that may cause visual impairment include pre-mature birth, neo-natal jaundice, low birth weight, trauma, and misuse of birth instruments such as delivery forceps. At the after-birth (post-natal) stage head injuries, exposure to toxic chemicals, infectious disease such as meningitis and diabetes, poor nutrition, damage to the optic nerve, and tumours, may be the causes of visual impairment.

Moreover, Landberg, et al. (2019), and Verzoni, Zin and Barbosa (2017) list the following as causes of visual impairment:

- Optic nerve disorders (atrophy, hemianopia and optic nerve gliomas);
- Retinal disorders (retinoblastoma, retinitis pigmentosa, and retinal detachments);
- Disorders of the brain that affect vision (cortical blindness);
- Lens disorders (congenital cataracts);
- Cortical visual impairment;
- Pressure disorders (glaucoma);
- Color vision disorders (achromatopsia);
- Optic nerve hypoplasia;
- Septo-optic dysplasia;
- Nystagmus and others.

2.6 MANIFESTATIONS AND IDENTIFICATION OF LEARNERS WITH VI

Learners who have visual problems may display certain behaviours or may complain about what they can or cannot see, and this should be taken into consideration by teachers working with such learners because having identified a learner's problem will assist in

employing appropriate teaching strategies in the classroom. According to Bornman and Rose (2017), the following behaviours may alert a teacher to the existence of possible visual impairments in a learner: failure to make good eye-contact with others, under-reaching or over-reaching objects, holding reading materials too close or too far from the face, squinting the eyes, relying on sound indications to help locate objects, as well as clumsy movements.

Landberg et al. (2019) classify the manifestations of visual impairment into:

- a) Complaints: Headaches or dizziness after intense visual activities, blurred or double vision, itching eyes and inability to see well.
- b) Behaviour: Confuses letters or numbers of similar shapes, rubs eyes excessively, displays poor spacing when writing, and loses space when reading.
- c) Appearance: Drooping eyelids, watery or inflamed eyes, crossed-eyes and eyes that move excessively to and fro.

Additionally, Mariga and Phachaka (2011) point out that some of the indicators of visual problems in children may include: complaints about too little or too much light in the classroom; problems copying and reading from the chalkboard; eyes that do not fixate; tendency of withdrawing from activities or from the rest of the learners; having white patches in the centre of the eyes; move their head instead of their eyes when reading; poor hand-eye coordination, and staring at things. Landberg et al. (2019) indicate that it can be very difficult for teachers to identify some learners with visual impairment by mere looking at them because their eyes appear normal. However, the combination of different indicators of visual impairment can assist a teacher to assess if a learner has visual problems or not.

2.7 CULTURAL ISSUES REGARDING DISABILITY

The cultural beliefs, attitudes and myths regarding disability among Basotho have always been a major problem, where children with disability are sidelined and not given proper education. Haihambo and Lightfoot (2010) state that cultural perspectives on disability can influence the kind of services a community offers for people with disabilities, the extent to which parents give care to their children, the possibility for seeking out schools for them,

as well as medical interventions. The families of children with disabilities in most cases feel helpless and embarrassed of their children and as a result parent them indoors and deny the children necessities such as medication, mobility aids and education (UNDP, 2015). People who have a positive attitude regarding disability, often display a positive outlook towards universal principles and social inclusion of all people in their communities (Haihambo and Lightfoot, 2010). The cultural point of view on disability inflicts severe limits in the educational system since teachers still hold the belief that learners with visual impairment are dependent on their normal bodied peers, and they are hard to teach due to the uniqueness of the teaching and learning materials that are used.

According to UNDP (2015), Basotho with disabilities are vulnerable and have little opportunity for schooling as disability is still associated with witchcraft; people with disability are still not entitled to have their own families and they are also physically, culturally and financially dependent on other people. Figure 2.1 below is extracted from the UNDP (2015).

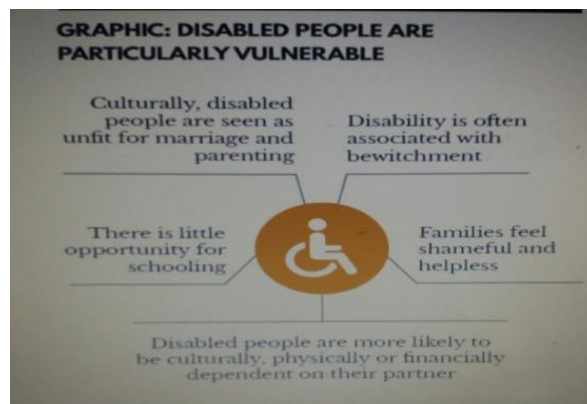


Figure 2.1: The vulnerability of disabled people (UNDP, 2015)

2.8 POLICY PERSPECTIVES ON DISABILITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Traditionally and historically, people always perceived disability as a form of disharmony, punishment, or embarrassment. The Basotho were no exception in this regard, as Matlosa and Matobo (2007) contend that disability among them had always been distasteful; and

children with a disability were the most vulnerable educationally as parents would hide them indoors away from school systems. This continued till initiatives were made to integrate people with disabilities within the communities to share in equal opportunities with other normal-bodied people.

Lesotho as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (Mosia, 2014) and of other different United Nations policies is bound to turn them into practical policies at a national level for implementation. However, Shale (2015) points out that there are policies that include sections that address issues of disabilities in Lesotho, but there is still no disability-specific law. For a very long time, there was no inclusive education policy within the MOET to gear up for the implementation of inclusive education as well as accommodating learners with different disabilities into mainstream schools as per the international demands. It was only on 7th August 2019 when the policy was launched in Lesotho.

Irrespective of the UN policies that advocate for the successful inclusion of learners with disabilities into Lesotho mainstream schools, GOL has different national policies and programmes which are all geared towards achieving inclusion of people with disability in the country. These include the Policy Statement (1989); Special Education Unit (MOET, 1991); Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2006 (MOET, 2005); Education Act 2010 (MOET, 2010); Children's Protection and Welfare Act (2011); National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy (2011); National Strategic Development Plan (2012) and the Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP) (Shale, 2015). Ironically, a plethora of International and National policies on inclusive education (IE) has not yielded benefit for persons with disabilities due to slow implementation of policies in Lesotho.

According to LNFOD (2016), Lesotho has taken positive steps towards the inclusion of learners with disabilities into the mainstream education system from 1989 to date. The MOET with its 1989 policy statement outlined seven goals of the Ministry:

- establish resource centres that will function as preparatory agencies for learners with special education needs to be integrated in mainstream schools;
- ensure that special education programmes are included in higher education teacher-training institutions in order to prepare pre-service teachers;

- ensure that learners with special education needs are integrated into the mainstream school system;
- guarantee completion of primary school education by every Mosotho with disability;
- create a team of itinerant special education teachers that would co-work with ordinary teachers to promote the education of learners with special education needs;
- co-ordinate special education and create a network of services; and
- respect children's right to be brought up by their own families, by parents, or legal caregivers (Mosia, 2011: 295).

Apart from the delayed implementation of the inclusive education policy, Mosia (2014) maintains that there are still several challenges that confront the successful implementation of inclusive education in Lesotho, such as the lack of awareness of what inclusive education entails, and the scarcity of resources to facilitate the education of learners with special education needs.

As mentioned above, Lesotho's adoption of an array of United Nations Policies inspired the MOET in 1991 to establish a Special Education Unit (Matlosa & Matobo, 2007). The Government's motive behind establishing this unit was to put into practice its responsibility to support learners with different disabilities in schools. Additionally, the MOET (2005) was developed specifically to improve the education of learners with disabilities in Lesotho. The Education Sector Strategic Plan (2005-2006) shared the same vision as the Education Policy Statement (1989) but also set a target to develop an Inclusive Education Policy by 2006. Further, the following aspects, so necessary for the fulfillment of IE needs were left in abeyance:

- training of teachers on special education teaching-learning processes;
- increasing access of learners with disabilities into the education system;
- empowering the special education unit by increasing its staff members in order to decentralise its service by 2015;
- ensuring that all HIV/AIDS and gender issues are mainstreamed in special education programmes; and
- increasing staff and strengthening the special education unit capacity (Mosia, 2014).

In 2010, the Government enacted the Education Act which had sections that made reference to the education of learners with disabilities. The Lesotho Education Act sections 4(2) (b) and 4(2) (c) respectively, state that learners with disabilities should be provided with proper education as required by their condition, and they must also receive an education free from discrimination (MOET, 2010). According to this Act, free primary education was introduced in 2000 (Mosia, 2014) to make education accessible for every Mosotho child including those with disability. However, free primary education placed several challenges that hindered the provision of quality education for learners with disabilities (Seotsanyane & Matheolane, 2010). In this regard, education cannot be referred to as free, as the system lacks means to make it available for the benefit of everyone.

Lesotho, in its efforts to embark on the journey of addressing the issues of disabilities, also created the National Disability and Rehabilitation policy in 2011 (Shale, 2015) which acknowledges the rights of people with disabilities who should be provided with equal access to education and other services. The policy has been informed by different regional and international conventions, legal provisions within the country, the 1993 *Constitution of Lesotho*, and the Millennium Development Goals and Vision 2020. The Disability and Rehabilitation policy sets up a framework for the inclusion of people with disabilities in mainstream society. This is in line with Mateusi, Khoaeane and Naong (2014) that the inclusion principle seeks to restructure schools to achieve education for all and respond to individual needs. Again, the policy emphasises the non-discrimination of people with disabilities, as they are also human beings who can make a meaningful contribution towards community development.

Additionally, the Lesotho Government through its Social Development Ministry proved its commitment in protecting the rights of children with disabilities by promulgating the Children's Protection and Welfare Act in 2011. This Act affirms the right of children to education, regardless of disabilities. Shale (2015) states that the act outlined that education and training of children with disabilities should focus on providing such children with resources to enjoy a decent life, and also reach the maximum level of self-reliance and social integration. Even though the Act makes recommendations of mainstreaming learners with disabilities in the learning institutions with favourable environments, there is still a huge gap between the legal agenda and practical implementation in Lesotho schools.

On the positive side, NGOs also took the lead in fighting for the rights of people with disabilities in Lesotho. The LNLVIP is one of the organisations under LNFOD which was established in 1986 to look after the welfare of people with visual impairment in the country (LNFOD, 2016). This organisation aimed to ensure that people with visual impairment have equal rights as any other able-bodied person, enjoy full access to education like any other citizen in Lesotho, and get training in life skills to access job opportunities (Shale, 2015). Additionally, the LNLVIP president indicated that they have instituted initiatives to run campaigns around Lesotho that intends to create awareness and teach various institutions about the proper way to take care of the visually impaired learners in their midst (Sello, 2015). This was initiated to break barriers in the environment for the visually impaired, and to promote a belief that disability does not mean inability.

2.9 TEACHERS' SELF EFFICACY AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

A number of scholars have underscored the role of self-efficacy and attitudinal elements in successfully implementing IE teaching and learning (Yada & Savolainen, 2017; Summers, Davis & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2017; Zee & Koomen, 2016; Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012; Shaukat & Iqbal, 2012; Ozokcu, 2018). Successful inclusive education implementation relies on teachers' rational beliefs, unswerving commitment, loyal dedication, passion, industriousness, positivity, self-confidence, and love for the profession and the learners with special needs (Ozokcu, 2018).

The teachers' self-efficacy in the current study refers to teachers' perception of their ability to support learners with visual impairment in Lesotho mainstream schools. Shaukat and Iqbal (2012) assert that the teachers' classroom competency is based on their self-efficacy. Hence, Mojavezi and Tamiz (2012) indicate that teachers' self-efficacy belief influences how they employ teaching strategies to manage their classrooms, support learners with special education needs, and also inspire creativeness in teaching and learning. Therefore, it is vital for teachers of the visually-impaired learners to develop a strong sense of self-efficacy to beef-up their education practices to stimulate better performances in learners' assessment activities.

Generally, teachers' self-efficacy is a critical factor concerning pedagogical practices in an inclusive setting. This idea is centered on the belief that highly efficacious teachers show more advanced skills of instruction, by effectively explaining, questioning, and providing feedback to learners with special education needs. On the other hand, teachers with low self-efficacy usually have problems managing classroom behaviour, experience problems in maintaining learners to focus on a specific task, and they display custodial rather than humanistic approaches to classroom management as they feel threatened or angered by misbehaviour (Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012). Shaukat and Iqbal (2012) add that a low sense of self-efficacy in teachers precipitates a confused and morose disposition resulting in learners who distrust them.

According to Wood (2017), low efficacious teachers have a limited knowledge base for inclusive education practices and roles, and turn to be resistant to properly engaging with learners with disabilities in regular classroom settings. For example, teachers of the visually-impaired learners may feel these learners are hard-to-teach due to the teachers' lack of skills and consequently such teachers become unwilling to expend their efforts to support these learners. It is therefore believed that teachers who depict a positive sense of self-efficacy belief are liable to effectively use educational strategies and feel sufficiently knowledgeable in terms of meeting the needs of learners with special needs (Ozokcu, 2018).

Other scholars such as Yada and Savolainne (2017) have highlighted teachers' self-efficacy as an important predictor of their attitude regarding the implementation of inclusive practices. The teachers' readiness and willingness to modify the curriculum to accommodate learners with visual impairment in their classroom may positively influence learners in a manner that can increase the learning opportunities. Building on the same idea, Ozocku (2018) is of the view that positive attitude and belief towards disability is closely related to better learner academic achievement; however, poor efficacy belief can lead to teachers' perception that they are not capable to make inclusive education a success, and may be reluctant to try.

2.10 TEACHER COMPETENCES

The teachers' educational practices should demonstrate capabilities, especially when teaching learners with visual impairment to ensure quality educational provision. Reddy

and Sujathamalini (2010) define competencies as skills, attitudes and knowledge that one has to possess to do a particular task. Al-Adwan and Khatib (2017) are of the view that effective instruction requires teacher competences in personality, modification and behaviour management, skills and knowledge, especially for learners with visual impairment because they need extra support as compared to others. Ajuwon, Meeks, Griffin-Shirley and Okungu (2016) add that educators should acquire proficiency in teaching the visually impaired; however, teachers still encounter problems using assistive technology required to support education for these learners. Having required competencies in teaching learners with visual impairment will assist teachers to realise strengths and weaknesses in their teaching practice.

According to Al-Adwan and Khatib (2017), skills are viewed as a milestone for successful instruction; however, teachers who possess the skills in the field of special and inclusive education, still face challenges to appropriately apply them due to the lack of support and resources. Sabella (2015) notes that teachers become motivated when they are given adequate support; but without the support, they are likely to bring about no change at all. Therefore, advocating for professional development and training at pre and in-service level can assist the teachers to improve their skills in teaching learners with visual impairment.

There is a need for teachers to be trained in a wide range of skills concerning the disabilities, among others, teachers need: skills in communication, basic knowledge of different forms of disabilities, multidisciplinary work skills, knowledge of the effects of social deprivation and poverty, identification and assessment processes of learners, multilingual approaches, and behavioural management (Mpya, 2007). Al-Adwan and Khatib (2017) raise a concern that there is an acute shortage of trained human resources who work with learners with visual impairment, and there is currently a need for well-qualified teachers in this field worldwide. In this regard, teachers having acquired the necessary skills can make a significant and valuable contribution in teaching learners with visual impairment.

Schools are not prepared to accommodate learners with visual impairment due to the lack of resources, especially not having skilled and qualified teachers to teach learners who are visually impaired. Matlosa and Matobo (2007) in their study found that educators still struggle and find it difficult to cope with learners with visual impairment in their classroom because they cannot skillfully use assistive technology and thus regularly make use of

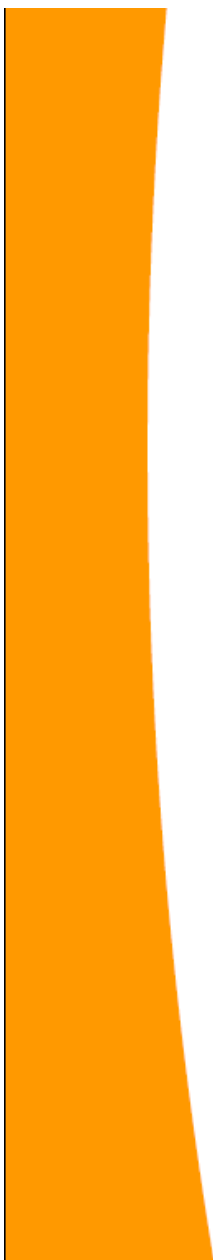
non-verbal cues while teaching. It is not surprising for teachers to exclude learners with visual impairment because as Sabella (2015) indicates, teachers portray a negative attitude in accommodating learners with special education needs in general, due to the fact that they did not receive proper training in this sphere, and this was compounded by the schools not having sufficient resources required by these learners.

Furthermore, the existence of competencies is essential for teachers to deliver quality education for learners with visual impairment. The lack of necessary skills in dealing with learners with visual impairment makes teachers endure a lot of stress including being negative in terms of following teaching-learning principles in the classroom when teaching (Bornman and Rose, 2017). Mypa (2007) argues that it is impossible to have different expert teachers on different disabilities found in a school, but teachers can be empowered on the necessary and basic skills of teaching the visually-impaired so that they deliver quality education for learners who experience barriers to learning.

Considering the lack of teacher-training regarding visual impairment and special education in general from the above discussion, *"The Perkins National Deafblind Training Project"* suggested the following competencies and knowledge that teachers have to possess in order to successfully educate learners with visual impairment (McLetch & Riggio, 1997:73-88). Table 2.1 below outlines the knowledge and skills needed to facilitate learners who are visually impaired.

Table 2.1: Knowledge and skills needed to teach VI learners (Graphics by: L. Halafu).

<u>The knowledge on:-</u>	<u>The skill to:-</u>
Major causes of visual impairment.	Access resources for different causes of visual impairment.
Critical roles of vision in learning.	
Linguistic forms/modes of com-	Use of alphabet system.
Development of vocabulary.	Provide opportunities to use and expand vocabulary through frequent and natural conversations.
4	Select and/or adapt assistive technological devices.
Effective use of communication support personnel.	Identify the roles and responsibilities of the communication support personnel to the needs of a learner.
Structure and function of the visual system and how they inter-relate in the learning process.	
Impairments in the structure and the function of the visual system.	Assess and explain educational implications of visual impairments upon a learner.
The potential impact of visual impairment upon bonding/attachment between a learner and other.	Establish a trusting relationship with a learner by providing nurturance, consistency in people, interaction and routines.



Development of body image in a learner.	Provide opportunities for blind learners to learn their body parts through sense of touch.
Development of positive self-esteem.	Provide opportunities for a learner to develop confidence by making choices.
The potential impact of vision loss development of concrete and abstract concepts.	Provide a learner with opportunities to explore and develop basic concepts through participation in meaningful as well as motivating real life experiences.
Development of communication partnership between a learner and others.	Assess and adapt to learner's pace/ timing of communication.
Auditory and tactile adaptations that enhance social interactions.	Use cues to initiate and terminate interaction. enquire
The influence of vision on motor development.	
The basic principles of orientation and mobility.	Assess, describe and explain the effects of vision loss upon learner's movements.
Resources that provide technical assistance at local, state and national level related to the blind persons.	
Curricula specific to or adapted for visually impaired learners.	

