



Tutorial Letter 501/3/2018

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION A ETH302S

Semesters 1 and 2

Department of Inclusive Education

This tutorial letter contains important information
about your module.

BARCODE

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A WORD OF WELCOME

Welcome to the ETH302S module. In this module we aim to give you a basic introduction to Inclusive Education (IE) and then concentrate on the factors causing learning difficulties, namely intrinsic and extrinsic factors as well as learning support. In order for you to understand the importance of Inclusive Education, you will need to become familiar with some concepts and policies, e.g. Education for All, Education white paper 6, Barriers to Learning, etc. The module will also introduce some new terminology to you used in the field of Education. Familiarising yourself with these terms thoroughly will not only help you to pass this module, but it will also give you a good foundation for the rest of the course.

HOW TO USE THIS LEARNING GUIDE

This learning guide alone will not provide you with all the information needed to complete the course successfully. Additional information obtained from the required reading such as the Education white paper 6, the Screening, Identification Assessment and Support (SIAS), is essential to this module.

This module is divided into 3 sections. Each study unit contains a number of features to enhance your learning efforts.

Learning outcomes: Learning outcomes indicate what you should be able to do after having studied each unit or lesson.

Required reading: Required reading indicates compulsory reading, which is compiled in a separate reader.

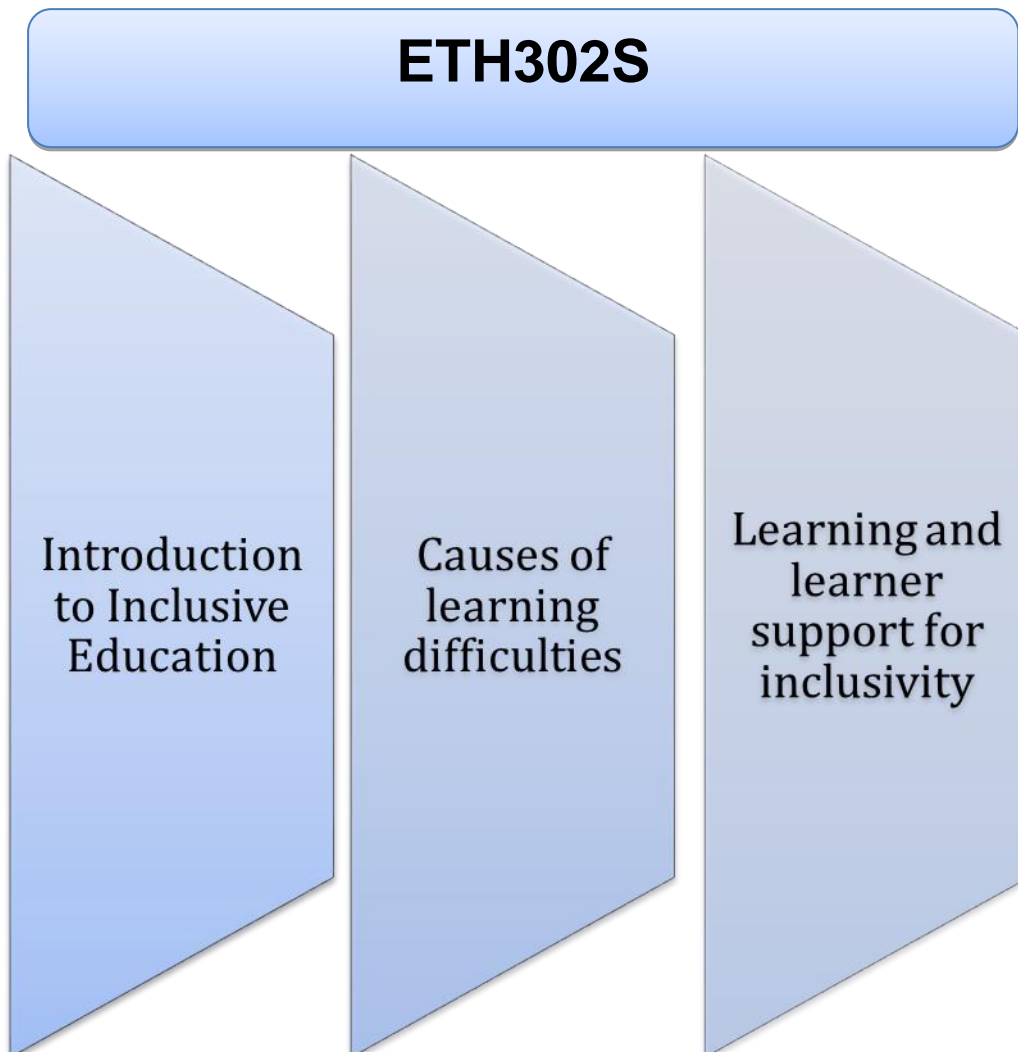
Additional reading: Additional reading which will help you to gain a deeper understanding of the particular issues at hand.

Activities: To help you evaluate your understanding of the required reading and also to help monitor your progress.

Icons: Icons draw your attention to important aspects of the learning content, provide instructions or indicate assignment activities.

Questions: Questions at the end of each section will guide your understanding of the learning outcomes.

Figure 1: An outline of the content of this module



ABBREVIATIONS

It is necessary to clarify some important terms which are frequently used throughout the study guide. For practical purposes, the use of 'his' and 'her' in this module is not related to gender. Other terminology is reviewed below.

| | |
|---------|---|
| ADHD: | Attention Deficiency Hyperactive Disorder |
| ADD: | Attention Deficit Disorder |
| DBE: | Department of Basic Education |
| DIBELS: | Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Learning Skills |
| DBST: | District Based Support Team |
| EFA: | Education for all |
| EWP 6: | Education White Paper 6 |
| FP: | Foundation Phase |
| FSS: | Full Service Schools |
| IE: | Inclusive Education |
| IEP: | Individual Education Plan |
| II: | Intellectual Impairments |
| ILST: | Institutional Support Team |
| ISP: | Individual Support Plan |
| LI: | Learning Impairments |
| LS: | Learning Support |
| MDG: | Millenium Development Goals |
| SBST: | School Based Support Team |
| SIAS: | Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support |
| SSPI: | Severe Speech and Physical Impairment |
| SSRC: | Special Schools as Resource Centres |

ICONS

The following icons are used in the learning guide in order to give you visual 'signposts' that show clear signals of what is expected of you. You will soon become used to recognising each icon and the message it conveys.



Stop and think

Whenever you see this icon, you should reflect on the issues or challenges presented, preferably in writing, and file it in your portfolio.



Activity

When you see this icon, you will know that you have to perform some kind of activity that will indicate how well you remember and understand what you have read, or that will help you assess how good you are at applying what you have learnt.



Feedback

This icon precedes the author's comments or tutorial advice on a particular activity or piece of text. These comments should never be read before you have completed the preceding activity, since your opinion may be completely different from the author's and may still be acceptable. The author is simply giving you an informed opinion.



Key points

The points following this icon are regarded as being crucial to your success. Not only do they serve as a brief summary of what has gone before, but they also highlight the things that are essential for you to know, understand, apply, analyse, synthesise or evaluate.



Other media

This icon signals to you that you should refer to other media, outside the learning guide, for example a textbook, website or other types of external resources.

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

1.1 Introduction

Why is this unit important?

In order to provide all learners with the opportunity to reach their full potential one needs a better understanding of the principles of Inclusive Education and why it should be implemented in all schools. Furthermore, one needs to have an understanding of basic educational concepts used within the field of Inclusive Education.

This unit aims to provide an introduction to the field of Inclusive Education as well as an explanation of the concepts related to Inclusion within the South African Education system.



Other media

Reading materials for Unit 1

- *Education white paper 6, Special needs education: Building an inclusive education*, Department of Education, 2001.
- Understanding and responding to children's needs in inclusive classrooms.
- *Towards inclusive education for children with disabilities: A guideline*, UNESCO, 2009.

1.2 Outcomes for Unit 1

At the end of this unit you will be able to:

- Define Inclusive Education and describe its significance in the field of education.
- Define mainstreaming and how it differs from Inclusive Education.
- Describe the roles of DBST, SBST, full-service and special schools.
- Describe the differences between the medical and the social model as highlighted in the field of education.
- Describe the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner and apply it to case studies.

1.3 The concept: Inclusive education

Inclusion! Although this may not be a new concept to many of you, the concept itself may elicit feelings of excitement but possibly also a feeling of fear and anxiety to many teachers. We all know that for the past fifteen years the South African Education system underwent a lot of transformation. One of those transformations was the Inclusive Education Policy, which was developed in 2001 by the National Department of Education (DoE).

Many teachers find the term 'inclusive education' confusing. Some might think that it means 'education for children with disabilities'. Subsequently a question arises: What is the difference between 'special education', 'education for all' and 'inclusive education'? What do these terms really imply? What does mainstreaming mean? How does it differ from Inclusive Education? Let's explore these concepts.



Activity 1

Time allocation: 60 minutes

1) *Indicate 3 important differences between Mainstreaming and Inclusive Education in table format.*

| Mainstreaming | Inclusive education |
|---------------|---------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |

5) *Read the following carefully.*

As far as special schools are concerned, this is their role according to the Policy for Inclusion:

In this White Paper, we make it clear that special schools will be strengthened rather than abolished. Following the completion of our audit of special schools, we will develop investment plans to improve the quality of education across all of them. Learners with severe disabilities will be accommodated in these vastly improved special schools, as part of an inclusive system. In this regard, the process of identifying, assessing and enrolling learners in special schools will be overhauled and replaced by structures that acknowledge the central role played by educators, lecturers and parents.

Given the considerable expertise and resources that are invested in special schools, we must

also make these available to neighbourhood schools, especially full-service schools and colleges. As we outline in this White Paper, this can be achieved by making special schools, in an incremental manner, part of district support services where they can become resources for all our schools. (DoE, 2001:3)



Feedback

The main focus of Inclusive Education is acknowledging, accepting and respecting diversity among all the children in our schools. Hence we should acknowledge the fact that each child is unique. Teachers and schools have been mandated by the Department of Education to respond to the diverse needs of all the children in our schools.

The main principles of Inclusive Education are that:

- Each child has his own strengths and abilities.
- All children can learn, regardless of their differences in age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, etc.
- Education structures, systems and learning methodologies must meet the needs of all learners.
- Everyone needs to acknowledge and respect differences among learners.
- Learning does not only occur in formal settings, but also in informal settings such as in the home and community.
- Attitudes, behaviour and methods need to change to meet the needs of all learners.
- Maximising participation of all learners and minimising barriers to learning are essential in all schools.

1.4 Where did it all start?

The international movement towards inclusion has been driven by a number of initiatives, which include the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the UNESCO Salamanca Statement (1994) and Save the children (2008). All these documents recognise the right of all children to education, which is inclusive. Several countries have signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child. South Africa is one of the countries, which has made significant advances towards promoting Inclusive Education. In response to the Salamanca statement the ministry of Education appointed two bodies, The National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training as well as The National Committee on Education Support to investigate and come up with suggestions on all aspects of special needs services. The findings and recommendations from the reports resulted in the development of Education White Paper 2, Special Needs Education, Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, 2001 which emphasises that learners, regardless of their disabilities or other barriers to learning, must be given the opportunity to pursue their learning potential to the fullest

1.5 Inclusive education in South Africa

A society's respect for human rights can be measured by the status that it accords to those members of society who are most vulnerable... disabled people, the senior citizens and its children (INDS, 1997).