In addition, the Renaissance Group (2004) states that teachers working with diversity in the classroom have to develop the capability to:

- provide quality education access for every learner on a daily basis;
- establish how to modify learners' assignments;
- make use of learners' internal motivation for developing required skills;

- take advantage of learners' interests;
- solve problems and assess skills and behaviour;
- value different kinds of skills that the learners bring to class;
- plan classroom activities that accommodate all the learners; and
- establish high expectations for each learner despite their uniqueness.

Apart from the above, Mpya (2007) also emphasised that teachers should be equipped with skills in designing curriculum in a way that accommodates learners with special education needs, develop the ability to apply different classroom management styles, make use of learners' unique and latent skills, and assess and identify behaviour patterns.

2.11 FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY IN AN IE SCHOOL

2.11.1 School Environment

An emotionally secure school atmosphere is very essential for learners' growth and creative expression. LNFOD (2016) is concerned that despite all the efforts that the GOL initiated to ensure that people with disabilities are included in the community, some learners with disabilities continue to drop out of schools because the environments do not cater for their needs. Savasci and Tomul (2013) specify that educational resources, infrastructure and facilities are of the great importance in determining the outcomes of socio-economic features on academic attainment, and creating equal opportunities for all learners. Creating a well-organised school setting and a learning environment that is favourable in terms of adequate and safe buildings and playgrounds, availability of well-skilled teachers, and adequate learning materials for learners with visual impairment, can impact on how learners perceive themselves as capable beings concerning their academic achievement.

2.11.2 Physical and psychosocial environment

The school physical environment includes buildings, classroom size, playgrounds, and furniture; while the psychosocial environment according to Mpya (2007), is the school environment which fosters the cognitive, personal and social development of learners. The

school should be welcoming, accessible and allow for mobility of learners with visual problems to use canes, guide dogs, other assistive devices and learning aids. Even though Savasci and Tomul (2013) found that the classroom size does not have an effect on academic achievement, Mestry and Bodalina (2014) on the other hand, maintain that school physical resources have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning. For learners who have visual problems, the need to be taught in spacious well organised classrooms is paramount so that they can easily access the learning materials and move around without much discomfort.

The majority of the learning institutions in Lesotho are inaccessible and unsafe, making it difficult for blind learners to move around the school compound, thus creating a barrier to learning and exploring the environment. Maringa and Phachaka (2011) state that since learners who have lost sight have missed out a lot of visual experiences, the schools need to be accommodative by increasing the use and intensity of other sensory mediums (e.g. touch and sound) to meet the needs of all learners whatever the historical background or disability to promote healthy development and enhance learning. Bornman and Rose (2017) state that teachers working with learners with visual impairment need to make a lot of physical adaptations in and outside the classroom by ensuring clear and open walkways, replacing visual cues with physical cues, as well as teaching learners about landmarks. Even though the buildings may be decrepit due the lack of funds to renovate them as well as keeping them in good condition, the schools should aim at providing a school environment which is least restrictive and safe by using available resources to provide the opportunity for learners to learn effectively.

2.11.3 Educators

Every learning institution is composed of employees that see to it that the objectives of the school are met. Okonyo, Ngao, Rop and Nyongesa (2015) state that human resources in the learning institutions consist of teachers and other staff members to support the teaching and learning process. Mpya (2007) defines an educator as a person whose role is to teach others at all levels of education in any type of education and training context, either formal or informal. Demir (2009) is of the view that teachers' length of service in teaching practice, the participation of in-service training, and level of education have an impact on learners' academic achievement. Therefore, teachers need to acquire skills in

teaching and interacting with learners with special needs so that such learners do not feel marginalised in the schools.

Moreover, teachers are people who have the authority in educative situations as a result of the competencies they have in transferring academic knowledge to the learners. Consequently, well-qualified teachers possess knowledge in the field, ability to communicate properly, knowledge on how to teach and learn, and possess skills to use different teaching and learning strategies based on the unique needs of the students (Savasci & Tomul, 2013). Bornman and Rose (2017) add that teachers who work with learners with visual impairment should get to know their learners and take advantage of their strengths; include different senses when teaching and narrate what is taking place in the classroom. Therefore, well-trained teachers are the most essential elements of a school, as they can create equal opportunities for all learners.

Educators who lack skills in teaching and interacting with learners with visual impairment can bring about a negative influence on learners' academic achievement. Babeli (2013) adds that teachers are the most valuable resources to help the learners make progress in their life as they spend more time with them in schools than they spend it with their parents or caregivers. Savasci and Tomul (2013) have a view that teachers' experiences and attitudes affect students, colleagues and the community at large. In this regard, for visually impaired learners to benefit from an environment that caters for their needs, teachers have to be trained as skilled personnel - not solely as a source of knowledge, but also as school-based support service-providers for special educational needs.

2.11.4 Material and instructional resources

Material and instructional resources are other vital resources for learning institutions. Likoko, Mutsotso and Nasongo (2013) describe instructional resources as educational inputs which are very important in the teaching of any subject in the school curriculum. Textbooks, maps, pens, exercise and notebooks, rulers, and drawing books (among others), are some of the learning materials that are used by the learners in schools, but for learners who are visually impaired, Braille is needed for reading and writing (Okonyo, Ngao, Rop & Nyongesa, 2015). Audio-visual and electronic instructional resources such as radios and tape-recorders are also important learning materials for the visually impaired.

2.12 STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY

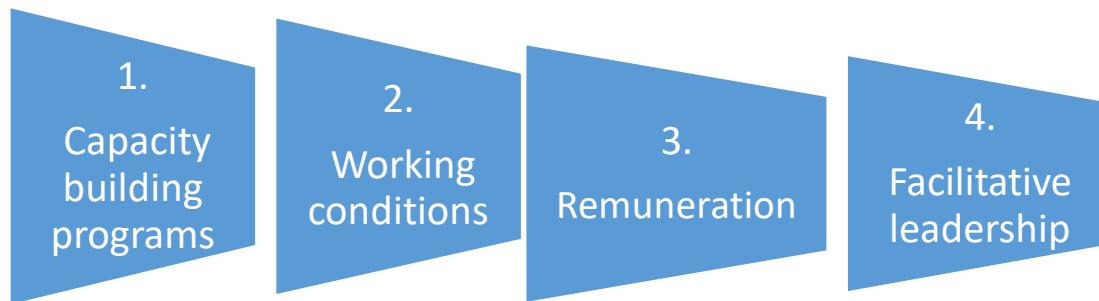


Figure 2.2: Strategies for enhancing teacher's self-efficacy (Odanga, Raburu & Aloka, 2018).

2.12.1 Capacity-building Programmes

Firstly, Odanga, Raburu and Aloka (2018) identified a capacity-building programme as a strategy to enhance teachers' self-efficacy, and can include counsellors to assist teachers to deal with stress, workplace harassment, bullying, work-related trauma, as well as conflicts. If teachers are provided with this kind of service, they may also disseminate the skills they have gained to learners with visual impairment when they are discriminated by teachers and other learners in school. The study conducted by Shahmohammadi (2014) and Bluestone et al. (2013) reveal that capacity-building programmes such as in-service training are effective in improving workers' skills, effectiveness and performances. The implementation of these programmes such as counselling services, teacher training and professional development workshops may enhance teachers' confidence by equipping them with new pedagogical skills in supporting visually impaired learners.

2.12.2 Working Conditions

The work atmosphere can be a determining factor for effective work-based outcomes. Odanga, Raburu and Aloka (2018) state that teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced by improving their working conditions which includes, among others, providing adequate teaching-learning facilities and instituting welfare programmes. Ongoing programmes that are aimed at improving teachers professionally and enhancing their work effectiveness, can be initiated in mainstream schools to stimulate their desire to support learners with

visual impairment. Due to the fact that self-efficacy is viewed as a personal resource factor that may protect teachers from work tension, improving their workspaces can uplift and inspire them to do their job effectively for the benefit of all learners (Odanga, Raburu & Aloka, 2018).

Other scholars have highlighted job-satisfaction as another factor that influences teachers' self-efficacy (Turkoglu, Cansoy & Parlar, 2017) since working environments are the places where people spend most of their time interacting with the environment as well as other people. Turkoglu, Cansoy and Parlar (2017) also point out that in many countries job-satisfaction has become conflictual due to changes and challenges experienced by teachers in the educational environments. For instance, curriculum changes in Lesotho put high expectations on teachers to implement them and also carry out new responsibilities. However, this can be circumvented by the provision of relevant resources which will increase teachers' effectiveness and strengthen their self-efficacy (Odanga, Raburu & Aloka, 2018).

2.12.3 Remuneration

Remuneration is another strategy to enhance teachers' self-efficacy as Odanga, Raburu and Aloka (2018) point out that better payments and salary increments for teachers who have attained higher qualifications have a way of motivating them to do their work more effectively. Coleman (2017) adds that if educators are being paid satisfactorily, they become more productive at work, particularly those whose driving force to teach productively is linked to more money. Special education teachers or education specialists working with the visually impaired learners should be catered for in terms of better remuneration to motivate them as their work demands more time and attention to make learners progress in mainstream schools. This will also develop a positive attitude in teachers towards learners with special needs as they will be motivated to become innovative and creative (Coleman, 2017). Therefore, better salaries for teachers working with learners with special education needs, including those with visual problems, may perhaps lead to better work performance and in turn positively influence self-efficacy which cascades into all learners achieving higher grades.

2.12.4 Facilitative Leadership

According to Odanga, Raburu and Aloka (2018), leadership style is viewed as one of the influencing factors on teachers' motivation to perform productively at the workplace. The administrative supervisions are thought to have an impact on how teachers perceive themselves as being capable to carry out certain tasks. However, Coleman (2017) indicates that when educators participate in decision-making and other important activities at school, they become motivated as they recognise that their voices are heard and as a result self-efficacy is fostered. Engaging teachers in some of the leadership roles and allowing them to participate in certain activities as recommended by the principals of school, promotes a true sense of ownership in being respected as the main stakeholders in their schools.

2.13 SCHOOL SUPPORT NETWORKS

"Kopano ke matla - [Union is power]" - Chitja (2010)

School support networks were highlighted in the study to encapsulate the wide range of formal and informal opportunities for enhancing teachers' self-efficacy for supporting the visually impaired learners. Support teams are viewed as essential in the process of nurturing special education teachers as they are the cornerstones in improving teachers' psychological state and efficacy (Minghui, Lei, Xiaomeng & Potmesilc, 2018). The study highlighted formal and informal support networks and this included, among others, parents and caregivers as well as special education teachers. The European Commission (2016) suggests that networking is vital to interconnect different stakeholders at any level to achieve desired educational goals, efficiency, quality and equity. Minghui et al. (2018) add that, in special education, teamwork is perceived as a way of curbing stress and getting new knowledge about teaching learners with special education needs. Therefore, teachers need to draw from different resources (including collaboration with colleagues) to improve their effectiveness in teaching learners with visual impairment.

2.13.1 Parents and Caregivers

Parental involvement is very essential throughout the academic years of the children as each learner belongs to a particular family and the schools become their second home.

Guo and Kilderry (2018) state that parents as the initial caregivers are familiar with their children's developmental history and other necessary information (Edwards & Xin, 2017) that can assist teachers to organise fun-filled and relevant teaching and learning activities for learners with visual problems.

Parents who are prepared to work collaboratively with teachers by initiating and maintaining constant communication develop a good relationship with the school that can create a home-school partnership that can assist visually impaired learners to be supported beyond the school context. This can offload some of the teachers' responsibilities as too much is expected from them to work effortlessly to support the learners by providing extra work and keeping records of the learners (Pas, Bradshaw & Hersfeldt, 2012). As such, Gavalda and Qinyi (2012) emphasise the importance of regular discussions between the teachers and parents about the learners' needs to provide the best educational, emotional and social outcomes.

Moreover, the back-and-forth communication between parents and teachers can yield good results in reinforcing support for the visually impaired learners from both parties. Gavalda and Qinyi (2012) suggest the use of communication logbooks that can be sent back-and-forth between the teachers and the parents to ensure authenticity and consistency of the learners' academic progress. This could be a platform for parents to suggest innovative and creative strategies for their children to learn effectively (Edwards & Xin, 2017). Therefore, when teachers encourage parents to get involved in their child's work in a less restrictive environment with little pressure, the visually-impaired learners may conceptualise better what was taught in school, while at the same time relieving the teacher in providing extra classroom work.

According to Gavalda and Qinyi (2012), parental involvement has not only been identified as a benefit to improving the learners' academic work, but also providing parents with a sense of ownership and satisfaction in the process of implementing inclusive education. Working collaboratively in the process of facilitating inclusive education can be effective and efficient when teachers draw from the initial caregivers for support. Pae et al. (2012) recognise the work pressure that special education teachers endure from their colleagues and families to make the learners succeed, as being overwhelming. For this reason, parents' inputs can motivate and strengthen teachers in making the visually impaired learners succeed in their academic lives.

2.13.2 Special education support teachers

Educational support for visually impaired learners can be made available through a wide range of practitioners who possess unique skills in addition to their preliminary teaching qualifications. This includes special education teachers who can work in collaboration with general teachers in supporting visually impaired learners in mainstream schools. Teacher's role in an inclusive setting is to understand the diverse needs of learners and successfully accommodate them all (Mhlongo (2017)). For some teachers, this can be the worst nightmare as to how possibly they can cater for the needs of learners with visual impairment if they have insufficient skills and training. For this reason, Burton (2015) suggests the integration of special education teachers to collaboratively work with general education teachers where they can plan lessons together, teach, and also take the responsibility of the class.

According to Williams (2010), teamwork improves teachers' self-efficacy by allowing them to exercise the competency of their professional lives. "*Nonyana e haela ka ts'iba tsa e nngoe*" is an African proverb that refers to the support that people draw from each other to improve. The general education teachers can, therefore, draw support from special education teachers to support visually impaired learners. Burton (2015) is of the view that when teachers collaborate, they share innovative strategies, experiences and skills to support learners with special needs. Special education teachers have distinctive roles and responsibilities that include:

- supporting classroom teachers to ascertain individual learner needs and strengths;
- implementing curriculum in a manner that responds to the needs and abilities of all learners;
- mediating between the developing and active learner, as well as the changing proximal environment;
- developing individualised educational plans for learners with disabilities;
- facilitating interactions between environments and extrinsic influences such as curriculum; and
- promoting progressive as well as mutual accommodation between a learner and the evolving learning environment in order to promote

independence (Mclinden, Ravenscroft, Douglas, Cobb & Hewett, 2017).

Effective collaboration between teachers can lead to dissemination of knowledge, experiences and skills thereby improving instruction in supporting learners with visual impairment. Burton (2015) adds that effective teamwork allows teachers to reflect on their instructional practices and remain focused on the shared vision and mission of the learning community.

The teachers who have a strong commitment to support learners with special needs and work together with special education teachers, have the advantage and strength in effectively supporting learners with visual impairment in mainstream schools. When general education teachers work hand-in-hand with special education teachers, they increase their self-efficacy, responsibility for work, professional growth, reflection on instructional practices, thus reducing work overload (Shakenova, 2017). In cases where teachers lack collegial support or opportunities to observe other teachers instructing, some forms of efficacy-building experiences such as verbal persuasions and vicarious experiences should be sought (Suchodoltz, 2018). Teamwork gives exposure to various experiences, perspectives and common understanding of issues regarding learners with visual problems; and in so doing, teachers grow professionally towards self-efficacy.

2.14 SUMMARY

In this chapter, existing literature in a similar field of the current study was reviewed. Firstly, the researcher unpacked literature on visual impairment and its causes, the characteristics that assist teachers to identify learners with visual impairment, cultural issues regarding visual impairment and disability in general, and policies concerning

supporting learners with disabilities in Lesotho mainstream schools. The chapter continued with teachers' competencies necessary to educate learners with visual impairment, qualities of an inclusive school setting, and the strategies required for enhancing teachers' self-efficacy. Lastly, it presented the school networks that support teachers to deal with visually impaired learners. The next chapter (3) will present the theoretical framework that was adopted in guiding the current study.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three presents deeper insights into the theoretical framework employed in guiding this study. The study incorporates two theories, the first one being the self-efficacy theory that provides a sound foundation in understanding the different constructs of self-efficacy belief. The second theory that is employed is an asset-based theory that gives a detailed explanation of the importance of utilising available resources in solving existing community problems (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993); hence, the researcher considered the school support networks as an essential type of resource to tap into available resources to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in supporting visually impaired learners. As this theory is centered on the belief that people are interrelated (Myende, 2015) and they can work together to bring about change, it was selected as being appropriate. In addition, this theory is supported by an African adage that states "*lets'oele le beta poho*", which means the conjoined efforts of different individuals can simplify any task. In this regard, the purpose of using theoretical triangulation will, therefore, be explained.

3.2 SELF-EFFICACY THEORY

3.2.1 The emergence and conceptualisation of self-efficacy theory

The study adopted self-efficacy theory which is characterised by the concern of human behaviour in carrying out a specific task (Bandura, 1977). The diagram below (figure 3.1) is a schematic representation of the self-efficacy framework:

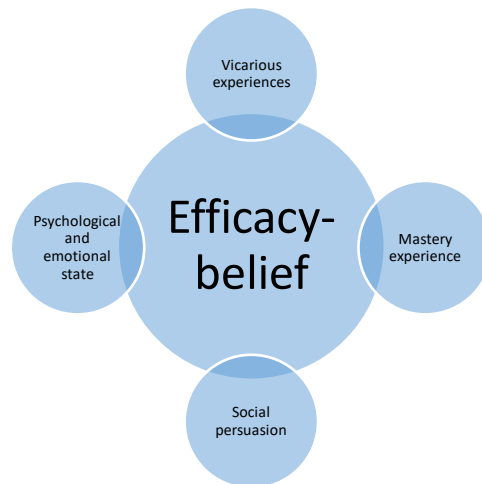


Figure 3.1: Self-efficacy framework by Bandura (1977)

Self-efficacy is the theory of Albert Bandura that was developed from social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977) with the central notion that self-efficacy influences performances of tasks (Iroegbu, 2015); in other words, successful performances improve a person's confidence, but constant disappointments lower it. Emma and Mohamed (2011) define self-efficacy as one's belief, ability and confidence in oneself to manage and perform the patterns of behaviour needed to produce particular skills. It is inadequate for a person to have requisite skills and knowledge to succeed - one must also possess the confidence to succeed in most difficult situations. Bandura (1997) emphasises that self-efficacy belief is very essential because it is centred on human functioning. Therefore, teachers need to acquire skills in combination with the self-efficacy belief that will assist them to execute their practices effectively.

3.2.2 Application of Self-efficacy Theory

Bandura (1977) identified four sources of efficacy beliefs regarded as being most effective in building a strong self-efficacy which motivates a person to effectively carry out tasks and achieve set goals. This includes mastery experience or one's actual performance of a task (Bandura, 1976). When a teacher succeeds in meeting the educational needs of visually impaired learners and performs activities that engage them in the instruction process, it provides genuine evidence that they can interact with these learners. However, Bandura (1995) points out that failure in carrying out the task can also challenge one's perception of their capability to succeed.