Historically there was an unequal delivery of education in South Africa. It was done as follows:

- There were two separate Education systems - for 'normal' learners and for learners who were labelled with some or other 'special need.'
- Only a small percentage of children with 'special needs' from privileged sectors had access to special schools.
- Many disadvantaged learners and learners with 'special needs' were accepted into 'ordinary' schools, but they were ignored.
- Most of the times they were rejected when they applied at schools and they were consequently completely excluded from the educational system.

1.6 Making Inclusive Education a reality

All children have a right to quality education. Education White Paper 6 strives for the participation of all children in education. Inclusive education aims to accomplish, among others, the strengthening of the Education system and the integration of children in need of additional support. The principles of Inclusive Education cover a broad range of conditions, including that of disability. But changes are needed to ensure that all children may benefit from education. These changes involve restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they can respond to the diversity of their learners' needs. With reference to the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of universal primary education by 2015 and the goal of Education for All (EFA) by 2015, Inclusive Education is becoming increasingly important in achieving such targets. In order for these goals to be reached by governments, teachers, parents and others involved with education, we need to ensure that all children have access to good quality education. It requires the principles of Inclusive Education to be put into practice on a much broader scale. It implies improving the quality of life of all children by providing on-going opportunities for learning and participation in their homes, schools and communities. Our efforts must focus on developing inclusive school environments, which will provide access to learning and participation in learning to all children.

Therefore, teachers and others involved in education should work towards developing positive educational experiences so that every child can enjoy and benefit from Inclusive Education practice. To children who were marginalised in the past due to their difficulties in learning, inclusion will bring more enriching and rewarding educational experiences.



Activity

Time allocation: 90 minutes

2

- 1) *Read Chapter 2 (p.24-34) of Education white paper 6, Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education, Department of Education, 2001.*
- 2) *Write down six of the strategies suggested in this chapter to initiate change within the South African Education system.*

- *Strategy 1*
- *Strategy 2*
- *Strategy 3*
- *Strategy 4*
- *Strategy 5*
- *Strategy 6*



Feedback

From the above activity you will realise that a lot of restructuring is needed for the success of the implementation of Inclusive Education, such as early identification of barriers to learning experienced by many of the children in our schools, convergence of schools into full-service schools, establishment of District based Support teams, strengthening of special schools and in-service training of teachers.

1.7 Paradigm shift towards Inclusive Education

(From the medical model to the social model)

Implementation of Inclusive Education demands a new way of thinking about what we do in our schools and classrooms to incorporate children who experience barriers to learning. There have been changes in thinking about how children develop. With Inclusive Education there is a move towards a more human rights based approach.

Traditionally we have used a medical model approach in education of children with barriers to learning. The following case study highlights some of the negative effects of a medical model approach to learners who experience barriers to learning.



Activity

3

Time allocation: 60 minutes

Read the case study and answer the questions that follow.

Paul is a friendly ten-year-old boy with an intellectual disability. He lives with his mother Ruth, two sisters and his grandmother in one of the townships in Kwa-Zulu Natal. He is currently not at school and stays home with his grandmother during the day as his mother is working at the local shop on a daily basis.

In 2008 his mother tried to put him in a local primary school. On her arrival at the school the principal informed her that the school cannot accommodate Paul because of his disability. He furthermore explained to Ruth that teachers at the school are not knowledgeable enough to teach children with intellectual disabilities. He therefore recommended that Paul should go to Vhukani Special School, which is 200 km away from his home. His mother does not have support from Paul's father and as a result it was very difficult to take Paul to the special school due to financial problems.

- 1) *What effect did the situation above have on Paul's life?*
- 2) *What is the main barrier preventing Paul to fulfil his potential?*
- 3) *What could have been done differently in Paul's case?*



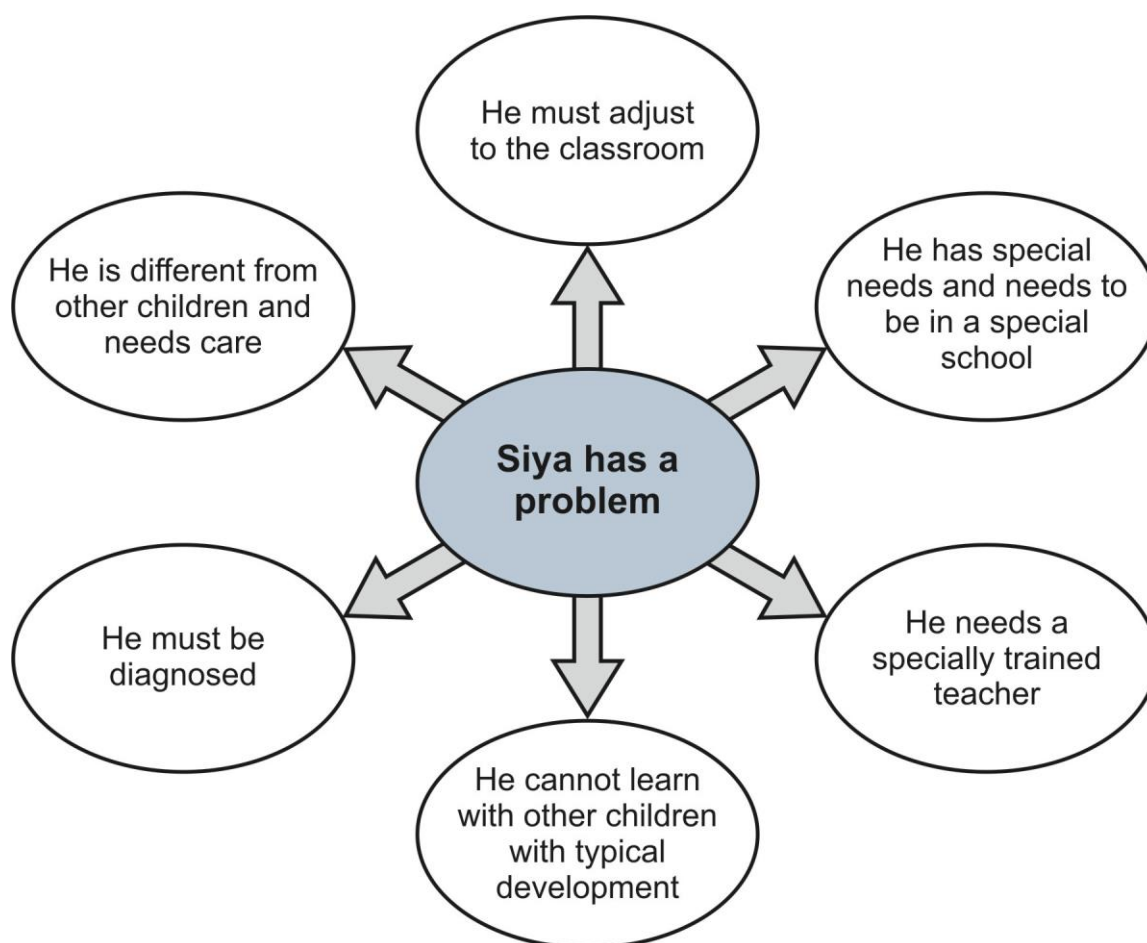
Feedback

This case study is an example of how the previously used medical model led to the exclusion of learners with barriers to learning. Note that the principal immediately referred the parent to some far away special school that was out of

reach for them. His reasons for not accepting Paul at his school were that the teachers were not trained properly to support a learner with an intellectual disability and that the school was therefore not ready to accommodate him. Resulting from this, Paul had to stay at home and was deprived of an opportunity to be educated and reach his potential.

Study the diagrams below to learn more about the Medical and the Social Models.

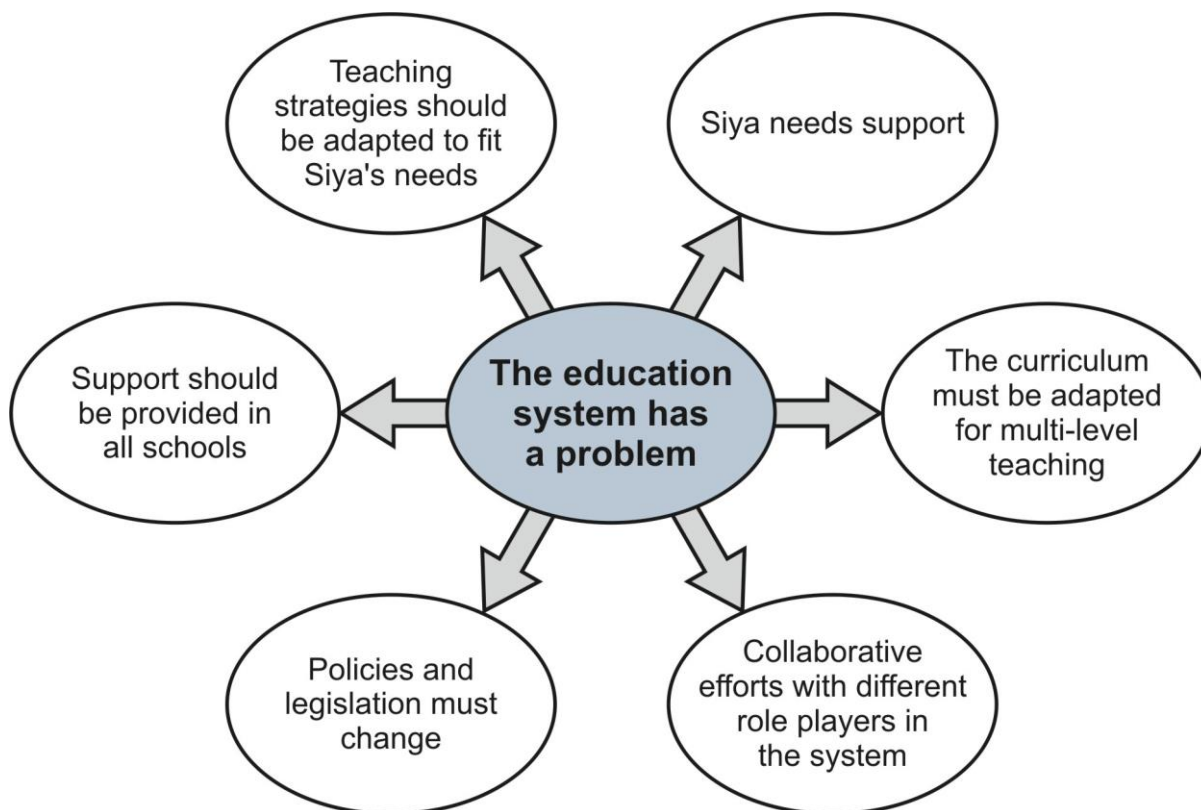
Figure 2: The Medical Model



In many countries such as South Africa, education systems were traditionally embedded within a **Medical Model**. In this model, social and economic factors were ignored when teaching children. The emphasis was placed on what was happening within the child as an individual. However, the model played an important role in identifying children with intrinsic factors causing learning barriers such as physical, sensory and some emotional barriers to learning. For example, if the child did not concentrate well, it was commonly believed that the child had an attention problem, etc.

The child and his family were often left to deal with other issues on their own, and the child was seldom offered extra support by the school.

Figure 3: The Social Model



The **Social Model** serves as a cornerstone for the implementation of Inclusive Education. According to this approach all learning is affected by the social context in which it occurs.

An important idea in the Social Model is that the education system cannot operate in isolation from other systems. These include the family that the child lives in, the geographical and social context (e.g. rural as opposed to urban), the resources available to the child and the family, and so on. Every child lives in a particular social context, in a community with sets of values and beliefs, and in certain socio-economic circumstances. The child brings to school all the influences that exist in his life outside the classroom. All of these have an effect on how the child will function in the classroom, and how he will learn. For example, factors such as how a

child is treated at home, how well fed the child is, how far the child has to travel to get to school and how well the adults in the child's environment are, have an important impact on the child in the learning environment. The Social Model regards these social and economic influences as very important. Social influences can be positive and support the child's learning. But on the other hand, they can be negative and become barriers to the child's learning. Another context that becomes important is the school and the classroom. Important issues to take into consideration are the school's readiness to accommodate the learner, the teaching strategies used by the teachers, the attitudes of the teachers, the curriculum used and the resources available at the school, etc. Any of these issues can become barriers to learning if not managed correctly.