The second source of efficacy-belief mentioned by Bandura (1977) is a vicarious experience which is also referred to as social models or observation (Bandura, 1976). For teachers to master activities and strengthen their self-efficacy, they can observe other more knowledgeable people. However, observing others fail, regardless of the constant efforts made, tends to lower one's judgement of one's capability (Bandura, 1995). On the other hand, repeated performance of activities regardless of failure can assist teachers to make reflections on what they can do better than what they observed so that they can improve their teaching practices.

Furthermore, often teachers may feel frustrated and find it time-consuming in preparing learning activities for learners with visual impairment. It is in this case that Bandura (1997) found the third source of efficacy-belief in strengthening people's performances as an affective state or one's psychological and emotional state. Maika (2012) states that teachers believe that they can support learners as evident in behaviour they execute as a result of their emotional state, especially in tough or demanding situations. As a result, the way teachers interact with visually impaired learners regardless of their current emotional state at any given time, can provide evidence of how efficacious they are in teaching this type of learners.

The final source identified by Bandura (1977) is the social persuasion of one's capability. This is referred to as a form of verbal feedback from others in trying to boost a person's confidence (Bandura, 1995). The four sources of efficacy belief are combined to signal how capable and how efficiently one can execute a task in any given context. Therefore, in order for teachers to possess a strong sense of self-efficacy belief, they need to acknowledge that alone they cannot make it to successfully support learners with visual impairment. They need to work closely with people to draw positives from the work of others, later reflecting on it and then making efforts to improve and provide quality education for learners.

3.2.3 The Strengths of Self-efficacy Theory

Several studies have been conducted confirming the importance of self-efficacy when applied to different disciplines. Scholars such as Haegele, Kirk and Zhu (2018) used this theory to investigate self-efficacy and physical activities among adults with visual impairment. Ozturk and Sahin (2014) used the theory to assess and evaluate methods

pertaining to academic achievement, the persistence of learning, self-efficacy perceptions, and attitudes. Neve, Devos and Tuytens (2015) add by highlighting the theory in utilising job resources to boost confidence. Further, Li (2012) explored the attitude, self-efficacy, effort, and academic achievement of city students towards research methods and statistics. Yesilyurt, Ulas and Akan (2016) point out that self-efficacy gives feedback to a question asked by teachers' of whether they can plan and play out the necessary thoughts and actions to perform their duties. Teachers' self-efficacy is a concept that can, therefore, be allied to effective and successful teaching practices.

3.3 ASSET-BASED THEORY

The researcher approached the whole study through an inclusive education lens, and with the full understanding that inclusive education is the responsibility of all, and that every person should contribute towards the quality education provision of learners, including those living with disabilities. Hence, the asset-based theory of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) was chosen. Below is a schematic presentation (figure 3.2) of the asset-based theory of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993):

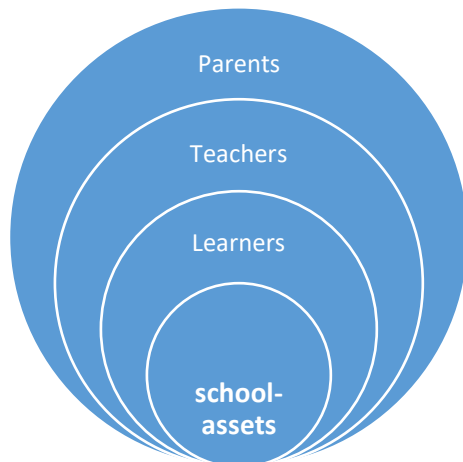


Figure 3.2: Asset-based theory by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993)

3.3.1 The Emergence and Conceptualisation of the Asset-based Theory

The asset-based theory emerged in the late 1990s with its pioneers being John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann (Mhlongo, 2017). The theory is centred more on building people's

capacities and their relationships, to develop powerful communities (Kretzmann, 2010). This approach was an alternative arising from the perception that different people possess different skills, knowledge and resources. The asset-based approach of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) was perceived as an ideal approach which was used successfully in community development work in the USA.

In post-development studies, the asset-based approach is utilised more flexibly in influencing the practices and views of people in communities to bring marginalised activities and ideas to the forefront of the development agenda (Fuimaono, 2012). This approach is also known as a capacity-focused alternative (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993) or capacity-focused approach (Piennar & Raymond, 2013) which went beyond the traditional way of solving community problems by using the community assets (such as the latent potentialities of people) to navigate ways of intervention.

Furthermore, the theory favours bottom-up approaches of dealing with community issues from a service point of view by looking at the empowerment perspective which considers the importance of collaboration, participation and dynamic partnerships (Fuimaono, 2012). According to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), the community was believed to have individuals who have different abilities and resources; so are the schools that have assets such as learners, teachers, parents, non-academic staff, and other stakeholders in education. Hence the study advocated for school support networks as being the most beneficial source to draw from in supporting teachers.

3.3.2 The application of the asset-based theory in this study

The purpose of using an asset-based theory in the study is to identify what school support networks can be installed to support teachers working with visually impaired learners. These assets within the school system include individuals such as teachers, learners, families and other stakeholders who can work collaboratively with teachers of the visually-impaired to enhance their self-efficacy. Verbeij (2013) is of the view that linking people and increasing their capacities can be done through participatory activities. Fuimaono (2012) discovered that an asset-based approach is relationship-driven, therefore it is important to find a collective way of solving existing problems by tapping into available and useful resources (Khanare, 2012) to improve the work performance of teachers of the visually-impaired.

The schools do not operate as single entities, but survive through the assistance of other support systems (Myende, 2015) and for this reason; they should acknowledge the existence of community assets in improving the professional lives of teachers working with the visually impaired learners. Assets are established in various community resources such as financial, political, social, human and physical resources (Fuimaono, 2012). These are regarded as assets because they can produce fruitful outcomes if utilised effectively.

In attempting to create a school atmosphere conducive for learners with visual impairment, teachers need to draw knowledge and ideas from different individuals by working collaboratively and encouraging proactiveness (Fuimaono (2012) in every individual who is involved. The teachers as members of the communities need genuine and sustained support from individuals such as parents; and this can cascade into holistically supporting learners in and out of school. According to Fuimaono (2012), the asset-based approach is driven by the following principles:

- appreciation and mobilisation of individuals in terms of skills and knowledge;
- collaboration in community development and utilisation of strategies;
- participatory approaches that empower and give ownership to individuals involved in the process of development; and
- recognition of social capital at any community level.

In line with the principles of the asset-based approach outlined above, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) contend that a community that recognises and mobilises the available resources, drives people to become part of the development process, and consequently those who are involved become empowered. In this regard, teachers of the visually impaired learners can use an asset-based approach to identify community assets that can be useful in enhancing their self-efficacy.

3.3.3 The Strengths of the Asset-based Approach

According to asset-based perspectives, communities are transformed with what already exists in the communities, and fostering cohesive relationships among community members assists in navigating ways in solving community problems (Kretzmann &

McKnight, 1993). The networking combines the resources, skills and capacities within the social system, focusing on the strengths of the community members rather than the weaknesses. Different researchers have used this approach in their studies which explored the inclusive education support programmes provision for learners with learning difficulties in full-service schools, examined the academic performance in rural areas, investigated school-university partnerships in a South African rural context, analysed the work of NGOs, and ascertained the school environment that enable or limit learners living with HIV/AIDS in rural South Africa (Mhlongo, 2017; Myende, 2015; Myende & Chikoko 2014; Fuimaono, 2012; Khanare, 2012).

3.3.4 The Challenges of the Asset-based Approach

Even though the asset-based approach of Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) was viewed as an appropriate strategy for intervention in problem areas and used by several scholars in their research studies, it was on the other hand perceived to have short-falls (Myende & Chikoko, 2014). Fuimaono (2012) states that gender inequalities, racism and class differences are some of the factors that can hinder effective implementation of this theory. Mhlongo (2017) adds that the effectiveness of this approach is more dependent on the readiness of individuals involved to fully participate and invest their skills and knowledge for the development of the school. However, Fuimaono (2012) points out that the existing qualitative studies that described the efforts of the asset-based approach as a strategy for intervention have a great significance and should not be understated.

3.4 THE RATIONALE FOR USING THEORETICAL TRIANGULATION

According to Mhlongo (2017), triangulation is the combination of two or more theoretical frameworks in the study. Similarly, Haele and Forbes (2013) see theoretical triangulation as the use of more than one approach in research which increases the confidence of the findings by viewing the phenomena from different angles; this study applied triangulation to describe the phenomena from two different perspectives. Theoretical triangulation is essential in understanding the research problem, navigating ways to deal with the existing problem by bringing different points of views, providing the study with rich data, and providing an incisive analysis of research findings (Mhlongo, 2017). Therefore, the use of the self-efficacy and asset-based theories will assist in ascertaining how teachers'

behaviours support the visually impaired learners. This involves how they network in order to draw from schools' assets such as support networks so that they acquire more knowledge and build on their efficacy-belief system.

3.5 SUMMARY

This chapter (three) outlined the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that were adopted in guiding the study. The researcher incorporated the self-efficacy theory by Bandura (1977) as well as the asset-based approach by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993). The self-efficacy theory explored the pillars of efficacy-belief that need to be considered so that teachers of the visually-impaired can develop physically and mentally to enhance their own self-efficacy. The asset-based approach highlighted the importance of tapping into available community resources in solving and transforming societies. The school support systems, in this regard, are viewed as assets that can support teachers who work with visually impaired learners. Lastly, the use of theoretical triangulation was explained to view the phenomena from different angles.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter (four) discusses the research design, methodology, and methods in order to answer the key research questions that address the objectives of the study. The research design, methodology and methods describe the course of action in conducting a research. This includes aspects of when, where, with whom, why, how, and under what circumstances the data were generated (Coleman, 2017). First, the chapter focuses on the research questions that guided the study; provides an overview of the selected research design; outlines the qualitative aspect of the research and the research context and sampling processes. Second, the chapter describes the processes and strategies that were used to generate data including the data analysis approach that was employed. Lastly, it outlines issues of trustworthiness, ethical principles, and the boundaries in which the study was situated.

4.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

4.2.1 The Main Research Question

This is: How can teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments be enhanced through school support networks?

4.2.2 Sub-questions

The main research question is addressed by exploring the following sub-questions:

- How do teachers conceptualise self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments?
- What are the enabling and deterring factors affecting teachers' efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments?
- In what ways could the school support networks enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments?
- What aspects of the school support networks do teachers of visually impaired learners identify as being most valuable?

- What aspects of the school support networks do teachers of visually impaired learners identify as being most challenging?

4.3 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

4.3.1 Aim

The aim of the research is to investigate how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced to support learners with visual impairment through school support networks.

4.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the research are:

- to explore how teachers conceptualise self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to explore the enabling and deterring factors affecting teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to explore the ways in which school support networks could enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as the being the most valuable; and
- to explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as being the most challenging.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

4.4.1 Research paradigm

The study is situated within a critical paradigm as mentioned in chapter one. Mack (2010) defines a paradigm as a set of logical ideas that guide a research study and inform the choice of the research questions, methodology, method and intentions of the researcher. Coleman (2017) adds that the critical research paradigm directs a researcher to look into what is acceptable, and what can be done during the course of the research process. Scotland (2010) perceives research using this paradigm as working towards making social

change. Critical paradigm was chosen because the main purpose of this study is to challenge the current practices in learning institutions by enhancing teachers' self-efficacy so that they can efficiently support learners with visual impairment, and thus contribute to social change.

The critical paradigm is suitable for the study as the researcher intends to address the issue of learners who are vulnerable in society; that is, learners with visual impairments. The principles of an ancient Basotho game was utilised as a method of data generation. Freire (cited in Scotland, 2010) perceives critical theorists as working towards making social changes; and Mack (2010) adds that using the critical paradigm principles advocates for the emancipation of people in a democratic society by challenging the reproduction of social discriminations. Additionally, both the researcher and the participants are of great importance in the social construction of knowledge where they will critically analyse and recreate knowledge (Scotland, 2010). In this regard, the researcher co-worked with the participants, not on the participants, to dissect their understanding of their roles and responsibilities in working with visually impaired learners; and by exploring how their self-efficacy can be enhanced to positively transform their educational practices.

4.4.2 Research approach

Furthermore, this research adopted a qualitative approach to explore the school support networks for assisting teachers of the visually impaired learners. The qualitative approach has been identified by Creswell (2012) as the best approach in attempting to address the research problem that needs exploration due to unknown factors. The fact that research within a qualitative research approach is described in the form of words (Sharp, 2012), it thus provides the researcher with an opportunity to probe into the people's experiences within their context and gather information from their different point of views. Since people have feelings, ideas, motives, and different experiences, the importance of using qualitative research in this regard is ideal in gleaning first-hand information about phenomena in their natural setting (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

Additionally, qualitative research is appropriate in investigating issues in inclusive and psychology of education as it better facilitates the process of people unbundling issues from their personal experiences that are unknown to the community. This can create a

rich platform for a researcher to best gain knowledge from the research participants (Creswell, 2012) to explore how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced through school support networks for supporting visually impaired learners. Leedy and Ormrod (2013) maintain that qualitative research is subjective in nature, and because of this characteristic, different school support systems were able to easily express their feelings and brought up different ideas that can assist teachers to enhance their self-efficacy.

According to Creswell (2012), the literature may not provide sufficient information about a phenomenon being studied, and for this reason a researcher needs to interact with the participants to elicit an appropriate explanation of some events. Even though the approach has been used before in different disciplines (Mhlongo, 2017), it was chosen due to the uniqueness of learners involved in the study (i.e. visually impaired learners and the need to interact with their support systems). Therefore, the motive behind using qualitative research is to bring forth the voices of the participants to justify the call for engaging different stakeholders in enhancing teachers' self-efficacy for supporting visually impaired learners.

4.5 RESEARCH STYLE

The researcher employed a participatory visual method in the study. Blackbeard and Lindegger (2015) define a visual or arts-based participatory method as a strategy that activates a research process by situating the activities within the participants' time and space context through the use of visual materials to generate data. Since the researcher wished to gain a detailed examination and an in-depth comprehension of the phenomenon (i.e. teachers' self-efficacy in working with visually impaired learners), the approach was suitable for the study as it created harmonious collaboration among the research participants (Mhlongo, 2017) which led to sharing ideas and experiences.

With reference to the African proverb "Ngoana salleng o shoela tharing" (someone who cannot express his or her feelings ends up being oppressed), the use of participatory visual method in this study allowed the voiceless to tell their stories and express their ideas as the research study focused on capturing people's feelings and views (Mayaba & Wood, 2015). Blackbeard and Lindegger (2015) state that this method is participant-centred, in that, participants actively engage in meaning-making through a collaborative process. For this reason, participants were engaged in a collage-creation activity where they cut and

pasted written words and phrases with different colours of their choice and explained the reason behind each choice.

According to Mhlongo (2017), a participatory research approach is normally used in community development to solve existing community problems. The attempt to let people participate in issues that directly involve them makes it easier for a researcher to gather relevant information. When community members contribute to the research process, the chances are that the participants will accept the research findings and immerse themselves in problem-solving strategies (Kumar, 2011). The involvement of different school support teams (in this case) enhanced collaboration and support for teachers working with visually impaired learners in mainstream schools.

4.6 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

The study aims to examine ways in which the school support networks could enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairment. It was therefore imperative to purposively select a group of teachers and parents of the visually impaired learners, as well as learners with visual impairment. Johnson and Christensen (2012) state that purposive sampling helps the researcher choose the respondents based on specific features. Creswell (2012) also emphasises the importance of using purposeful sampling in selecting participants and sites that assist in understanding the phenomena and providing rich information by bringing out the voices of the silenced people. Therefore, the researcher applies purposeful sampling in the study to elicit rich data.

Additionally, Kumar (2011) points out that this type of sampling is exceptionally useful because the researcher can make a selection of whom he/she wants to involve in the research process by considering the best information sources based on the research objectives. Hence, only one public school was selected in Maseru as a research site. According to the MOET (2010), the schools are categorised into three types: public, independent and special schools. The school that was selected accommodates learners with visual impairment, and is located a few kilometres from the Central Business District in Maseru, a locality which enabled the researcher to easily access the research site.

Furthermore, the researcher purposively chose the maximum of (n=21) participants, which is acceptable in a qualitative research. Creswell (2012) states that choosing a sample size

can vary from one study to another, but at least a maximum of 40 individuals in a qualitative research study can be reasonable to acquire necessary information; a very large sample size can be cumbersome and lengthen the time in analysing the data. For this reason, the researcher engaged seven teachers of visually impaired learners, seven parents of the visually impaired learners, as well as seven learners with visual impairment, because these three groups are interrelated and are assumed to be knowledgeable about the phenomena being studied.

4.7 RESEARCH SITE

The researcher purposively selected St Catherines High School as the learning site for the current study. The school is located not far from the CBD of Maseru in Lesotho about 300 metres from the Royal Palace. Mhlongo (2017) states that the school location must be in close proximity for the convenience of all participants and the researcher, as there may be financial and logistical implications. This school is a church-run and was established by the Anglican Church of Lesotho in 1978. It offers secondary education for the visually impaired learners and although it is a girls' school, it is exceptional in that it also accommodates visually impaired male students. The researcher has chosen this school in particular because it is the only secondary school in the country that carried out the practice of educating learners with visual impairment together with their able-bodied peers in the same classrooms. Due to the purpose of the study, the researcher considered the school to be ideal because teachers interact with visually impaired learners on daily basis.

The researcher's visit to the school on 10th May 2019 aimed at meeting the 14 research participants (7 teachers of the visually impaired learners, and 7 visually impaired learners). During this visit, the researcher met the principal in his office where she (the researcher) was told to meet the deputy principal as he was the one going to give all the directives because he was coordinating the issues of research within the school. It was around lunch time when the deputy principal took the researcher to the staffroom to meet the seven teachers. The researcher was given the opportunity to explain to the teachers the purpose of the visit and the aim of the study. Some teachers seemed hesitant to participate in the study due to time constraints claiming that they were overloaded with work as a result the

teachers' strike that took place countrywide; but one teacher pleaded with them all to contribute towards making my study a success.

Afterwards, the deputy principal introduced the researcher to a teacher based in the centre for the visually impaired learners within the school (referred to as the "CAT" centre for the blind). During this time, one teacher helped the researcher to call all the seven visually impaired learners after school for orientation to the research study. This is where the learners pleaded with the researcher to be excluded from the planned focus group consisting of parents and teachers. The researcher also planned a meeting for 7 parents on school premises on the 11th May 2019 to explain to them the purpose of the study.

4.8 DATA GENERATION INSTRUMENTS

The researcher employed three methods to generate data: focus group discussion, "lesokoana", and collage-creation activity. Coleman (2017) states that in an attempt to produce results that are worthy for readers to pay attention to, the researcher needs to diversify the methods of generating data to extract rich information. In the light of Coleman's (2017) view, the discussion of data generation methods used in the study is presented below.

4.8.1 Focus Group Discussion

The researcher chose focus group discussion as one of the methods of generating data for the study to allow for an open discussion of the issues as per the research objectives. Creswell (2012) states that in qualitative research, a nominated group of people who share similar characteristics can provide rich information while in discussion. First, the researcher made use of a focus group to discuss schedules that were drawn up in draft form to save time, but were confirmed or revised by the group (See appendix A and B). The focus group schedule served as a framework for discussion sessions conducted with the participants (Mhlongo, 2017).

Furthermore, both English and Sesotho languages were used as means of communication, and to break the communication barrier. There was a meeting organised for the teachers and learners on 10th May 2019 to orientate them with the contents of the study and to discuss scheduled dates for the activities. The researcher met the parents

the following day on 11th May 2019 for orientation because on weekdays they had work commitments.

The researcher had to conduct four (out of the planned 5) focus group discussions with the participants after the learners pleaded that they would like to be excluded from a focus group consisting of their parents and teachers so that they can be able to share their ideas in a comfortable space. This was noted in the researcher's field notes (see appendix Q). Therefore, focus group 1 consisted of 7 learners; focus group 2 (round 1 and 2) was made up of 7 teachers; and lastly focus group 3 had 7 parents. The duration of each round/session took approximately 30 minutes. Mhlongo (2017) suggests that a group of 6-12 participants not only saves time, but also helps a researcher to capture a lot of information within a short period of time.

The researcher visited the first group of participants for data generation on 13th May 2019. The group consisted of seven learners and the venue for the discussion was the "CAT" centre for the blind at 16:00. The place was very convenient for both the visually impaired learners and the researcher, as it was free of noise and thus communication took place effectively. The initial plan was to conduct the first focus group discussion with teachers, but the researcher started with a group of learners as a result of the ongoing teachers' strike in Lesotho which tampered with the planned schedule.



Picture 4.1: Focus group discussion with VI learners (Photograph taken by the researcher)

The second visit was on 15th May 2019. The focus group was made up of 7 teachers of the visually-impaired. This was the first round of discussion with the teachers; the second round was held on 16th May 2019. During the two visits, one teacher organised the school chapel as a venue for our meetings during lunchtime. Lastly, the researcher had a meeting with a group of 7 parents on 18th of May 2019 at the school premises.

All the participants were asked similar questions and during the whole process of data generation, the researcher kept field notes for recording and reflection purposes. The group of people in a less structured and flexible environment can articulate their points of view and discuss matters in deeper detail (Liamputtong, 2011).

4.8.2 Lesokoana

The researcher chose "lesokoana" as one of the data generation methods. Below (figure 4.1) is a schematic representation of how "lesokoana" was played.



Figure 4.2: Schematic representation of how “lesokaona” was played (by B. Seisane, 2019)

According to Mats'ela (2001), "lesokoana" is a rain race (game) rooted in Basotho culture that was played by women and girls in dry seasons in Lesotho to make it rain. In this game, "lesokoana" which was stolen from a chosen household in a particular village was being passed from one person to the next until it reached its final destination; that is, in another village (Nkhono-Mantho, 2018). The researcher therefore adapted the principles of this game to generate data; the "lesokoana" was wrapped with paper and passed from one teacher participant to the next, with participants writing their views on receiving it.

The researcher went to the field on 14th June 2019, where a group of seven teacher participants was engaged in this activity. The prepared schedule was used as a guide for this activity (See appendix C) and the activity took approximately 45 minutes. The researcher engaged the participants in a pre-activity that entailed a discussion of what is expected and how to go about the activity; afterwards the researcher handed over the "lesokoana" wrapped in a paper to the first participant to write his/her views, and then it was passed from one teacher participant to another. The researcher asked questions in English during the activity.

The activity allowed for a flow of information from one participant to the other, with the researcher being both the starting and ending point in this game. After the researcher had collected all the written ideas from the participants, the activity was closed by singing one of the songs that was sung as a sign of a victory and appreciation for good collaboration in the activity for achieving the objective of the day (Nkhono-Mantho, 2018). The song goes:

"Mankabela manesa pula- ("Mankabela" the one who makes it rain)

Hee-ee pula eana hee-ee pula- (Oh! make it rain, make it rain)"

The song marked the official closing of the activity that indicated that "lesokoana" had now reached its final destination, which was the researcher. Afterwards, the researcher discussed with the participants, and then closed the session by thanking all the participants.

4.8.3 Collage-creation Activity

The last method that was used to generate data was via a collage-creation activity. According to Gerstenblatt (2013: 295), "the term *collage* originates from the French word '*colle*' meaning glued". A collage is created by placing several pictures or words on a canvas, a chart or any other surface in a visually appealing and concise manner (Bianco & Ciocca, 2015). The use of visual cues had been used in schools over the years, when teachers incorporated them in their teaching as learning aids. Mayaba and Wood (2015) add that pictures are among a wide range of visuals that are used as teaching and learning aids to give insight into how learners perceive and interpret the world based on what they see. However, Gerstenblatt (2013) states that the use of collage has been increasingly

popular in visual or arts-based research. Therefore, collage-creation activity has been chosen to assist the teacher participants to connect their self-efficacy with the teaching practices and experiences. Below (figure 4.2) is a collage-creation depicting the participants' views on factors affecting their self-efficacy in supporting the VI.



Figure 4.3: A collage-creation by the participants

According to the researcher's field notes, the collage-creation activity was scheduled for 31st May 2019, but due to teachers' commitments, our meeting ended up taking place on 21st June 2019. Seven teacher participants including the researcher, made use of the collage-creation schedule to guide the activity throughout the process (See appendix D). Some guidelines and questions were used to coordinate and stimulate the discussion to explore what the enabling and deterring factors affecting teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairment are. Mayaba and Wood (2015) are of the view that collage-creation is the most appropriate way for some people to communicate their feelings, ideas and moods. The researcher asked probing questions, and the questions were translated in Sesotho where there was a need for it.

There were three contact sessions: in the first session the researcher gave the participants a short training on how to create a collage; the second involved the actual creation of the collage; and the last session entailed collage interpretation. All activities lasted for about 90 minutes.

Even though collage is an innovative way of gathering information on a particular theme or topic through the use of photographs, pictures, coloured papers, words, symbols and other artifacts (Khanare & De Lange, 2017), Mayaba and Wood (2015) state that this strategy is not merely a way of generating data, but also provides a researcher with participants' lived experiences and a means to understand how they make meaning out of their chosen pieces. The researcher in visual/arts-based research can choose to be an observer to the art-making process or participate in the activity, or use the combination of both approaches (Gerstenblatt, 2013). In this case, the researcher was there to coordinate the activity by asking questions to stimulate the participants' thinking while they engaged in the process of collage-creation. The researcher audio-recorded all the discussions, and then transcribed them afterwards.

4.9 DATA GENERATION PROCESS

In preparation to go to the field and generate data for this study, the researcher adhered to ethics principles by requesting permission to conduct this research (Coleman, 2017), and no commencement of data generation process took place before permission was granted by the Ethics Committee. The researcher also prepared informed consent forms and letters (See appendix I - O) that were to be used to advertise and recruit all who wished to be involved in the study, including the Education Principal Secretary, school principal, teachers and parents (See appendix E- H). The informed assent letters for learners who were to participate in this project were included as part of the advertising package. Upon approval to conduct the research, an arrangement was made to visit the school that was purposively selected to be a research site to meet the participants, orientate them, and highlight some of the reasons they were selected to participate in this study.

The researcher explained the aim of the study: that is, "how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting visually impaired learners in Lesotho schools through school support networks". The nature of the activities that were to take place, and the duration of each data generation method were highlighted during the orientation. Lastly, the researcher informed the participants that there would be the use of video and audio-recording devices, pictures would be captured where necessary, and field notes would

also be kept for reflective purposes – informed signed consent was also sought for this process.

4.10 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher chose a thematic analysis approach to analyse the data. The thematic data analysis approach is the process of identifying the patterns or themes within qualitative data, analysing and interpreting those patterns to find the meaning (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), thematic analysis is the initial approach that should be learned by the researchers as it provides the necessary skills that will help conduct different approaches of data analysis in qualitative research because it is a very flexible approach. Therefore, the researcher engaged in the following steps when analysing the data as suggested by Clarke and Braun (2017):

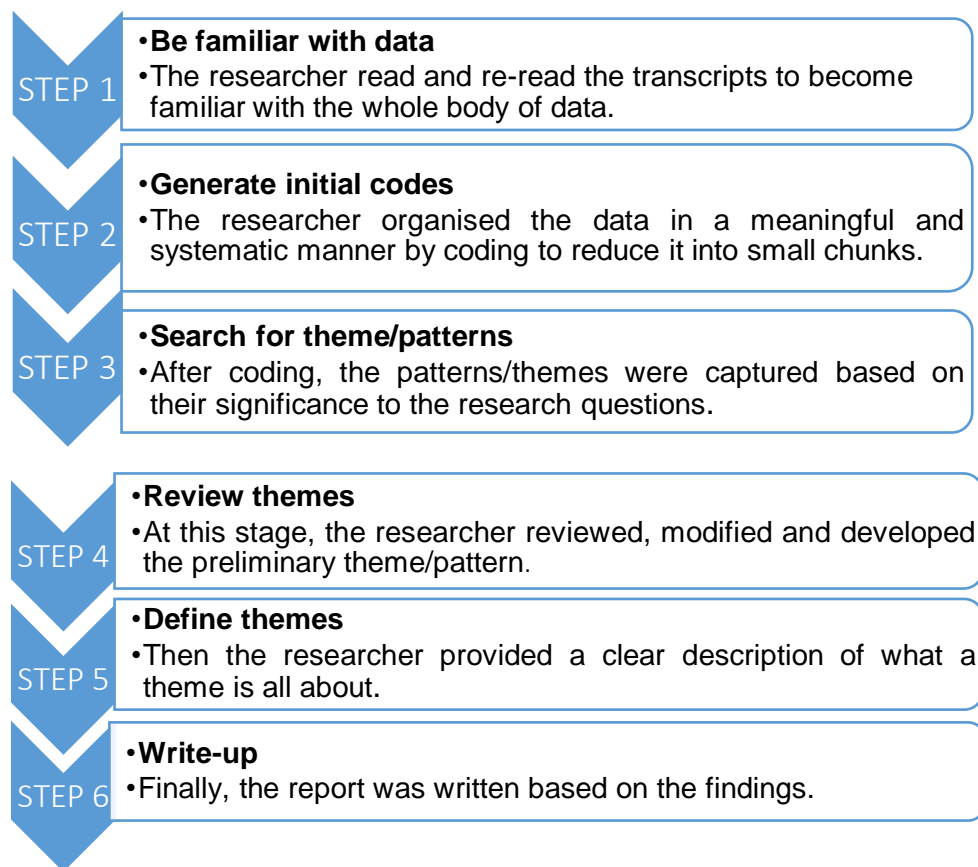


Figure 4.4: A data analysis process adopted by the researcher (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

For the researcher to make sense of data, the process involved reducing data into discrete units, consolidating, and conceptualising what people said regarding a specific research question (Clarke & Braun, 2017). The researcher made use of recording devices to capture the information during the interviews. Similar research questions were asked where a larger group was divided into smaller ones. Clarifications were made as per request of the participants whenever required. Afterwards, the researcher sat quietly in her office at work and repeatedly listened to the audio-recorded discussions to ensure accuracy when transcribing.

After the dissection of data, the researcher identified the ideas and patterns by coding. Firstly, the researcher used the manual way of coding, which she found effective at that time, but on 10th May 2019 after the meeting the supervisor discussed the different ways to administer coding, after which the researcher switched from a manual way to colour coding (See appendix P). Sharp (2012) states that, first of all, the researcher has to discover areas of interests, ascertain a coding arrangement that allowed the ideas to be traced within a text with ease, then extract and categorise information, and lastly group them into themes and sub-themes to discover the meaning of the findings (Sharp, 2012). In agreement, Ibrahim (2012) perceives this approach as relevant in a qualitative study that seeks to study a phenomenon by exploring events. However, Maguire and Delahunt (2017) warn that researchers who engage in this approach of data analysis make the common mistake of using the main interview questions as their theme, and this is a clear indication of data that has been summarised and organised, instead of being analysed. For this reason, within the patterns or themes that were extracted, the researcher tried to make sense of what the participants communicated in the discussions, and then attached meanings to them .

4.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS

In qualitative research, the researcher is responsible for the findings of the research project. For this reason, trustworthiness becomes an important aspect in qualitative research through the researcher's accountability to produce the research results that are worth paying attention to (Coleman, 2017). These results should be authentic, trusted and

be useful to the readers in the field related to the current research project. Therefore, to guarantee the honesty of this research project, the researcher adhered to the pillars of trustworthiness (discussed in the sections that follow).

4.11.1 Credibility

According to Creswell (2012), credibility is referred to as the truthfulness of the study by measuring what it is supposed to measure. To ensure that the study is credible, the researcher spent a reasonable period of time on the field so that she becomes familiar with the research project. The researcher's tasks included being responsible that the data generation process was carried out on time, coordinating all the data generation activities in a manner that was not biased, ensuring that data was captured correctly, and reflecting on the activities that had taken place by consulting with the participants after each session. Coleman (2017) is of the view that quality in a qualitative research project is ensured by correct record-keeping of main ideas as well as events that take place during the data generation process.

A reflective notebook was kept to record the dates of the events, contextual factors, and information shared by the participants. The researcher also engaged in member checking by attending a Sustainable Rural Learning Ecologies Colloquium from 4th to 6th October 2018 to present the current study. Again, the researcher had a meeting with the supervisor on 10th August 2019 to check the authenticity of the generated data, as well as attending a writing retreat that was organised by the supervisor on 27th August 2019 (See appendix Q).

4.11.2 Transferability

Transferability is another important aspect of the current study to ensure the truthfulness of this project. Transferability refers to the researcher's potential to generate true and detailed information that involves descriptions of the context so that an understanding can be transferred to other studies or larger populations (Coleman, 2017). The effort undertaken by the researcher to achieve this with ease was through the incorporation of multiple data generation process methods; namely, focus group discussions, collage-creation activity and lesokoana, to increase confidence in the research findings. Further, the main focus of the researcher was to gather rich information to allow the readers to

determine the usefulness of the research findings so that it can be applied in other contexts.

4.11.3 Dependability

Additionally, the researcher employed proper procedures to ensure that the dependability of this research project is achieved. Dependability is concerned with the researcher's ability to guarantee that if the study was to be repeated with the same subject, in the same context and/or with the same tools used in the current study, similar results will be achieved (Mhlongo, 2017). This was achieved by revisiting the research site to verify from the participants that the information recorded during the data generation process was a true reflection of what they said. Again, the fieldwork notebook was used to check the information and activities that took place during data generation.

4.11.4 Confirmability

Once confirming the credibility and transferability aspects of this study, it was then that the researcher focused on the confirmability of the research study. Coleman (2017) views a study that is free of bias during the process of data generation and interpretation of results as the one that has attained confirmability. As a result, the researcher ensured that objectivity was maintained during the process of data analysis and interpretation by not involving personal issues to influence the findings of this research project. The researcher read and re-read through the initial transcripts for comprehension purposes and referral adequacy. Lastly, there was ongoing discussion between the researcher and the supervisor of this research project to validate the findings and reduce bias through consistent reflective processes.

4.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conducting an investigation, there have to be security measures undertaken to ensure that both the researcher and the participants are not involved in anything that can jeopardise their lives or intrude on their basic human rights. Creswell (2012) indicates that ethical consideration is an initial step to be taken into account when doing a research study and not an afterthought – as such, all steps in the research process including ethical

practices must be strictly followed. Mpya (2007) adds that the researcher needs to apply the moral principles in the process of research to avoid harming the participants involved in the study. For this reason, the researcher attempted to follow all the rightful procedures in carrying out this study.

Firstly, the researcher requested permission to commence with the data generation process from the Faculty Ethics Board - no attempt was made to carry out any process before the ethics committee mandated the request. According to Mpya (2007), qualitative researchers normally encounter problems in the process of the research; however, they need to make decisions to resolve them and then continue with the project. The ethics in a research study is closely allied with data collection, reporting, and distribution - more than any other phase of the research (Creswell, 2012). It is further obligatory that the researcher needs to respect the research site by gaining permission before conducting an investigation; there must be no disturbance during the investigation, and respect must be shown to the audience that is going to utilise the information from the research by providing findings that have not been altered or manipulated to satisfy certain interest groups. In this regard, the researcher prepared consent and assent letters for all participants, stakeholders and other authorities seeking sign consent to conduct this research study.

Secondly, the researcher requested permission to use video, audio-recording and photographic equipment during the research project. As a qualitative researcher, attention was paid to the ethical principles by conducting face-to-face interactive data generation processes that do not put any participant of this study at risk (Coleman, 2017). Best and Kahn (2014) add that when researchers plan to investigate phenomena involving human issues, it is crucial to consider the ethical procedures intended to protect the subjects and subject matter. In accordance, the approval of the requests made by the researcher from all the stakeholders involved in the study elicited collaboration, openness, trust and acceptance between the researcher and the participants.

Furthermore, the preservation of human dignity was accounted for, regardless of participants' socioeconomic backgrounds, gender, age and other individual differences. Babbie (2007) emphasises that ethical principles ensure that the research participants do not experience discomfort when giving their responses. This was achieved by respecting the visually impaired learners' request to be excluded from a focus group discussion consisting of their parents and teachers. In dealing with issues in special education needs,

the researcher needs to pay attention to minute details to avoid harm, because this is the field of the minority where the majority of people are unaware of the needs of learners with disabilities. According to the American Psychological Association (cited in Best & Kahn, 2014), psychologists are supposed to respect the basic rights of people and also be conscious of individual differences including those of gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, language as well as socioeconomic status. Hence, the researcher adhered fully to the rules guiding the study to ensure that all possible threats are avoided.

4.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Mhlongo (2017), the limitations of the study are referred to as those obstacles encountered by the researcher which cannot be easily controlled. One of the encountered setbacks in this study was the occurrences of teachers' strike in Lesotho that affected the initial dates scheduled for data generation. The researcher had to wait for the re-opening of the schools to meet the teachers and learners. Also, as a result of these labour demonstrations, teachers had now limited time to spend on this research project due to a backlog in work commitments. As noted in the field notes of 21st June 2019 (See appendix Q), one teacher stated that "*...this research is interesting, I wish we had spent more time with you, but fortunately there is too much on our plate*".

Another issue was that the learners wanted themselves to be excluded from a focus group consisting of their teachers and parents because they felt that they would not be free to share their views because of the belief rooted in Basotho culture that it is disrespectful for children to be under one roof with the elders and engage in conversations. Therefore, the researcher ended up having three groups of 7 teachers, 7 parents and 7 visually impaired learners, while the initial plan was to have two groups with all the participants evenly distributed.

4.14 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

This study is located within the area of Psychology of Education. Psychology is the field that studies human behaviour, activities and experiences (Mangal, 2011). Psychology of Education focuses on holistic well-being and support of learners regardless of their socio-economic background. Again, it also deals with addressing several problems teachers encounter in schools regarding the learners. Hence, the current research study aims at

exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in relation to supporting learners with visual impairment.

Psychology is divided into pure and applied psychology. Mangel (2011) states that the psychology of education falls under applied psychology which mainly applies psychological theories, principles and techniques to human behaviour in the educational setting. Zwiers and Johnson (2012) point out that under the field of Psychology of Education, teachers are able to make provision for the following services: school-based counselling; designing and implementing crisis response plan; designing and delivering prevention programmes for at-risk learners; educating parents and other teachers about strategies to address risky behaviours; help to create safe, healthy and supportive environment; and help parents and other school staff members understand how children develop. Therefore, the study navigates strategies to improve aspects of teaching and learning processes by drawing from school assets to support teachers of visually impaired learners. The study is also limited to one mainstream school in Maseru Lesotho due to limited financial resources and time-constraints. Lastly, the researcher conducted a study with n=21 participants (7 teachers, 7 parents and 7 learners with visual impairment) which may somewhat be considered as limiting.