1.8 Making schools inclusive



Activity 4

- 1) *Page through the document Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS), Department of Education, 2008.*
- 2) *Pay special attention to the SIAS Process (p.10-23).*
- 3) *Explain the roles of the following structures as they appear in the SIAS document. Provide examples as well.*
 - *Special Schools as resource centres (p.4) and Full service schools (p.3)*
 - *School based support teams (Institution-level support teams) (p.3)*
 - *District-based support teams (p.3)*

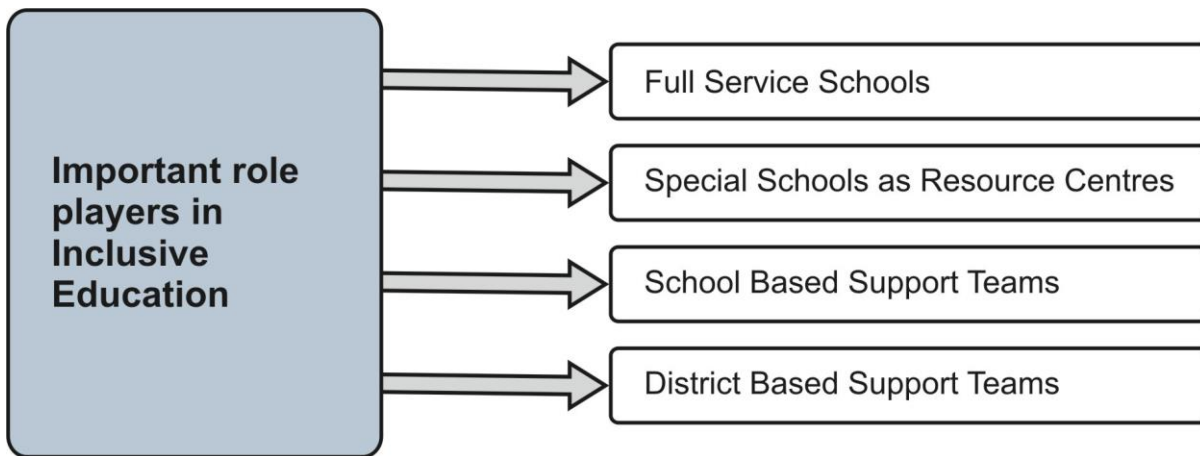


Feedback

From the document that you have just studied, you will realise that making education more inclusive requires the ability to provide support to all children by addressing their learning barriers and ensure equal participation. Screening and

identification are the first steps in the process of addressing learning barriers. Then follows the assessment process, which will determine the type and level of support the child needs. The final stage is the actual providing of support. An important question arises now: Who are responsible for the screening, identification, assessment and support of these learners? Let us look at the different structures responsible to drive the SIAS process as mandated by the *Education White Paper 6*.

Figure 4: Role players in Inclusive Education



1.8.1 Full-service schools

These are ordinary schools that will be equipped and supported to address a full range of learning needs amongst all the learners.

1.8.2 Special Schools as Resource Centres (SSRC)

These are the former special schools that have been converted into resource centres. They accommodate learners who are in need of high intensity support, but they also provide a range of specialised professional support services to ordinary and full service schools. Their roles will include the following:

- Early intervention and home programmes.
- Ensuring that learners who attend intervention programmes do not automatically gain entrance into SSRC, but should follow the same process of accessing ordinary schools to get support through the DBST.

1.8.3 School-Based Support Teams (SBST)

The SBST are also called Institution-level Support Teams (ILST's). These are local support teams in schools, Early Childhood centres or colleges.

The primary function of these teams will be to put in place properly co-ordinated learner and educator support services. These services will support the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, educator and institutional needs. Where appropriate, these teams should be strengthened by expertise from the local community, district support teams and higher education institutions. District support teams will provide the full range of education support services, such as professional development in curriculum and assessment, to these institutional-level support teams. (*Education white paper 6, 2001:29*)

1.8.4 District-Based Support Teams

This is an integrated professional service at the district level. They aim at providing support to teachers at various schools in order for them to identify and address barriers to learning experienced by learners in schools.

This will include:

- Validating assessment process
- Providing additional resources
- Training and mentoring of educators
- Supply assistive devices
- Mobilising community resources
- Providing on-going support to SBST
- Supporting learners indirectly through supporting educators and school management

This strengthened education support service will have, at its centre, new district-based support teams that will comprise staff from provincial district, regional and head offices and from special