4.15 SUMMARY

This chapter (four) stated the aim of the study which was to explore how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in relation to supporting learners with visual impairment in Lesotho mainstream schools. The objectives of the study were geared to respond to this aim. An explanation of the research site for the current study details of the participants involved was outlined. Also, the processes of data generation that included lesokoana, focus group discussion and collage-creation activity, were explained. Lastly, trustworthiness, ethics and limitations of the study were discussed.

CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter (four) discussed the research process that guided the study. It presented the research design and paradigm that was adopted, the research approach and style, as well as the data generation methods. It further explained the data analysis processes, limitations and demarcation of the study, and the ethical considerations.

In this chapter (5), the results of the study are presented in terms of themes and sub-themes that surfaced after analysis of data generated from "lesokoana", focus group discussions and collage-creation activities. Firstly, the chapter presents the themes and sub-themes that emerged, after which they are discussed in detail. The discussion is supported by the extracts from the transcripts, existing literature, and the theoretical framework to support the ideas central to the discussion.

5.2 PRESENTATIONS OF THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

The themes and sub-themes are presented below in tabular form (table 5.1).

Table 5.1: A summary of the themes and sub-themes identified in the study by the researcher

Theme 1: Teachers' understanding of self-efficacy is multifaceted <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to execute a task• Understanding instructions and communicating effectively• Making informed decisions and producing visible results
Theme 2: Perceived ways to bolster self-efficacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training• Resources• Learning styles• Student-teacher ratio• Other professionals resident on campus

- Self-reflection and evaluation
- Portfolios
- Remuneration

Theme 3: Identification of school support networks

- Teachers
- Learners
- Parents
- Other schools
- Government
- Non-governmental organisations and private companies

Theme 4: Enabling school support networks for teachers' self-efficacy

- Adequate equipment and material
- Collegial support
- Accessibility for consultations
- Partnership with the MOET
- Good relations with learners

Theme 5: Restraining factors for school support networks influencing teachers' self-efficacy

- Negative attitude
 - Reluctant administrators
 - Learner enrolment
 - Calibre of learner
 - Workload
 - Underutilised equipment
-

5.2.1 Theme 1: teachers' understanding of self-efficacy is multifaceted

In examining teachers' understanding of self-efficacy, seven participating teachers were asked a general question to establish rapport during a focus group discussion. Multiple

responses emanated from the discussion, where the participants revealed their understanding of self-efficacy as follows: the ability to carry out tasks, understanding instruction and communicating effectively, making informed decisions, and producing visible results.

5.2.1.1 Ability to execute tasks

The sub-theme that strongly emerged from the majority of the participants was that self-efficacy has to do with the ability to carry out designated tasks. The following participants reported that:

Teacher Participant 1: *I think it has to do with the ability to do all your tasks...again being able to do those tasks on your own or maybe getting help from other people.*

Teacher Participant 2 and 3 added:

Teacher Participant 2: *I think its build with, like my colleagues, said the ability or capability one has to do something.*

Teacher Participant 3: *For us, it's about carrying out our duties, whether we can do all the basic stuff that is needed in education and learning.*

From the above excerpts, teachers have a clear understanding that self-efficacy has to do with one's ability to perform tasks. The findings are in line with Bandura's conceptualisation of self-efficacy as one needs confidence to carry out their duties (Bandura, 1995). It even became more interesting when teachers contextualised self-efficacy, to say, it is the ability they have to carry out their duties in teaching and learning. Again, they acknowledge the fact that one can also tap into other resources such as people to assist them to carry out their tasks effectively.

5.2.1.2 Understanding instructions and communicating effectively

Another sub-theme that emerged from the data analysis was that teachers' understanding of self-efficacy as being referred to as “teachers' understanding of instruction and effective communication”. The teacher described self-efficacy as:

Teacher Participant 1: *[U]nderstanding the instruction and maybe to communicating effectively...*

It was suggested that for one to execute the tasks effectively, one has to understand the given instructions, and also be able to communicate effectively with others. It was emphatically noted that engagement in more meaningful communication makes a person to be regarded as efficacious. Bandura (1977) has identified feedback in communication as essential in enhancing one's self-efficacy because one can be able to reflect and adapt to make more constructive progress in forthcoming developments.

5.2.1.3 Making informed decisions and producing visible results

The participants also perceived their self-efficacy as the ability to make an informed decision and produce visible positive results. The participants shared their views as stated in the following excerpts:

Teacher Participant 4: *My understanding is based on whether a person can do things on their own as well as making informed decisions.*

Teacher Participant 5:

Efficacy as derived from the word efficient, something which is precise, which is sort of hard work that brings the results.

Teacher Participant 6 added:

I can say that it is carrying out tasks and producing visible results.

The teachers' understanding of self-efficacy from the above verbatim quotes is the ability to carry out their task in teaching the VI learners and producing visible results. Again, teachers perceived their self-efficacy as the ability to make informed decisions for VI learners to benefit from their pedagogical practices. Emma and Mohamed (2011) share the same idea that self-efficacy is one's belief about their capability to manage and perform the course of behaviour needed to produce certain skills.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Perceived strategies to bolster teachers' self-efficacy

In this theme, all the participants highlighted ways that they believe may enhance their self-efficacy in supporting learners with visual impairment. The responses from the participants suggested different possible ways that can assist teachers to be effective in their work. The following were identified by the participants and presented below as sub-themes:

5.2.2.1 Training

Teachers referred to training as one of the major tools that could help them be self-sufficient and improve their teaching practice. One of the participants even indicated that training should not only focus on teachers, but also the learners who should be given training even if it is on an informal basis. They responded as follows:

Teacher Participant 1: *Training is one of the things that can boost our self-efficacy...*

Teacher Participant 7 agreed:

There should be intensive training to acquire skills because by so doing we can be efficient in our work...

Teacher Participant 2 added on the training component, but focused more on learners than teachers:

...if our learners could be informally trained, they could also be self-sufficient when it when it comes to the basics...if they have the necessary basic skills. I think they can help us improve ourselves when it comes to effective teaching."

The above excerpts indicate that there is a need for intensive training in the school for teachers to be engaged with learners productively. The findings of the current study correspond with Al-Adwan and Khatib's (2017) assertion that internationally there is currently a need for adequately trained teachers working with the visually impaired learners. Matlosa and Matobo (2007) also indicate that a lack of training makes it difficult for some teachers to accommodate visually impaired learners in their classrooms due to the struggle of using assistive equipment.

Although the teachers may work tirelessly to meet the needs of learners with visual impairment, they also need to be trained to be self-efficacious in supporting learners' educational needs. Al-Adwan and Khatib (2017) perceive the acquisition of relevant and creative skills as being crucial for successful instruction; hence, Bornman and Rose (2017) indicate that teachers who are well-trained and possess the necessary skills will be able to exploit learners' strengths and engage different sensory aids (like informing all via the spoken word of all action occurring in the classroom) during teaching-learning situations.

5.2.2.2 Resources

Apart from training, another technique of boosting teachers' self-efficacy that was highlighted is through the provision of adequate and relevant resources and materials. It was indicated that due to the diversity of visually impaired learners' (and other physically disabled learners etc.) educational needs, the learning environment should be barrier-free to facilitate accessibility and efficiency. One teacher revealed:

Teacher Participant 3: *If there can be enough resources I think we can be efficient in our work...*

Regrettably, it was reported that even though there are resources, they are grossly inadequate. The school physical environment is seen as a challenge in supporting the VI learners. It was stated that:

Teacher Participant 3: *Given the environment itself, it is not conducive for their kind of needs. There are a lot of trees and other obstacles in the environment.*

However, one parent indicated that due to the availability of resources that supports VI learners, she enrolled her child at this school so that her child could receive the best possible education. It was stated as follows:

Parent Participant 5: *I had to take my child to this school because it is the only high school in our country that has resources that support this kind of learners.*

The above statements indicate that teachers need resources to support the visually impaired learners, and their concern was mainly on the school environment as a barrier to effective support. Odanga, Raburu and Aloka (2018) point out that teachers' self-efficacy can be improved by providing them with adequate resources and making

improvements to the working environment. Despite the physical environment, Babeli (2013) considers teachers as the most valuable resource in any learning institution in fostering a culture of learning; hence, Bornman and Rose (2017) suggest that teachers should attempt to make physical adaptations in-and-outside the classroom by ensuring clear and open walkways to accommodate blind learners.

5.2.2.3 Learning styles

Having a sound knowledge of learners' different learning styles was also highlighted as another strategy that could assist teachers to boost their self-efficacy in supporting learners with visual impairment. The participants felt it was important to know the learning styles that every learner prefers, and teachers should go the extra mile to accommodate various styles of learning.

Teachers asserted that:

Teacher Participant 4: *We as teachers have to know their different learning styles and know how they learn best. Whether they do well when collaborating with others or what. I am saying this because I have one visually impaired learner who prefers to learn alone regardless of whether you request her to work in groups and you will find that she always performs well.*

Teacher Participant 5: *[T]he learning styles vary across different streams...when it comes to the question papers; you have to go an extra mile to make it user-friendly.*

The findings of the current study are congruent to the existing literature that learners with special education needs have their unique way of learning, and thus teachers need to organise their classrooms in a way that takes into consideration the diverse learning styles (Coleman, 2017). The findings indicate that the learning styles of the visually impaired learners in this school vary across different groups, therefore these calls for innovative and creative teachers. Coleman (2017) is of the view that appropriate pedagogy is often displayed in the ability to differentiate between instruction and a responsive teaching and learning environment.

5.2.2.4 Student-teacher ratio

In this sub-theme, it was revealed that the student-teacher ratio is a contributory factor towards teachers' degree of efficiency. One teacher indicated that having a manageable number of learners with visual impairment counts a lot in becoming self-efficacious and providing adequate support; however, the main problem in the current practice is that the number of learners per teacher is not being monitored across different streams. As a result, it causes frustration in teachers who work with a large group of learners with visual impairment. This was articulated in the following excerpt:

Teacher Participant 5: *Having a manageable number of visually impaired learners per teacher is fine. I think the student-teacher ratio also counts a lot because you have just witnessed how a large number of learners for one teacher are difficult to control. So it means if you have more than the normal number of learners, it is frustrating because I remember one year I had 25 of them from different streams and it was hectic. Yes, the student-teacher ratio must be seriously taken into account because it affects how efficient we are.*

The research conducted in Lesotho reveals that free primary school education has resulted in overcrowded classrooms which complicate teachers' efforts to cater for the diverse needs of learners with special education needs (Seotsanyana & Matheolane, 2010). Teachers report that the current situation in the school is that visually impaired learners are not allocated evenly amongst the teachers such that there is an equal sharing of such learners to lighten the burdensome workload. Contrary to what was espoused by Savasci and Tomul (2013), classroom size does affect academic progress as the findings of the current study reveal that it needs to be taken into account because it affects how efficient teachers are in supporting learners with visual impairment.

5.2.2.5 Self-reflection and evaluation

Teachers felt it was also vital to carry out regular self-reflection to assess whether their approaches to teaching the visually impaired learners are beneficial to them, and whether it brings fruitful results. Nonetheless, one teacher believed that learners also have to engage in reflection and evaluation of their work so that they can both meet each other halfway in terms of work progress. The teachers' suggestions follow:

Teacher Participant 6: *A teacher can engage in self-reflection and evaluation. I have to reflect on my teaching as a teacher because like I said earlier that these learners are taught in one classroom with the rest of the learners, sometimes it happens that, as a teacher, you forget they are in the classroom during the teaching process. [Adds] My learners also have to reflect on their learning process and correct their mistakes.*

This was supported by another teacher who revealed that they need to reflect on their successes and downfalls:

Teacher Participant 7: *We need to continuously reflect on how we are dealing with learners, where we are succeeding and where are we failing them. Sometimes the skills that the other teachers need are readily there with us, but the fact is we normally do not sit together to share our experiences and reflect on things that we do...we end up failing to impart the new skills to our colleagues to support these learners.*

The above narratives indicate that self-reflection will assist teachers in recognising their strengths and weaknesses to allow opportunities for improvements by sharing readily available knowledge and skills. Results in the current study compare with Mosia (2014) findings that teachers forget to plan for the needs of learners with visual impairment in their lessons. The similarities, as noted in teacher participant 5's response, are concerning that six years from Mosia's research, the learners' needs may still not be met fully. Hence, one teacher felt continuous reflection will assist them to see where they are succeeding or failing the learners. Self-reflection enables a teacher to appraise his/her performances - negative or positive - and develop new strategies for improvement as needed (Coleman, 2017).

5.2.2.6 Portfolios

The Participants also spoke positively about portfolios as one of the techniques that can boost their self-efficacy. Participants felt that having a background check of every learner's academic progress and social activities can assist them to structure academic activities in a manner that can cater to individual needs. The participant revealed that:

Teacher Participant 7: *I think it is also wise to have a portfolio for all learners to know their backgrounds so that we know how to approach every learner according to their strengths and weaknesses because sometimes we end up generalising according to the experience that we have. [Adds] So I think if we have a background check for every learner who gets into our school, it will give us an idea of how we should treat them.*

Teacher Participant 5 agreed:

The lack of information about individual learners makes us treat them in a way that we end up generalising and making them feel uncomfortable.

These excerpts (above) indicate that the lack of background information has led to teachers treating the learners in a way that makes them uncomfortable. Consequently, they thought that the compilation of a portfolio for every learner who is visually impaired will assist them to apply the appropriate intervention strategies. Portfolios have been used in the educational setting for different purposes including keeping a record of learners' work that exhibits the process of learning: how they think, question, synthesise, analyse, create, produce, and interact (emotionally, intellectually and socially) with other people (Ajuwon, 2016).

The findings, therefore, reveal that for teachers to be efficient in supporting the visually impaired learners, they need a record of the learners' work from their feeder (primary) schools in the form of portfolios which can help to trace the learners' academic and social backgrounds. The participants of the current study expressed similar sentiments with the findings of the study conducted by Ajuwon (2016) by stating that teachers need portfolios to assess the progress of learners to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching and learning. They added that portfolios can help teachers to evaluate the education programmes, have a continuous connection with parents, and determine learners' weak points and strengths to enhance the process of learning.

5.2.2.7 Other professionals resident on campus

Another sub-theme that emerged during the discussions was the possibility of having other professional people who can be located on the school campus to assist teachers of the visually impaired learners.

Teacher Participant 6 reported: *If our school can have other professionals who are resident on campus then that will deal with the psychological aspect of individual learners. This can help us as we will access the information that will be necessary for assisting these learners. [Adds] Sometimes we end up thinking we know things basing ourselves on experience that we have and the truth is by so doing we are generalising. So if we have other people alongside teaching, then that can be very helpful.*

The findings revealed that if teachers can have other specialists resident on campus who can be easily accessed daily whenever there is a need to, then this can help the teachers in accessing the necessary information about the learners as this will assist to bolster teaching. This concurs with the study conducted by Mhlongo (2017) which sees other specialists as assets in solving the problems encountered by teachers in schools.

5.2.2.8 Remuneration

Another factor that was highlighted was the issue of remuneration. Some participants felt remuneration was an important aspect in motivating the teachers to be efficient in supporting VI learners. One participant stated:

Learner participant 1: *Our Government should pay them good salaries so that they can be motivated because they do too much work to see to it that we perform well.*

Existing literature confirms the above statement that good salaries and salary increments can be used as a positive reinforcement in supporting teachers of VI learners such that they become more effective in their work (Odanga, 2018). As noted in the researcher's field notes written on 15th May 2019, one teacher stated that they were on an ongoing strike due to the Government's reluctance to meet their needs, salary increments being one of them. Critically, it can be argued that special education teachers and teachers working with the visually impaired learners be catered for in terms of better remuneration to motivate them as their work demands more time and attention to make learners progress in mainstream schools.

According to Coleman (2017), well-paid teachers can be effective in their work, especially for those who are motivated by monetary benefits. The findings revealed that the Government should pay teachers good salaries to motivate them because their work

demands more time as a result of an increased workload, as compared to other teachers who do not have learners with visual problems. Therefore, better salaries for teachers working with learners with special education needs, including those with visual problems, may perhaps lead to better work performance and in turn positively influence self-efficacy which cascades into all learners achieving higher grades.

5.2.3 Theme 3: Identification of School Support Networks

The majority of the participants were very mindful of the school support systems that make a meaningful contribution to supporting the education of learners with visual impairment. The participants indicated that the teachers are supported by different role players: parents, teachers, learners, other schools, NGOs, private companies, and Government, among others. The heart of this theme lies in a belief that every person or group in the community possesses unique talents, skills, capabilities and resources (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993) to meaningfully contribute towards supporting teachers of visually impaired learners. Below is a schematic representation (figure 5.1) of the resources that teachers tap into to support learners with visual impairment.

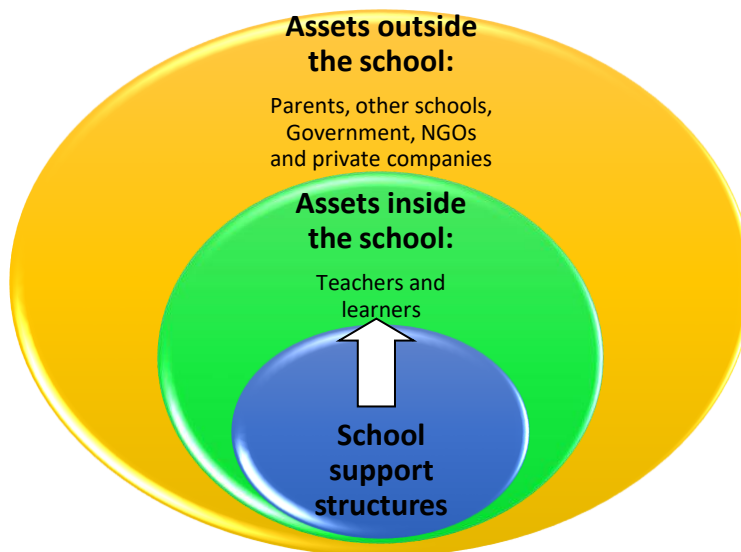


Figure 5.1: Asset-based map (drawn up by the researcher)

5.2.3.1 Teachers

The sub-theme that strongly emerged from the participants during the focus group discussion was the recognition of the support teachers of the visually impaired learners get from other teachers. It was reported by the participants as follows:

Teacher Participant 5: *Mentioning the support we get from our colleagues, you will find that different teachers teaching a learner in different subjects will come together and share information to overcome some of the challenges.*

Teacher Participant 6: *Talking of internal collaboration, for a very long period we were just teachers without any skills who accidentally came to a school which has visually impaired learners. The support teachers get are from other support structures that helped us a lot because the number of learners is increasing.*

The findings indicate that the teachers of the visually impaired learners get support from their colleagues by sharing information since some of them came into the school without any skills on how to teach visually impaired learners. It is true that "*Matsoho a hlatsoana*" (one person can benefit from another if there is collaboration). Mpya (2007) expresses the same sentiments that through collaborative work teachers can share ideas on how to exploit learners' potential. Additionally, it is suggested that teachers be particularly supportive to learners with special education needs by improving their (the teachers') skills and practices (Mpya, 2007).

5.2.3.2 Learners

The sighted learners were also acknowledged by the participants as one of the support systems. It was reported by the participants that they often assist visually impaired learners to read through their notes during their spare time. This was expressed in the following statements:

Learner Participant 5: *Our classmates are also very supportive as they sacrifice their time to read the notes to us sometimes during their spare time because some of our textbooks are not in Braille format.*

Teacher Participant 7 agreed:

Even learners themselves support each other. The ones who are sighted normally assist those who are visually impaired. In a way, they help us as teachers. You will find that the sighted ones sometimes organise the notes for those who are blind and they will be typing them using the Perkins.

From the above, it is interesting to discover that other learners accommodate learners with visual impairment as part of their learning community, embracing the differences by giving them support. The teachers' report confirmed that the support given by other learners to the visually impaired in turn helps them to further support these learners effectively. Mpya (2007) found that acceptance and respect are the most valued kinds of support learners with learning barriers can get from other learners which makes them feel appreciated and accepted as equal members of the school community.

The findings revealed that the sighted learners are regarded as being very helpful as they use spare their time to read class or subject notes to the visually impaired learners so that they can type them using the Perkins Braille. The study conducted by Kayama and Haight (2018) urges that an inclusive learning environment should advocate for a supportive kind of relationship among learners to circumvent the bullying epidemic (so common at most schools) and promote positive peer-to-peer interaction. The teachers in the current study acknowledged the kind of support the visually impaired learners get from their fellow peers. Mpya (2007), in line with this type of learner support system, confirms that learners generally learn better from their peers.

5.2.3.3 Other schools

The participants also identified that teaming up with other learning institutions is one of their support structures. They revealed that their interaction with colleagues from other schools brought productive outcomes on different occasions in that they have learned new skills and knowledge to assist VI learners. This mutual sharing of best practices was revealed in the following statements:

Learner Participant 7: *At times they visit other schools outside the country to learn about different teaching practices that help us when they come back.*

Teacher Participant 5[confirms]: *Fortunately we had a chance to network with other schools outside the country, that is, in South Africa. We were able to see*

what kind of latest machines they were using to make teaching and learning easier.

Furthermore, the learners perceived other schools' performances as the benchmark to judge teachers' effectiveness. It was stated that if the neighbouring schools tend to produce good results, then their teachers are motivated to work harder and give them better quality support to outdo other schools in terms of academic results.

Learner Participant 6: *Talking from the neighbouring schools' point of view...if other schools are performing well, that drives our teachers to work harder and make sure that we pass well.*

The findings revealed that teachers had collaborated with other schools beyond the borders of Lesotho to learn about modern Braille equipment as well as current trends in teaching learners with visual impairment. Their effort in implementing the new strategies was evident in one learner's report who indicated that the new approaches to teaching are beneficial to them. Mhlongo (2017) compare with the findings of the current study that the inter-connection of schools is beneficial for learners' especially in promoting quality academic outcomes. Apart from visits to other schools, the findings indicate that the neighbouring schools are also push-factors in driving teachers to effectively support learners with visual impairment.

5.2.3.4 Parents

The participants identified parents as being key role players in supporting teachers of the visually impaired learners in this school. Participants emphasised parental involvement as being one of the strongest supporting networks. The participants, who revealed the role they as parents play as stakeholders in the education of the visually impaired learners, is indispensable. The parents stated:

Parent Participant 2: *Firstly, I can point out the ... input parents make. At home, they are there to take care of the learners during the holidays because most VI learners stay at a boarding facility during normal school days. Therefore teachers can always consult with the parents if anything arises.*

Parent Participant 6: *Parents play an important role in motivation, giving counselling and providing learners with educational materials and other basic needs. I can say that parents are always there whenever needed.*

The findings indicate that parental involvement is very crucial in supporting visually impaired learners. The parents are primary caregivers as they take care of their children during the school holidays or whenever they are home. The findings also indicated that parents make provisions for learners' educational needs as well as taking care of their emotional wellbeing by giving them counselling. The findings corroborate results of Maluleke's (2014) study which found parental support embraces a wide range of home and school-based activities that parents engage in.

Furthermore, Maluleke (2014) extends the findings of the current study by suggesting that parents can support teachers by positively nurturing their children, providing a home setting that encourages readiness to learn, and providing learners with good healthcare and modelling sound moral values. However, Mpya (2007) points out that some parents fail to participate in their children's daily educational activities due to social issues such as alcohol and drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, illiteracy, poverty, and some are even ashamed of their children's disability.

According to learners' reports, their parents are always there whenever they need them. This is welcomed and supported by Gavalda (2012) who states that parents who are actively involved in supporting teachers and their learners may yield the best educational results, as well as better emotional and social outcomes, especially for learners with special education needs. However, Maluleke (2014) warns us against regarding parents' lack of support as a neglect of their responsibilities to support their children, as sometimes parents feel that their input would not be valued or taken into account.

5.2.3.5 Government

The majority of the participants clearly stated that through different Ministries within the Government, including the Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Social Development, and Ministry of Health, support is given to teachers who teach learners with visual impairment. This was articulated by the participants:

Teacher Participant 4: *The Government also makes a huge contribution by paying their school fees ... because the support they get from these support systems contributes to a child's welfare and in return our work becomes smoother. [Elaborating] Long before the current technology that we are using, our teachers would take a longer time to do the work. For instance, we had to use the Perkins Braille to type our work and then there will be transcribers who would work tirelessly to convert our Braille work. Presently we have new technology that transcribes the work with ease. They were given to the school by the Government to support our education.*

Parent Participant 1 [in support]: *our government has made efforts to meet us half way by paying the fees, so now I can concentrate on other needs of my child.*

Learners Participant 2 adds that: *... I also believe that if we as learners get enough support from the government, this will also benefit our teachers.*

Other than the Ministry of Education and Training, participants clarified that the Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Health also support the education of the visually impaired learners. The participants further explained the role of other Ministries in supporting visually impaired learners.

Teacher Participant 4: *We also have other ministries such as Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Development and Welfare, but they work directly with the learners. You will find that they provide toiletries for learners and other needs [Adds] I would like to focus on our Ministry of Social Development as the support structure that helps us to pay for our school fees and also provides skincare products for some of us.*

The above narrative from the participant indicates that the Government plays a supporting role in seeing that VI learners' needs are met. Even though some of the Ministries may not directly help teachers, but the support learners get benefits the teachers in turn who find it not so burdensome to support these learners academically. Contrary to Mosia's (2014) assertion that the Government through MOET has contributed minimally to investing in the education of learners with disabilities, the participants stated a different view regarding the prevailing condition in their school as being Government-supportive.

The participants claimed that different Ministries have a certain role they play, ranging from the provision of cosmetics and toiletries to paying the school fees for learners with visual impairment. Although one teacher admitted that this support sometimes may not directly affect them, but the welfare of learners is also an important aspect in the whole process of teaching and learning (Mhlongo, 2017).

5.2.3.6 NGOs and private companies

The participants indicated that NGOs and private companies also form part of the network in supporting teachers of the visually impaired. The participants revealed that:

Teacher Participant 1: *We have one association that helps us to handle the visually impaired.*

Learner Participant 2: *I can name LNLVIP as being very supportive in that, it provides counselling for us because some of us are emotionally disturbed.*

Teacher Participant 5: *I can refer to the business world part of the network because some businesses provide our learners with their educational needs.*

Parent Participant 7: *Private companies sometimes donate uniforms to these learners.*

The findings extracted from the above participants' statements clearly show that the support teachers get is also not limited within the school boundaries, but provided by the NGOs and companies among other structures. It was reported that services such as counselling and educational needs are being provided to learners to support their education. It is evident that this type of support is also focusing on the welfare of learners; as Mhlongo (2017) states, whatever happens beyond the classroom is likely to affect the activities inside the classroom.

5.2.4 Theme 4: Enabling School Support Networks for Teachers' Self-efficacy

The current study explored teachers' self-efficacy and how it could be enhanced through the school support networks; however, there are important factors that drive the teachers to effectively support learners with visual impairment in a mainstream school. The participants, therefore, highlighted some of the factors that they perceive to be affecting

their self-efficacy positively. The factors were categorised into sub-themes presented below.

5.2.4.1 Sufficient equipment and material

Under this sub-theme, the participants indicated that having adequate equipment and materials in supporting learners with visual impairment is essential to be able to carry out their daily duties effectively. The following responses confirm this:

Teacher Participant 1: *I personally think those factors include enough equipment that helps me to carry out my daily duties.*

Teacher Participant 3: *Having enough material to boost whatever knowledge that I have to approach these learners, for example, I used to have a problem embossing learners' work, but now we have the machine that does this.*

The above findings indicate that for teachers to be efficacious they need to have adequate equipment and materials to support learners with visual impairment. One teacher even indicated that before having an embossing machine, it was difficult to process the learners' work. The findings of this study are supported by Likoko, et al. (2013) who found in their study that educational materials are very essential in successful teaching and learning. The findings indicate that having adequate materials made it possible for teachers of the visually impaired learners to carry out their daily tasks more smoothly and with better results.

5.2.4.2 Collegial support

Another factor that the majority of the participants strongly agreed with was the help from colleagues to support the visually impaired learners. The participants shared the following views:

Teacher Participant 1: *I think those certain individuals whom we sought help from, whenever there was a need to, are our colleagues here.*

Teacher Participant 2: *The support I get from my colleagues...when I encounter problems is what makes me a better teacher.*

Teacher Participant 5: *Mentioning the support we get from our colleagues, you will find different teachers teaching a learner different subjects, but we come together and share information to overcome some of the challenges.*

The findings are supported by Williams (2010) who states that teacher-collaboration improves their self-efficacy. The teachers indicated that they assist each other in areas where they encounter problems and this allows them to navigate strategies which they can solve to effectively support learners with visual impairment. Suchodooltz (2017) highlights that in instances where teachers lack collegial support, they may miss opportunities concerning some form of efficacy-building experience.

The findings further indicated that since one learner is being taught by different teachers for different subjects, these teachers usually come together to share the information that assists them to overcome some of the challenges they experience in supporting these learners. This is supported by Burton (2015) who states that teacher-collaboration helps in sharing innovative strategies, experiences and skills to support learners with special education needs. Also, it allows teachers to reflect on their pedagogical practice and implement strategies for improvement which leads to better all-round performances for learners as well as teachers.

5.2.4.3 Accessibility for consultations

Another sub-theme that emerged was the accessibility for consultations that participants (teachers and learners) identified as one of the factors enabling/restricting them to support VI learners. Some participants stated that teachers' access to consulting other knowledgeable people helped in supporting the VI learners. They stated the following:

Teacher Participant 6: *To have access beyond the school to more experienced people to consult, helps us a lot because you will find that some people who were once our colleagues at this school [now experts] can assist us.*

Learner Participant 7: *At times they visit other schools outside the country to learn about different teaching methods which really help us when they come back.*

Teacher Participant 5: *We also have Saint Bernadette Primary School as one of our feeder schools. Our partnership with them is very important because they*

have technicians who have the skills in maintaining the Perkins Brailers. When we have trouble with our equipment, we normally call them to come and fix them.

The findings revealed that teachers can get assistance from their former colleagues, and sometimes they visit other schools to learn about different instructional strategies that help them to improve their self-efficacy in supporting VI learners. Again, it was indicated that teachers also consult technicians at their feeder schools if they have any problems with their equipment such as repairing the Perkin Brailers. Through the lens of the asset-based approach by Kretzmann and McKnight (1997), teachers drew their support from their former colleagues and feeder schools to support VI learners. This also coincides with an African adage that states, "*Nonyana e haela ka ts'iba tsa e nngoe*" which means one needs help from others to develop.

5.2.4.4 Engagement of the MOET

The cooperation of the Government through MOET was evident in participants' responses as they highlighted that the Ministry is engaging itself in supporting teachers of the visually impaired. The participants highlighted the following in their responses:

Teacher Participant 6: *The relationship we have with the Ministry of Education through the Special Education Unit is that we were able to access other departments within the Ministry. For example, the inspectorate and assessors are not familiar with what takes place in our school, so through this Unit, we often overcame some of the challenges. [Adds] The office of curriculum developers - truly speaking they are now really engaged, more open and willing to help us. If there are special workshops and training, they usually involve us and make us part of the whole process. The examination office has also modified their approach in ways that make our job easier, but before there were clashes because they never created time to discuss our needs as a school.*

The above excerpt indicated that GOL has made positive steps towards assisting learners with disabilities especially the VI in mainstream schools. This involves the recently launched (7th August 2019) Inclusive Education Policy, the Special Education Unit that was established in 1991 under MOET, the Education Act of 2010 and Education Sector Strategic Plan of 2006. The findings revealed that the Special Education Unit is playing a vital role in linking the school with the different departments within the Ministry. For

instance, the teachers are now able to work closely with the assessors and the inspectorate who are generally not familiar with the needs of special schools.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that the Examination Office had also modified its approach in dealing with matters concerning VI learners. This was also supported by the field notes of 21st June 2019 where the deputy principal informed us that he was communicating with the Examination Council Officers about the structure of the question paper to be written by VI learners during 2019 final examination.

5.2.4.5 Good relations with learners

It was also highlighted that one of the factors that keep teachers engaged in their work is the good relationship they had established with their learners, as stated below:

Teacher Participant 5: *I can say the good relations that we have with the learners drive a person to go the extra mile in trying to find a way of helping them.*

It is indicated above that teachers have a good relationship with their VI learners which motivates them to go the extra mile in providing effective support. The teacher believed that the relationship they have established with VI learners has led them to be accommodative, and thus find effective ways to support such learners. The findings with reference to sub-themes extend the current literature in recognising that teachers' self-efficacy can be developed by establishing a good relationship with learners, because by so doing, teachers become motivated to be more engaged and innovative in their work.

5.2.5 Theme 5: Restraining factors for school support networks

The outcome of the analysis revealed that there are restraining factors that hinder teachers to improve their efficacy in supporting VI learners. The participants indicated that negative attitudes, reluctant administrators, calibre of learners, learner-enrolment, workload, and under-utilised equipment are some of the factors depriving teachers of effectively supporting VI learners. The factors are categorised into sub-themes and presented below.

5.2.5.1 Negative attitude

A negative attitude is one of the factors that were identified as being restraining to teachers' self-efficacy. The participants reported that some teachers had a negative attitude towards those who were trying to engage actively and positively in supporting visually impaired learners, as indicated in the following statements:

Teacher Participant 1: *Some teachers have a negative attitude...*

Teacher Participant 2: *When one tries to do positive work for visually impaired learners, some people come up with negative comments or just criticise.*

The above statements revealed that some teachers have a negative attitude towards supporting teachers of the visually-impaired. It was reported by some participants that some teachers pass destructive criticisms when committed and dedicated teachers make efforts to do positive work in supporting the visually impaired learners. Teachers' attitude shapes the learners, other teachers, and the community at large (Savasci & Tomul, 2013); hence, Yada and Savolainne (2017) report that teachers' self-efficacy is indicative of their attitude in implementing inclusive education.

Moreover, having a positive attitude towards learners with special education needs is linked to academic achievement; however, poor teachers' self-efficacy can lead to the perception that they are incapable of accommodating these learners in their classrooms (Ozocku, 2018). Therefore, teachers perceived negative feedback from other teachers as demotivating. In the works of Bandura (1977), social persuasion, which is referred to as a form of verbal feedback, is suggested to be one of the sources of efficacy which improves one's self-efficacy.

5.2.5.2 Reluctant administrators

Another fact that was unearthed was the presence of reluctant administrators which contributed to teachers' low self-efficacy in supporting VI learners in their school. The participants stated that their administrators are hesitant to act when it came to vital supportive decisions, which sometimes discouraged the teachers to do their work effectively.

Teacher Participant 5: *...that raises some challenges and sometimes discourages you to push because sometimes you end up tramping someone's toes.*

Teacher Participant 6: *Our administrators entrust some of our former colleagues with their [administrators'] duties, so we normally engage them to influence our administrators.*

From the findings above, it is clear that apathetic school administrators also contribute towards teachers' inefficiency in supporting VI learners as it is reported by the participants that their reluctance in dealing with matters that need attention sometimes discourages teachers to do their work. It is evident that the teachers of the VI learners feel insecure to implement some of the new ideas as the administrators entrust their former colleagues to perform this duty. The findings differ with what was indicated in the study conducted by Coleman (2017) that teachers who have powers in decision-making and other activities in the school become motivated as they recognise that their voices are being heard, and as a result this enhances their self-efficacy. The participants also reported that sometimes it is discouraging to try hard to influence their administrators as they end up getting into conflictual situations. Odanga, Raburu and Aloka (2018) believe that an astute leadership style by those in authority positively influences teachers' self-efficacy; however, the opposite is also true –weak leadership limits the self-efficacy of teachers.

5.2.5.3 Learner enrolment

Learner enrolment is one restraining factor hindering teachers to improve their self-efficacy in supporting VI learners. It was reported that the school has an open-door policy in admitting learners with visual impairment; this increased the number of the VI learners such that the school no longer has the capacity to admit learners from the feeder school. This was highlighted in one of the participant's responses:

Teacher Participant 5: *Our intake, on the other hand, is too wide. We no longer admit learners from one school, while in the past we knew that we were taking children fresh from a certain school and the culture of our school was matching the culture of our feeder school. Of late, we have an open-door when it comes to the intake of our learners with visual impairment.*

The findings above indicate that learner-intake has become broad. The school used to admit learners fresh from primary school which matched the culture of the secondary school. The report indicated that the school no longer admits learners from one source like in the past, which increased the numbers of VI learners enrolled in the school. Due to the free primary education policy that was introduced in Lesotho (Matlosa & Matobo, 2007) which advocated for the provision of education for every Mosotho child, the numbers of learners enrolled in schools increased. This has led to Lesotho teachers feeling that this policy has made classrooms overcrowded, and hence the accommodation of learners with disabilities has become difficult (Seotsanyana & Matheolane, 2010).

5.2.5.4 Calibre of learners

The participants also highlighted the quality of learners admitted to their school. They reported that recently the calibre of their learners is deteriorating since they now have an open-door policy of learner intake; and some of the learners admitted have been out of the school system for a very long time.

Teacher Participant 1 stated: *Another discouraging factor is the calibre of our learners. Of late, the calibre of our learners is deteriorating – academically, socially or behaviour-wise...because maybe they are too aware to their rights...but you find learners who are uncontrollable.*

Teacher Participant 3 added: *The learners themselves are a little bit discouraging...When they get out of order and you try to put order back, they take it otherwise and you have to step in very hard.*

Teacher Participant 5 said: *Some of them come here having been out of the school system for a very long time.*

Parent Participant 2 confirmed: *My grandchild went to school at an older age because I couldn't afford to pay the fees, but because of this organisation of the Blind, he went back as school fees were paid by them.*

From the above, it was clear that one of the factors that deprive teacher to engage effectively in supporting VI learners is the learners themselves. The findings revealed that the calibre of learners is deteriorating academically and socially because some of the VI learners go back to school after having been out of the school system for a long time which

makes it hard for teachers to manage them. Hofman (2014) maintain that if teachers have low self-efficacy, this is usually the result of encountering a problem of managing behaviour in the classroom, and also being often threatened by misbehaving learners. The report also revealed that teachers sometimes have to employ harsh means of restoring order, but the kind of learners they have now are aware of their rights.