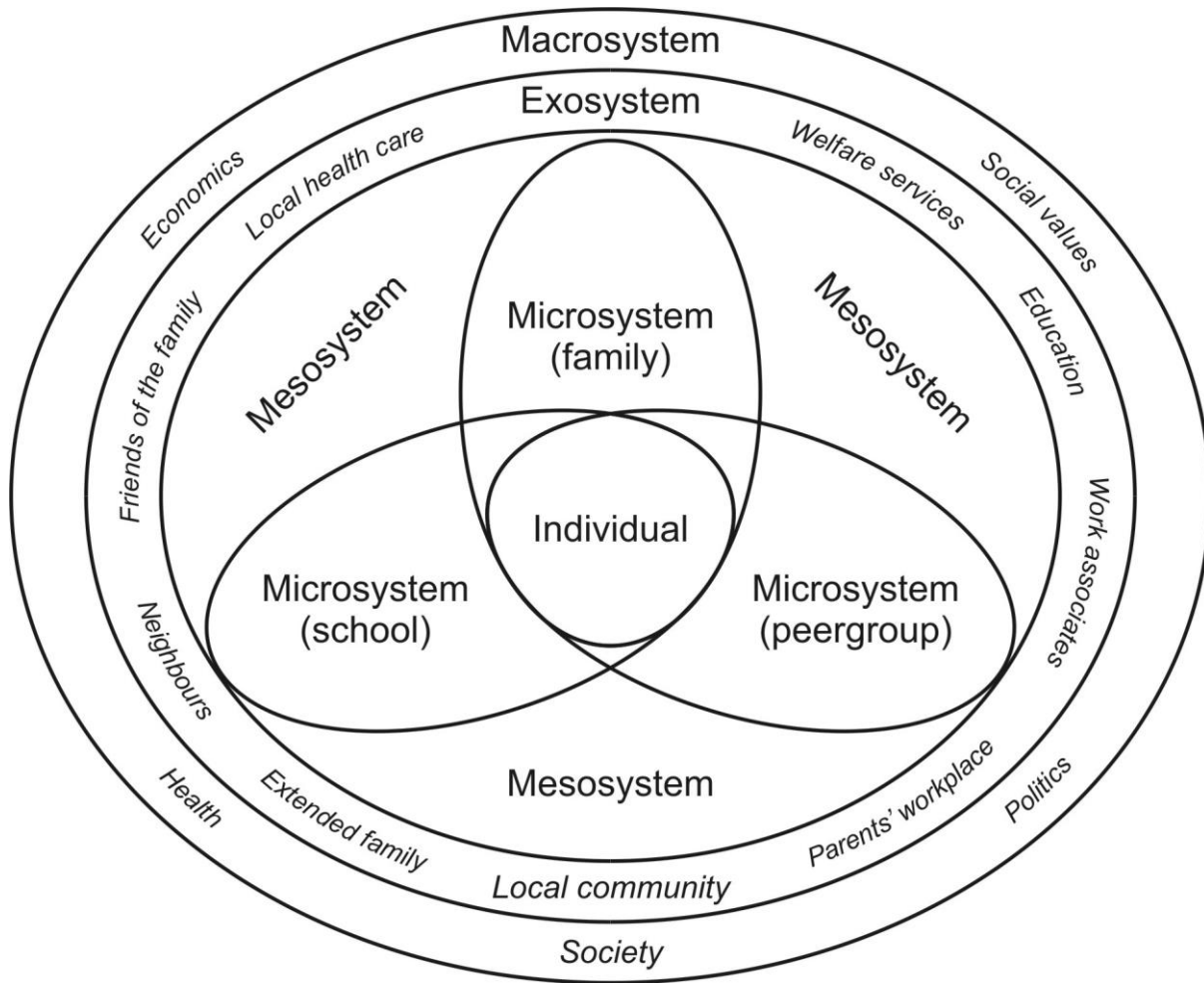
schools. The primary function of these district support teams will be to evaluate programmes, diagnose their effectiveness and suggest modifications.

Through supporting teaching, learning and management, they will build the capacity of schools, early childhood and adult basic education and training centres, colleges and higher education institutions to recognise and address severe learning difficulties and to accommodate a range of learning needs. (DoE, 2001:29)

1.9 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model is a very handy tool to use in the implementation of Inclusive Education and addressing barriers to learning. This theory shows us that barriers to learning and participation cannot be seen in isolation. Teachers, parents, peers and others all have an influence on a child's learning and participation. It is also important to understand the influences from society and the immediate social context on the individual learner. In turn, the individual learner brings knowledge, skills, values and understandings to the teaching/learning situation from his own social context. Both perspectives are necessary for the teaching/learning process to be effective. In other words, the learning process does not take place in a vacuum. There are many factors that impact both on the teacher and on the learner. The teaching / learning situation is a critical place where they actually meet in an interactive, dynamic manner.

Study the following illustration of the Ecological Model of Bronfenbrenner:

Figure 5: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model

Adapted from: Bronfenbrenner (1986:723)

Each of these systems (micro, meso, exo and macro) has a significant influence on the development of the learner as well as his ability to learn and achieve his full potential.

Positive aspects in the different systems will, of course, contribute to the learner's successful development, while negative aspects usually cause barriers to learning.

In order to support learners with diverse needs in an inclusive environment, it is necessary to see each learner's life-world as a whole. This can be done by using the above illustration of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model and indicating the positive as well as the negative aspects in the different systems.

1.9.1 The microsystem

The microsystem represents the personal relationships that the learner has within the family, the school and the peer group. In other words, it denotes the learner's immediate environment where he has face-to-face contact with other people on a daily basis. This is where the learner develops physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

“This system should support the child's feeling of belonging, love and support, and subsequently serve as a protective factor.” (Swart & Pettipher in Landsberg, 2011:14) It may, however, have a very negative effect on the learner's development and can actually be the cause of learning barriers in cases of child abuse, drug abuse in the family, homelessness, poverty, rejection in the peer group, bullying, insensitive teachers, etc.

1.9.2 The mesosystem

The mesosystem is a representation of the interaction of a child's microsystems. The interaction between the different microsystems is represented by the mesosystem. In this system, for example, we look at the relationships between the parents and the teachers or the parents and the peers. Again, these relationships may have a positive or a negative effect on the learner's development and progress. A child with a lack of support at home can benefit from a loving and caring teacher who can give guidance to his parents on how to support their child.

It is important for a teacher to consider all the different role players who have an influence on the development of the child, especially when looking for the causes of learning barriers.

1.9.3 The exosystem

The exosystem represents factors that have an indirect influence on the learner's development. This means that the child is influenced either positively or negatively by these factors, without being directly involved or physically present.

An example would be the parent's workplace. If the parent is employed and has a regular income, it means that the child will be well provided for financially. If the parent is happy at work, it will have a positive effect on his relationship with his children at home.

The opposite is also true – if the parent is unemployed, the family will struggle financially or if the parent is frustrated at work, he might not have the patience and energy to spend quality time with the children.