5.2.5.5 Workload

The workload had been identified as one of the restraining factors for teachers to be effective in supporting VI learners. The participants indicated that some teachers were specifically employed to support VI learners and teachers working with the visual. However, they are still given classes to teach and that increases their workload. The participants stated their views below:

Teacher Participant 7: *Teachers' workload for those working with visually impaired learners is too much. It is like for those having the VI in their classrooms cannot be given a maximum of 30 periods per week as it is right now.*

Teacher Participant 1: *We were employed here as the support teachers, so you find that our workload becomes too much in a case where some teachers do not do their work when it comes to modifying learners' work. Things such as diagrams should be modified before coming to me and you find that some of the teachers do not do that. Some teachers delay doing their work and thus this puts a greater load on us as support teachers to emboss the learners' work.*

The above findings revealed that teachers of VI learners are overloaded with work. Even though support-teachers are working closely with the teachers of the VI learners, these teachers are also given the classes to teach which puts a lot of burden on them as they have to teach more or less similar hours as other teachers, and also provide support for those teachers. Some teachers are reported to delay in handing their work to the support teachers, while others do not do their work. The report from the participants concurs with the finding of the study conducted by Seotsanyana and Matheolane (2010) that the introduction of free primary education has resulted in teachers experiencing overcrowded classrooms and too much workload which hinder them to effectively support learners with disabilities.

5.2.5.6 Underutilised equipment

The participants also indicated that underutilised equipment has also influenced their effectiveness in supporting VI learners. One participant even noted that lack of knowledge and skill in Braille reading, writing and typing hinders her to assist the learners in the absence of the support teachers. The participants shared the following views:

Teacher Participant 6: *I can say the same equipment I regard as an encouraging factor, can also be a discouraging factor when it is underutilised.*

Teacher Participant 4: *The computers that we have for these learners are specifically used by the support teachers, and for me when they are absent I encounter problems accessing them and that hinders my work progress.*

Teacher Participant 5 agreed: *Since the computers are programmed for these learners, I may not be able to access whatever I need. I am saying the majority of the work is done by our support teachers.*

Teacher Participant 4 added: *Another thing is that I do not know Braille, even if I could love to transcribe the learners' work in the absence of the support teachers I cannot.*

From the above findings, the participants felt that the available equipment is being underutilised since it is used by the support teachers and the VI learners only. Other teachers cannot access the computers because they are specifically programmed for the VI learners; in the absence of the support teachers they are unable to support these learners. Apart from that, other teachers do not know Braille which makes it problematic for them to assist the VI learners in transcribing their work. The findings are in line with Ajuwon et al. (2016) who state that educators come across challenges using assistive technology required to support learners with visual impairment. Also, Matloso and Matobo (2007) state that Lesotho teachers encounter problems to accommodate learners with visual impairment because they struggle to handle assistive devices.

5.3 SUMMARY

This chapter (five) presented, analysed and discussed the data that was generated through three data generation methods: focus group discussions, collage-creation activity, and lesokoana. There were five major themes which were identified. The first theme was teachers' understanding of self-efficacy which was perceived to be multifaceted in line with how teachers unpacked different meanings regarding their self-efficacy. The second theme was how teachers could boost their self-efficacy. The third one was the identification of the school support networks, and the fourth theme was the perceived factors that encourage teachers, and lastly the restraining factors that hinder teachers to the development of their self-efficacy. The following chapter (6) will summarise the findings of this study, conclude, give the recommendations, as well as suggest directions for further research in this related field.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five dealt with data presentation, analysis and interpretation of the findings. Five themes and the sub-themes that emerged from the data were discussed in detail. The discussion was supported by the verbatim statements from the participants, as well as the existing literature and the theoretical framework adopted in the current study. The researcher also referred to the field notes taken during the visits. This chapter presents the summary of the findings, suggests recommendations, and gives direction for further research in a similar area of the current study.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

6.2.1 Theme 1: Teachers' understanding of self-efficacy

Most teachers have a clear understanding of what self-efficacy is. From their statements, they understood that self-efficacy is all about the ability to carry out tasks; and to be able to do so, they have to first understand this type of disability, and find ways to assist these learners so that they reach their full potential. This is the stage when teachers' efforts would have achieved success in teaching learners with visual impairment. However, one can conclude that they have not yet fully acquired self-efficacy needed to support VI learners.

6.2.2 Theme 2: Perceived Ways to Bolster Self-efficacy

The findings from this study suggested ways in which teachers can enhance their self-efficacy in supporting the VI learners. Several strategies were explored including the need for teachers to undergo training specifically designed to teach VI learners. It was emphasised that without proper training which must be specifically designed to teach VI learners, it becomes difficult to facilitate such learners in their classrooms. Secondly, the relevant resources were also taken into account to be the prime tools in educating VI learners. Learning styles, learner-teacher ratio, the contribution of other specialist personnel resident on the school campus, self-reflection and evaluation processes,

portfolios, and remuneration are also components which teachers can utilise to boost their self-efficacy to support the VI learners in mainstream schools.

6.2.2.1 Training

The teachers understood that for them to be able to boost their self-efficacy, they have to undergo a certain type of training that is specifically designed for learners with visual impairment. They understood that without proper training, it is difficult to accommodate learners with visual impairment because not having the necessary knowledge and skills to teach VI learners is like batting in the dark.

6.2.2.2 Resources

Findings of this study also revealed that teachers need resources to support learners with visual impairment. These resources may be in the form of materials or equipment that assists teachers to be fully self-efficient in teaching learners with visual impairment. The report indicated that the environment needed to be modified to fully accommodate the movements and learning styles of learners with visual impairment, and to boost teachers' self-efficacy.

6.2.2.3 Learning styles

A self-efficient teacher has to take note of how all his/her students learn as this helps to understand the students better. High quality results are often achieved by both parties (teacher and learners), when there is deep insight into how students learn. Such insight leads to teachers achieving the successful completion of tasks by using the best strategies in assisting learners to exploit their full potential and thus excel in their learning.

6.2.2.4 Student-teacher ratio

The student-teacher ratio is another debilitating factor hindering teachers' efficiency. One understands that if there are more learners with visual impairment and fewer teachers to assist them, there would be a great challenge in accommodating these learners. They would require more from the teachers who will not be efficient enough to assist all learners in their tasks as a result of unrealistic class sizes. However, if the student-teacher ratio were to be properly and fairly monitored, it would boost teacher's self-efficacy in the classroom.

6.2.2.5 Other professionals resident on campus

Teachers believe that the involvement of other professionals who are based on the school campus is invaluable as this improves the education of the visually impaired learners who would be monitored by experts – this goes a long way in and motivating teachers. It is understood that in collaborating with other professionals, greater success is guaranteed as different parties would be focusing on different aspects of the learner. This advantages the learner to be known as an individual where his/her strengths and weaknesses, among other characteristics, are known such that it makes it easier for teachers of learners with visual impairment to achieve success in their daily tasks.

6.2.2.6 Self-reflection and evaluation

Great teachers always reflect and evaluate themselves. This is so that where there is lack, they exert more effort. For example, if a certain strategy does not seem to work, then a new strategy is introduced. Teachers understood that for them to be self-efficient, they have to constantly keep reflecting and evaluating their teaching. Further, learners themselves need to do both reflection and evaluation so that they can help in creating a productive and conducive atmosphere in the class, thus improving both the teaching and learning.

6.2.2.7 Portfolios

The compilation of portfolios is another perceived way of boosting self-efficacy in teachers. Teachers believe that if they have background information about learners with visual impairment, then it would be easier to assist such a learner as there would be a file containing relevant information about a learner. This information will help teachers plan for and accommodate these learners which will lead to them (teachers) becoming efficient in their teaching.

6.2.2.8 Remuneration

Research shows that special education teaching requires teachers to work much harder as they encounter different challenges daily with learners with special education needs, therefore the Government should remunerate such teachers accordingly (Odanga, 2018 & Coleman, 2017). In increasing their salaries, they feel more appreciated, and in return they are motivated to work even harder, thus boosting their self-efficacy.

6.2.3 Theme 3: Identification of the School Support Networks

The participants of the current study also identified the school support structures as influencing teachers' efficacy concerning the teaching of VI learners. Even though most school support networks are considered to be functioning on an informal basis and sometimes focus directly on assisting learners with visual impairment, the participants of this study acknowledged their existence and helping-hand in most of the activities carried out by the teachers. The following support networks were identified: teachers, learners, parents, other schools, the Government, NGOs and private companies. All the stakeholders have specific and essential roles they play in supporting teachers of the VI learners. These are the assets teachers tap into to boost their self-efficacy in supporting these learners in their school.

6.2.3.1 Teachers

The teachers of the visually impaired get dedicated support from their co-workers. These teachers understand that it is not only the responsibility of teachers of the visually impaired to assist these learners, but for all to work as a team. The teachers of the VI learners, together with other teachers are obliging in sharing ideas or finding strategies that can assist these learners - this boosts self-efficacy.

6.2.3.2 Learners

Sighted learners also play a huge role in assisting learners with visual impairment; this in return gives support to teachers of these students. Sighted learners actively help the visually impaired learners by either reading to them or dictating to them, while they (visually impaired) type the notes using the Perkins brailers. This boosts teachers' efficacy as they can now also focus on the entire class without forgetting about learners with visual impairment.

6.2.3.3 Parents

Parents are the key role players in supporting teachers of learners with visual impairment. Parents are thought to be primary caregivers of their children. They know their children

better than anyone else and their involvement in their children's education offers great support to teachers. A discovery has been made that parents support their children's emotional wellbeing by giving them counselling and other support. Therefore, this kind of support helps teachers to get better academic results for learners with visual impairment.

6.2.3.4 Other schools

Collaboration with other schools is another type of support teachers activate to boost their self-efficacy. Visiting other schools to observe different strategies in handling and supporting learners with visual impairment has brought about positive outcomes, as shown in this study. Teachers learn from other teachers who may be using different support structures in assisting learners with visual impairment; this helps teachers to boost their self-efficacy as they can now implement new teacher-learning strategies in their schools. Apart from that, it also assisted learners to study subjects that teachers previously thought the learners are incapable of passing due to their impairment.

6.2.3.5 Government

Teachers of VI learners also received support from the Government even though the support does not directly target them, but it was revealed that the support the learners get positively affects all role players. It was revealed that the Government pays the school fees for these learners, in addition to supplying modern machinery that assists VI learners in their learning, thus helping teachers of these students to become more efficient.

6.2.3.6 NGOs and private companies

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private companies also lend a helping-hand in supporting teachers of learners with visual impairment. The support from the private sector ranges from offering physical resources to counselling for visually impaired learners who may be emotionally disturbed. This type of support is effective as it focuses on the welfare of learners; if learners are emotionally stable, it becomes easier for them to learn, and this automatically benefits the teachers.

6.2.4 Theme 4: Enabling School Support Networks for Teachers' Self-efficacy

Apart from school support structures, the findings of this study revealed that there are encouraging factors that drive teachers to support learners with visual impairment in their school. The report revealed that several factors contributed to supporting teachers of VI learners: adequate equipment, collegial support, accessibility for consultations, engagement of the MOET, and good relationships that the teachers established with VI learners to make them feel appreciated and socially accommodated in the school. The study revealed that these elements are identified as those which motivate teachers of VI learners to extend themselves to ensure quality teaching and learning in the school.

6.2.5 Theme 5: Restraining Factors Concerning School Support Networks

Although the findings revealed that some of the support networks which teachers draw assistance from were quite beneficial, it was indicated that there are some restraining factors which hinder teachers' efficiency. The report indicated that negative attitudes, reluctant or underperforming administrators, calibre of learners, workload, and under-utilised equipment are some of the disadvantages hampering the effective support of VI learners.

6.3 CONCLUSION

The study was carried to explore how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced to support visually impaired learners in the mainstream school through school support networks. The study employed a qualitative research design using three methods of data generation processes: focus group discussions, "lesokoana", and collage-creation activity. The data was analysed using thematic analysis which revealed that there are multiple schools support structures for teachers of VI learners, even though a number of them are thought to be functioning on an informal basis.

Through the lens of an asset-based approach, it was clear that different stakeholders in education play different and significant roles in supporting teachers of the VI learners to be efficacious in their work. Through analysis, some factors were perceived to be encouraging teachers to effectively support learners with visual impairment. However, the restraining factors hindering teachers to effectively support VI learners were also evident.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are based on the findings of the current study. The following are the suggested strategies that can effectively improve teachers' engagement in dealing with VI learners concerning their self-efficacy.

1. It is recommended that there should be the establishment of a **school support network committee** where the representatives from all the school support structures or stakeholders are involved for purposes of regularly deliberating on matters concerning the visually impaired.
2. The school should establish an **asset-based map** to identify the surrounding support networks within and outside the school so that it assists in maintaining a close working relationship such networks.
3. There should be the compilation and availability of **learner-portfolios**(from primary schools) that can be used by teachers of grade eight(entry-level) as a form of guide and background knowledge on how to plan and assist individual VI learners.
4. The teachers should also engage in **joint research projects** (with possible funding) with other stakeholders in education such as the Ministry of Education and the institute of higher learning to share ideas and resources to support teachers of VI learners.

6.5 POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following should be considered for further research:

- A study that will further explore the use of "lesokoana" as a method of data generation in the related field;
- A study that will explore how teachers' self-efficacy is impeded by the lack of background information from feeder-schools during the learners' transition from primary to secondary schools; and

- An inquiry that adopts the quantitative research approach with a bigger sample size from a wide range of schools to explore how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting learners with visual impairment.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix A

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SCHEDULE 1

Session 1: Teachers' conceptualisation of self-efficacy in relation to supporting visually impaired learners.

Participants: 7 purposively selected teachers

Facilitator: L. L. Mosola

Duration: 1 hour

Welcome.

You are kindly invited to partake in this activity that is part and parcel of the research study that aims at exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced for supporting visually impaired learners in Lesotho mainstream schools through school support networks. The study intends to tap into available school resources or assets within and beyond the school context in order to support teachers working with learners with visual impairment. The researcher acknowledges that team work can yield fruitful results, hence a call for this group discussion. This is also supported by an African adage that states "lets'oele le beta poho". Please be informed that participation in this focus group discussion will be very essential as it is a journey towards educational liberation of learners with visual impairment by giving adequate support to teachers working with them so that they can in return give necessary support to this minority group in schools. However, participation is voluntary and the rights of the participants are reserved.

Introduction by facilitator (researcher):

Hello everyone, my name is Lintle Lydia Mosola. I am a Masters student at the University of the Free State. My research study intends to explore how **teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced for supporting visually impaired learners through school support networks in Lesotho mainstream schools**. I would like to thank everyone for their precious time to partake in this focus group discussion.

Introduction by the participants:

I humbly request us to have a quick round of introductions. Each and everyone is humbly requested to tell us their name, the area of specialty, the number of visually impaired learners in your class and which grades they are in.

GUIDELINE: The researcher will engage the participants in the discussion by asking the following questions:-

1. What is your understanding of term “self-efficacy”?
2. Do you think it is necessary to acquire self-efficacy in supporting the visually impaired learners? Give explanation to your response.
3. How can you boost your self-efficacy in order to provide adequate support to visually impaired learners? Elaborate on your answer.
4. Is there anything we left out that we did not discuss, but you feel it is vital in understanding self-efficacy in relation to supporting visually impaired learners?

“Kea leboha ka ho nka karolo lipatlisong tsa boithuto bona- Thank you for partaking in this research study”- Researcher

Appendix B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SCHEDULE 2

Session 2: School support networks as a way to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairment.

Round 1: Group 1

Participants: 4 visually impaired learners, 4 teachers and 3 parents

Facilitator: L. L. Mosola

Duration: 1 hour

Welcome.

You are kindly invited to partake in this activity that is part and parcel of the research study that aims at exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced for supporting visually impaired learners in Lesotho mainstream schools through school support networks. The study intends to tap into available school resources or assets within and beyond the school context in order to support teachers working with learners with visual impairment. The researcher acknowledges that team work can yield fruitful results, hence a call for this group discussion. This is also supported by an African adage that states "lets'oele le beta poho". Please be informed that participation in this focus group discussion will be very essential as it is a journey towards educational liberation of learners with visual impairment by giving adequate support to teachers working with them so that they can in return give necessary support to this minority group in schools. However, participation is voluntary and the rights of the participants are reserved.

Introduction by facilitator (researcher):

Hello everyone, my name is Lintle Lydia Mosola. I am a Masters student at the University of the Free State. My research study intends to explore how **teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced for supporting visually impaired learners through school support networks in Lesotho mainstream schools**. I would like to thank everyone for their precious time to partake in this focus group discussion.

Introduction by the participants:

I humbly request us to have a quick round of introductions. Each and everyone is humbly requested to tell us their name and the category they fall in (whether an educator, a parent or a learners).

GUIDELINE: The researcher will engage the participants in a discussion by asking the following questions:-

1. What is your understanding of the term school support networks?
2. Do you think the school support networks are essential in supporting teachers working with visually impaired learners? Give an explanation.
3. Can you identify some of the support networks a school has and how are they working in supporting the teachers of the visually impaired learners?
4. How efficient is the current functioning of the school support structures in supporting the teachers of the visually impaired?
5. How can the school support networks enhance teachers' self-efficacy for supporting visually impaired learners?
6. What do you suggest can be done to actively engage the school support networks in a continuous and consistent manner to support teachers working with the visually impaired learners?

“Kea leboha ka ho nka karolo lipatlisisong tsa boithuto bona- Thank you for partaking in this research study”- Researcher

Round 2: Group 2

Participants: 3 visual impaired learners, 3 teachers and 4 parents

Facilitator: L. L. Mosola

Duration: 1 hour

Welcome.

You are kindly invited to partake in this activity that is part and parcel of the research study that aims at exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced for supporting visually impaired learners in Lesotho mainstream schools through school support networks. The study intends to tap into available school resources or assets within and beyond the school context in order to support teachers working with learners with visual impairment. The researcher acknowledges that team work can yield fruitful results, hence a call for this group discussion. This is also supported by an African adage that states "lets'oele le beta poho". Please be informed that participation in this focus group discussion will be very essential as it is a journey towards educational liberation of learners with visual impairment by giving adequate support to teachers working with them so that they can in return give necessary support to this minority group in schools. However, participation is voluntary and the rights of the participants are reserved.

Introduction by facilitator (researcher):

Hello everyone, my name is Lintle Lydia Mosola. I am a Masters student at the University of the Free State. My research study intends to explore how **teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced for supporting visually impaired learners through school support networks in Lesotho mainstream schools**. I would like to thank everyone for their precious time to partake in this focus group discussion.

Introduction by the participants:

I humbly request us to have a quick round of introductions. Each and everyone is humbly requested to tell us their name and the category they fall in (whether an educator, a parent or a learners).

GUIDELINE: The researcher will engage the participants in a discussion by asking the following questions:-

1. What is your understanding of the term school support networks?
2. Do you think the school support networks are essential in supporting teachers working with visually impaired learners? Give an explanation.
3. Can you identify some of the support networks a school has and how are they working in supporting the teachers of the visually impaired learners?

4. How efficient is the current functioning of the school support structures in supporting the teachers of the visually impaired?
5. How can the school support networks enhance teachers' self-efficacy for supporting visually impaired learners?
6. What do you suggest can be done to actively engage the school support networks in a continuous and consistent manner to support teachers working with the visually impaired learners?

Closing remarks: A researcher thanks everyone for their great input in this research study.

“Kea leboha ka ho nka karolo lipatlisisong tsa boithuto bona- Thank you for partaking in this research study”- Researcher

Appendix C

LESOKOANA SCHEDULE

Session 1: School support networks

Round 1: The valuable aspects of school support networks

Participants: 7 purposively selected teachers

Facilitator: L. L. Mosola

Duration: 30 minutes

Welcome.

You are kindly invited to partake in this activity that is part and parcel of the research study that aims at exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced for supporting visually impaired learners in Lesotho mainstream schools through school support networks. The study intends to tap into available school resources or assets within and beyond the school context in order to support teachers working with learners with visual impairment. The researcher acknowledges that team work can yield fruitful results, hence a call for this collaborative activity. This is also supported by an African adage that states "lets'oele le beta poho". Please be informed that participation in this activity will be very essential as it is a journey towards educational liberation of learners with visual impairment by giving adequate support to teachers working with them so that they can in return give necessary support to this minority group in schools. However, participation is voluntary and the rights of the participants are reserved.

GUIDELINE: The researcher will engage the participants in a pre-activity whereby there will be a brief explanation of what lesokoana entails and how Basotho people used to play it. Afterwards the researcher will highlight the significance of using the principles of this Basotho game as a tool to generate data as well as how the activity will take place.

The following question will be asked by the researcher to guide the activity:-

1. What are the aspects of the school support networks do you identify as most valuable and why?

Probe: You may explore features that are within or beyond the school context that you feel play a major role in providing you with adequate support.

Round 2: The challenging aspects of school support networks

Participants: 7 purposively selected teachers

Facilitator: L. L. Mosola

Duration: 30 minutes

Welcome to the second round.

GUIDELINE: The following question will be asked by the researcher to guide the activity:-

1. What are the aspects of the school support networks do you identify as most challenging and why?

Probe: You may explore features that are within or beyond the school context that you feel are challenging and hinder provision of adequate support.

Closing activity: The activity will be ended by singing one of the songs that was sang by the players (which in this regard will be the participants) at the end of the race as a sign of a victory and indication that they have achieved a targeted goal.

“Kea leboha ka ho nka karolo lipatlisisong tsa boithuto bona- Thank you for partaking in this research study”- Researcher

Appendix D

COLLAGE CREATION ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Session 1: Orientation about collage making

Participants: 7 purposively selected teachers

Facilitator: L. L. Mosola

Duration: 30 minutes

You are welcome.

This is an activity that is part and parcel of the research study that aims at exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced for supporting visually impaired learners in Lesotho mainstream schools through school support networks. The study intends to tap into available school resources or assets within and beyond the school context in order to support teachers working with learners with visual impairment. In teaching, educators have always considered pictures as one of the essential teaching and learning aids with a perception that what is seen can be understood better than what is heard (Mariga and Phachaka, 2011). Therefore, collage is an innovative way of gathering information on a particular theme or topic through the use of photographs, pictures, coloured papers, words, symbols and other artefacts (Khanare & De Lange, 2017). Please be informed that participation in this activity will be very essential as it will raise awareness on empowering or discouraging factors with regard to teachers' self-efficacy dealing with the visually impaired learners, however it is a voluntary activity and your rights as a participant are reserved.

GUIDELINES: The researcher will unfold what collage activity entails during this session by:

- Giving the teacher an explanation of what collage is.

- Highlighting the materials that are going to be used during the collage creation activity.
- Demonstrating examples of collages.
- Humbly requesting the participants to bring the pictures they feel can add a value in their collage, but researcher's provision of materials to be used during the activity will be highly guaranteed.
- Allowing questions for further clarifications in order to proceed to the second session.

Session 2: Collage creation activity

Participants: 7 purposively selected teachers

Duration: 1 hour

Welcome once again.

In this session, participants will engage in the actual performance of a task. You are requested to use the combination of pictures of your choice, as well as texts and phrases to describe the factors inside and outside the school context that you identify as empowering (enabling) with regard to developing your self-efficacy for supporting visually impaired learners based on the chosen pictures. Similarly, describe other factors that you also identify as discouraging which affects your self-efficacy in supporting those learners in the same context.

Probe: This might include the personal or professional experiences, in or outside the classroom. It can also be the factors beyond the school context that have a direct impact on your self-efficacy and how you support learners with visual impairment in your school.

GUIDELINES: The researcher will hand over materials to be used by the participants and allow the activity to proceed.

- The participants will cut and paste their pictures.
- Use words and phrases to describe the pictures they have selected.

Session 3: Collage interpretation

Participants: 7 purposively selected teachers

Duration: 1 hour

Welcome once again.

In this session the participants will engage in interpretation of the collage activities that was done in the previous session.

GUIDELINE: The researcher will ask the following questions to trigger the interpretation process:-

- Can you please describe what is entailed in your collage?
- From your collage, which factors do you regard as encouraging or motivating that increase your confidence in teaching learners with visual impairment? Give the explanation of your response.

Probe: It can be factors within or beyond the school context that have direct or indirect impact on your work for supporting visually impaired learners.

- Similarly, which factors do you identify as discouraging and lowers your confidence in teaching learners with visual impairment? Please explain why?

Probe: It can be factors within or beyond the school context that have direct or indirect impact on your work for supporting visually impaired learners.

Session 4: Reflection on collage creation activity

Participants: 7 purposively selected teachers

Duration: 30 minutes

Welcome once again.

This is a wrap up session, whereby the participants are requested to reflect on their work.

GUIDELINE: The researcher will ask the following questions:-

- How was the activity? Was it interesting or challenging?
- Have ever been engaged in the same activity before? If yes, where, when and for what purpose?
- Can you regard it as an effective way of putting the ideas together and learn about something?
- Would you like to keep your collages? If yes, what are you intending to do with them? With whom and why?
- Are there any suggestions, compliments or any other issues regarding the collage creation activity that you need to share for improvements while using this method in a research project?

“Kea leboha ka ho nka karolo lipatlisisong tsa boithuto bona- Thank you for partaking in this research study”- Researcher

Appendix E

Box 9

Qacha's Nek 600

Lesotho

05/03/2019

The Principal Secretary of Education

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN A SCHOOL

My name is Lintle Lydiah Mosola; I am a Masters student at the University of Free-State in Bloemfontein Campus School of Education. My student number is: 2015311117. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's dissertation entails "**An exploration of how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in Lesotho mainstream schools for supporting visually impaired learners through school support networks**". I am hereby seeking your permission to conduct a study in St. Catherines High school in Maseru District in order to be able to engage participants in this research project.

The aim of the research is to ***explore how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting learners with visual impairment through school support networks*** in a selected mainstream school.

Upon the completion of research, I therefore pledge to provide the Ministry of Education with the full copy of the report based on the findings. For further enquiries and clarity of the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact me on:-

- Cell-phone #: (+266) 62191887/ 58553025
- Email address: lintlemosola@gamil.com

Yours sincerely

.....

Lintle L. Mosola

REFERENCE

Dr. Fumane Khanare (Supervisor)

University of Free-State- Senior Lecturer and Acting Head of School of Education

Contact details: +27 83 432 1772

Email: Khanarefp@ufs.ac.za

AppendixF

Box 9

Qacha's Nek 600

Lesotho

29/01/2019

The Principal

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Lintle Lydia Mosola; I am a Masters student at the University of Free-State in Bloemfontein Campus, School of Education. My student number is: 2015311117. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's dissertation entails "**An exploration of how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in Lesotho mainstream schools for supporting visually impaired learners through school support networks**". I am hereby seeking your permission to conduct a study in your school in order to be able to engage participants in this research project.

The aim of the research is to ***explore how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting learners with visual impairment through school support networks*** and the following objectives will assist in responding to the main subject of this research study:

- to explore how teachers conceptualise self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to identify the enabling and deterring factors affecting teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to examine the ways in which school support networks could enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as the most valuable; and

- to explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as the most challenging.

The study will be useful for many stakeholders in education in navigating ways to support teachers who deal with the visually impaired learners; make known the importance of networking and drawing from other resources in order to support teachers and learners with visual impairment in mainstream schools.

Research Plan and Method

I intend to engage the participants in the following data generation methods: focus group discussion, collage creation activity and lesokoana. Focus group discussion and lesokoana will last for 1 hour, while on the other hand collage creation activity will last for approximately 1 hour 30 minutes. I will audio record the conversations and also take pictures where necessary during the project activities, but also keeping confidentiality of the research participants. The participation is voluntary and the participants will be informed that data collected from them will be used for the purpose of research.

I will be grateful to get your permission to carry out the study in your school and upon the approval of my request; I will then seek permission from the teachers and learners as well as the parents of the learners to be engaged in this research project.

For further enquiries and clarity of the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact me on:-

- Cell-phone #: (+266) 62191887/ 58553025
- Email address: lintlemosola@gamil.com

Yours sincerely

.....

Lintle L. Mosola

REFERENCE

Dr. Fumane Khanare (Supervisor)

University of Free-State- Senior Lecturer and Acting Head of School of Education

Contact details: +27 83 432 1772

Email: Khanarefp@ufs.ac.za

Appendix G

Noted & permitted to carry the study
Done
07/03/19



**THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MASERU DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE
P.O. BOX 47. MASERU 100.
28810001 / 22 322 755**

06 March 2019

The Principal
St. Catherine's High School
Maseru 100

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: RESEARCH


**"AN EXPLORATION OF HOW TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY CAN
BE ENHANCED IN LESOTHO MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS FOR
SUPPORTING VISUALLY IMPAIRED LEARNERS THROUGH
SCHOOL SUPPORT NETWORKS"**

MS LINTLE L. MOSOLA is a student who is conducting a research on the above stated topic. She therefore wishes to carry out a research at Lesotho High Schools.

You are kindly requested to provide her with the information that she may require.

Thanking you in advance for your usual support.

Yours Faithfully


DISTRICT
EDUCATION OFFICE
06 MAR 2019
MPHILELE LEMENA (MR)
DISTRICT EDUCATION MANAGER (ai) - MASERU

Appendix H



ST. CATHERINE'S HIGH SCHOOL

P.O. Box 17, Maseru 100.
Lesotho, Southern Africa.
Fax/Telephone: (+266) 22322452

13th March, 2019

Ms L. L. Mosola
National University of Lesotho
P.O. Box Roma
180

Dear Madam

Re : Permission to conduct research work

Please be informed that permission has been granted to you to conduct research work in our school.

Yours Faithfully

Rev. Atwell N. Xana - PRINCIPAL

ST. CATHERINE'S
HIGH SCHOOL
P.O. BOX 17, MASERU 100
LESOTHO, SOUTHERN AFRICA
FAX: 22 322452

Appendix I

Box 9

Qacha's Nek 600

Lesotho

05/03/2019

The Teacher

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Lintle Lydiah Mosola; I am a Masters student at the University of Free-State in Bloemfontein Campus, School of Education. I wish to engage you as my participants in my research project for my Master's degree dissertation and the research I wish to conduct entails **"An exploration of how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in Lesotho mainstream schools for supporting visually impaired learners through school support networks."**

The study aims at *exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting learners with visual impairment through school support networks* and the following objectives will assist in responding to the main subject of this research study:

- to explore how teachers conceptualise self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to identify the enabling and deterring factors affecting teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to examine the ways in which school support networks could enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as the most valuable; and

- to explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as the most challenging.

Research Plan and Method

I intend to engage you in the following data generation methods: focus group discussion, collage creation activity and lesokoana as per the demands of the research objectives listed above. Focus group discussion and lesokoana will last for 1 hour, while on the other hand collage creation activity will last for approximately 1 hour 30 minutes. I will audio record the conversations and also take pictures where necessary during the project activities, but also pay attention to your confidentiality. The participation is voluntary and the participants will be informed that data collected from them will be used for the purpose of research.

I will be grateful to engage you in this research project. The study will be useful for many stakeholders in education in navigating ways to support teachers who deal with the visually impaired learners; make known the importance of networking and drawing from other resources in order to support teachers and learners with visual impairment in mainstream schools.

For further enquiries and clarity of the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact me on:-

- Cell-phone #: (+266) 62191887/ 58553025
- Email address: lintlemosola@gamil.com

Yours sincerely

.....

Lintle L. Mosola

REFERENCE

Dr. Fumane Khanare (Supervisor)

University of Free-State- Senior Lecturer and Acting Head of School of Education

Contact details: +27 83 432 1772

Email: Khanarefp@ufs.ac.za

Appendix J

Box 9

Qacha's Nek 600

Lesotho

29/01/2019

The Parent/Guardian

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Lintle Lydia Mosola; I am a Masters student at the University of Free-State in Bloemfontein Campus, School of Education. I wish to engage you as my participants in my research project for my Master's degree dissertation and the research I wish to conduct entails **"An exploration of how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in Lesotho mainstream schools for supporting visually impaired learners through school support networks."**

The study aims at *exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting learners with visual impairment through school support networks* and the following objectives will assist in responding to the main subject of this research study:

- to explore how teachers conceptualise self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to identify the enabling and deterring factors affecting teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to examine the ways in which school support networks could enhance teachers' self-efficacy in relation to supporting learners with visual impairments;
- to explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as the most valuable; and

- to explore which aspects of school support networks the teachers of visually impaired learners identify as the most challenging.

Research Plan and Method

I intend to engage you in the following data generation methods: focus group discussion as per the demands of the research objectives listed above. Focus group discussion will last for approximately 1 hour. I will audio record the conversations and also take pictures where necessary during the project activities, but also pay attention to your confidentiality. The participation is voluntary and the participants will be informed that data collected from them will be used for the purpose of research.

I will be grateful to engage you in this research project. The study will be useful for many stakeholders in education in navigating ways to support teachers who deal with the visually impaired learners; make known the importance of networking and drawing from other resources in order to support teachers and learners with visual impairment in mainstream schools.

For further enquiries and clarity of the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact me on:-

- Cell-phone #: (+266) 62191887/ 58553025
- Email address: lintlemosola@gamil.com

Yours sincerely

.....

Lintle L. Mosola

REFERENCE

Dr. Fumane Khanare (Supervisor)

University of Free-State- Senior Lecturer and Acting Head of School of Education

Contact details: +27 83 432 1772

Email: Khanarefp@ufs.ac.za

Appendix K

Box 9

Qacha's Nek 600

Lesotho

29/01/2019

The Learner

INFORMED ASSENT LETTER

My name is Lintle Lydia Mosola; I am a Masters student at the University of Free-State in Bloemfontein Campus, School of Education. I would like to invite you to take part in my research study for my Masters' degree. The purpose for this research is to **explore how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting learners with visual impairment through school support networks**. The participation is voluntary and you will be treated with respect throughout this study.

I will be grateful for your participation in this study. The study will be helpful in supporting teachers who teach learners with visual impairment.

For further enquiries and clarity of the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact me on:-

- Cell-phone #: (+266) 62191887/ 58553025
- Email address: lintlemosola@gamil.com

Yours sincerely

.....

Lintle L. Mosola

REFERENCE

Dr. Fumane Khanare (Supervisor)

University of Free-State- Senior Lecturer and Acting Head of School of Education

Contact details: +27 83 432 1772

Email: Khanarefp@ufs.ac.za

MAY 10 Friday
Vidyag
Ngweshanu
Labothlano
Labothlano
Labothlano
Lesithanu
Lavuthanu
Lavuthanu
Ulveshlanu

2019
Week 19
130-235

The researcher arrived at a research site around 12:45 pm and met the ground deputy principle as the principle ordered her to. The deputy principal took me to the staff room to meet the teacher participants and afterwards I was taken to the CAT center where I met for the blind who was going one teacher me to meet J do assist learner participants.

WR had a meeting with the learners for orientation about the study after which the was conducted with the teachers. The researchers pleaded with the regular teachers that they would like to be excluded from a group of teachers and their parents so that they can be able to communicate freely.

"A friend is someone who knows all about you and still loves you." ~ Elbert Hubbard

2019 FEBRUARY							2019 MARCH							2019 APRIL							2019 MAY						
T	F	S	M	T	F	S	T	F	S	M	T	F	S	T	F	S	M	T	F	S	T	F	S	M	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28																	

Appendix M

Box 9

Qacha's Nek 600

Lesotho

29/01/2019

The Parent/Guardian

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR LEARNER INVOLVEMENT

My name is Lintle Lydiah Mosola; I am a Masters student at the University of Free-State in Bloemfontein Campus, School of Education. I wish to engage your child as my participant in my research project for my Master's degree dissertation and the research I wish to conduct entails **"An exploration of how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in Lesotho mainstream schools for supporting visually impaired learners through school support networks."**

The study aims at ***exploring how teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced in supporting learners with visual impairment through school support networks.***

I will be grateful to engage your child in this research project. The study will be useful for many stakeholders in education in navigating ways to support teachers who deal with the visually impaired learners; make known the importance of networking and drawing from other resources in order to support teachers and learners with visual impairment in mainstream schools.

For further enquiries and clarity of the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact me on:-

- Cell-phone #: (+266) 62191887/ 58553025
- Email address: lintlemosola@gamil.com

Yours sincerely

.....

Lintle L. Mosola

REFERENCE

Dr. Fumane Khanare (Supervisor)

University of Free-State- Senior Lecturer and Acting Head of School of Education

Contact details: +27 83 432 1772

Email: Khanarefp@ufs.ac.za

Appendix N

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



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), 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, journal publications and/or conference proceedings.

I agree to the recording of the insert specific data collection method.

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: _____



Appendix O

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

UFS
UV

PLEASE RETURN

Name of child: _____


Name of Parent: _____

- Do you understand this research study and are you willing to let your child take part in it? Yes ☐ No ☐
- Has the researcher answered all your questions? Yes ☐ No ☐
- Do you understand that you can withdraw from the study at any time? Yes ☐ No ☐
- I give the researcher permission to make use of the data gathered from my child's participation Yes ☐ No ☐

Signature of Parent

Date

205 Nelson Mandela Drive/Ryalaan, Park West/Parkwes, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa/Suid-Afrika
P.O. Box/Posbus 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa/Suid-Afrika, T: +27(0)51 401 9111, www.ufs.ac.za



Appendix P

SAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPT: 15 May 2019

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION DATA

RESEARCH QUESTION: How do teachers' conceptualise self-efficacy in relation to supporting visually impaired learners?

Table 1: Question 1: What is your understanding of the term self-efficacy?

Teacher Participant= TP

TP1	I think it has to do with the ability to do all your tasks, understanding the instructions and maybe to communicate effectively . Again being able to do those tasks on your own your won or maybe getting help from other people .
TP2	I think it's build with, like my colleague said, the ability or capability one has to do something.
TP3	For us it's about carrying out our duties , whether we can do all the basic stuff that is needed in education and learning.
TP4	My understanding is based on whether a person can do things on their own as well as making informed decisions .
TP5	Efficacy as derived from the efficient, something which is precise , which is sort of hard work that brings the results.
TP6	I can say that is carrying out a task and producing visible results.
TP7	