1.9.4 The macrosystem

The macrosystem represents the broader community. Included in this system are the economic welfare of the community, political issues, values and beliefs in the different cultures, criminal activity, health issues, etc.

In a rich community many support systems are in place, e.g. hospitals, clinics, health workers, occupational therapists, security systems, good schools, etc.

In a poor community the crime rate is usually higher, medical care is insufficient and education provision is poor. There are very few, if any support systems the parents or teachers can rely on in order to provide for the diverse needs of the learners.



Activity

5

- 1) *Read the following case study.*
- 2) *Use 2 different colours and underline all the positive aspects in Shauni's life-world with one colour and all the negative aspects with the other colour.*
- 3) *Look at the table below to see how all these factors fit into the different systems of the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner.*

Shauni used to live with both her parents in Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN). After her parents have separated, her mother moved to Gauteng, Johannesburg. Shauni

now lives there with her mother in a very poor and densely populated suburb. Shauni's father still lives in KZN and rarely sees his daughter. Her mother has a sleep-in job as a domestic worker. She rents a small room in the back yard of a family for whom she works on a Saturday. Shauni stays here alone during the week. Her mother has arranged for her meals to be provided by the landlord who ensures that Shauni does not go to bed or to school being hungry. Her mother returns home on weekends.

Shauni attends the school around the corner from her home. She is in Grade 4. At 11 years, she is a little old for her grade. This school has about 800 learners and 22 staff members. The teacher/learner ratio ranges from 40 – 45 learners per teacher. The teachers are struggling to cope with the diverse learning and developmental needs of their learners, especially since they have so many learners in their classes. Many learners are poor and come from communities with high rates of unemployment. The teachers suspect that some of the learners might have intellectual disabilities of some kind, but do not consider it their job to help these learners as they believe that they are not trained in the field of Learning Support. The principal, however,

emphasises the implementation of Inclusive Education in the school. He has invited the District Based Support Team to come to the school and support the teachers in addressing the diverse barriers to learning experienced by many of their learners. He has furthermore organised parents' workshops, which will take place on Saturdays with the aim of encouraging parent-teacher collaboration. Shauni's mother appears to be very interested in attending the workshops as she feels that it will benefit her and her daughter.

Shauni misses her friends from her previous school and her father, and finds it very hard to integrate and feel at home in this new school. She did not do very well at her last school either, but at least she had a few friends there. Her teachers think that she suffers from an intellectual disability and tend to neglect her in class, especially since she rarely does any class work or homework. She

struggles with reading and is unable to manage the written work expected from her. Her classmates pick up on the teachers' attitudes, and tend to ignore her, or even abuse her verbally. Shauni has lost interest in her schoolwork and she withdraws herself completely from class activities, which leads to further neglect by the teachers and rejection by classmates.



Feedback

Table 1: Shauni's life-world

| Systems | Positive aspects | Negative aspects |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Individual | | Shauni struggles to adapt in the new school. She also struggles with reading and written work. She has lost interest in her schoolwork and withdraws herself. |
| Microsystem (family) | Shauni lives with her mother. Her mother wants to attend the workshops at school. | Her parents are separated, she hardly ever sees her father. Shauni is alone at home during the week and has nobody to help her with homework. |
| Microsystem (school) | The school is close to her home. The principal is positive about inclusive education. DBST has been invited to support the teachers. | Large classes, teachers struggle to cope. Teachers are not trained in Learning Support and do not help learners who are struggling. They ignore Shauni as they do not think she has the intellectual ability to learn. |
| Microsystem (peer group) | | Shauni misses her friends from her old school. Her classmates ignore her and some of them verbally |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|---|
| | | abuse her. |
| Mesosystem | Workshops for parents have been organized by the school to encourage collaboration between the parents and the teachers. | Her classmates pick up on the teachers' attitudes and tend to ignore her. |
| Exosystem | Her mother earns a salary. Regular meals are provided by the landlord. | Shauni's mother works away from home and only returns on weekends. |
| Macrosystem | | A very poor and densely populated suburb, high levels of unemployment. |

1.10 Legal considerations for inclusivity in South Africa:

- **Right to basic education**

The South African constitution mandate the right to basic education for all learners in South Africa. This include learners with disabilities, learners in conflict with the law, learners that have never been to school, and learners who experience other forms of learning barriers

- **SA Constitution (Act 108 of 1996)**

This was founded on the basis of human dignity, achievement of equality, advancement of human rights and freedom and to establish the right of all citizens to basic education, and to outlaw discrimination against anyone on any grounds.

- **SA Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996)**

Public schools must admit all learners and serve their educational requirements without discriminating against them. Schools may not administer or instruct anybody to administer any test related to admission of learners to a school. Parents may also choose where they want their child to attend school. Based on the above legislation, there was a need for a system that would benefit all learners from all schools in all areas in the country. Therefore the new Inclusive Education System in SA aims to address past imbalances and provide quality and accessible education to all its citizens.



Activity

6

4) *Page through SACE Code of professional Ethics for Educators, South African policies and legislatures and discuss the following:*

- *Right to equality*
- *Ethics in teaching profession*

1.10 Conclusion

In the following units we will take a close look at factors that cause barriers to learning and lead to learning difficulties.

THEME B
EXPLORING THE CAUSES OF
LEARNING BARRIERS

UNIT 2: A BROAD OVERVIEW OF FACTORS THAT CAN LEAD TO LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

2.1 Introduction

There are so many factors that can have a negative influence on a child's development. These negative influences form learning barriers and prevent the learner from learning successfully. As teachers we have an enormous responsibility to support our learners in the learning process, no matter what their needs may be. In order to master the content of this unit, you need to spend a total of 10 hours on the reading tasks and activities.



Other media

Other recommended reading material for Unit 1

- Barriers to learning and development*
- Understanding and responding to children's needs in inclusive classrooms*

2.2 Outcomes for Unit 1

After working through this unit you will:

- Understand that every learner is unique
- Have insight in the factors that cause learning barriers and lead to learning difficulties
- Be able to distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic barriers to learning
- Realise how important it is to know your learners well
- Understand how causative factors lead to observable learning difficulties, which result in learning problems;
- Realise that treating ‘the symptoms’ (learning difficulties) without addressing the underlying causes of the learning problem will not be successful
- Know how children’s learning can be affected by disabilities and deprivation
- Understand the responsibility of the education system regarding children’s right to education

2.3 Every learner is unique

No two children are the same. Every child is unique and has unique needs. Think of the children in your class. They may be more or less the same age, but they are not all alike. How do they differ from one another? Some are tall others are short. Some are shy others have lots of confidence. Some learn quickly, others are very slow learners. Some take part in sport, others don’t, some are good at drawing, others are not, some read well, others don’t, some are naughty, others not. The list can go on and on.

Some children’s growth and development is delayed because their environment causes them harm or does not support their well-being. They may not have enough food or follow a good diet, they may live in poor housing and are prone to illnesses, they may be neglected by their parents, they may come from broken families and they may be refugees. Sometimes they are homeless. They may even abuse drugs.

Some children are born with impairments such as a visual or hearing impairment, cerebral palsy or a neurological impairment. Some children can be left with impairments after childhood

illnesses like measles and cerebral malaria or from accidents such as burns and bad falls. Often these children are called 'disabled' or 'handicapped'.



Activity 6

-Read p.7-10 of Understanding and responding to children's needs in inclusive classrooms in your reader.

-Write down the four reasons why children with disabilities often do not attend school.



Feedback

Many parents do not understand why their children are different and they are unaware of their children's rights. They decide to keep their children at home instead of sending them to school. These children do not receive the support and education they need. Sometimes these children are sent to school, but the school is not ready to support them in their diverse needs.

Most countries have laws stating that all children should be educated. All children have the right to learn with their peers in a local school. To make sure we have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all the possible factors that can cause learning difficulties, is the first and very important step in supporting our learners.

A teacher's job is challenging. You may have 40 or more learners in your class, and all of them are individuals. You may have learners with disabilities or learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. According to the author of *Understanding and responding to children's needs in inclusive classrooms*, you will be able to manage if...

- You can recognise children's strengths and weaknesses and plan your lessons accordingly.

- You know how children’s learning can be affected by disabilities and deprivation and if you use teaching strategies to overcome these difficulties.
- You have confidence in your own abilities as a teacher to plan lessons for individuals and adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of all children.
- You get help and support from colleagues, parents and other professionals, such as community and health workers.
- You believe that all children have the right to education and that all can learn.

From here onwards we will focus on the highlighted issue mentioned above in the second point, namely to know how children’s learning can be affected by disabilities and deprivation.



Other media

Recommended additional reading

Read “*Every child is an individual*” (p.19-36 in Understanding and responding to children’s needs in inclusive classrooms).



Stop and think

The following are 10 of the important points made in this section that you have just read:

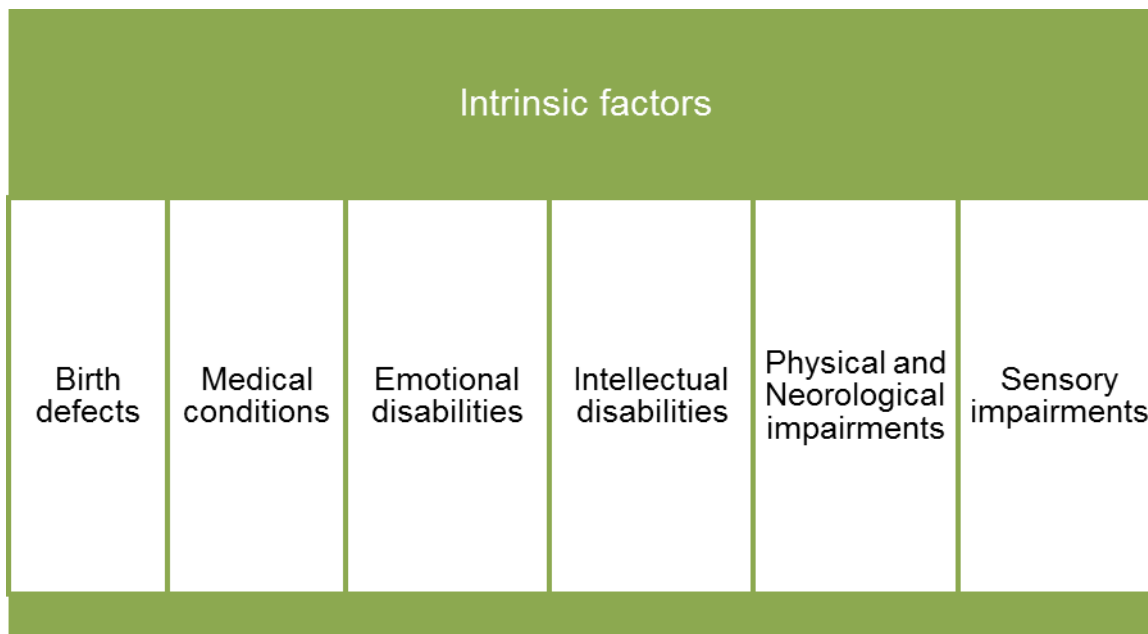
- Learning difficulties may arise from bodily impairments, but also from deprivation.
- Children who have physical, sensory or intellectual impairments can experience many difficulties in learning and participating in community life.
- Impairments need not hold children back. Disability need not be a

handicap.

- We need not cure the impairment, but we have to change the environment for the learner in order to reduce the effect of the impairment.
- All children learn through their interactions with other people and through the experiences gained in the various environments in their lives – this is equally true for children with impairments.
- Disabilities do not result from impairments but from a lack of opportunities, participation and education.
- All children have basic needs – for love and affection, security, nutritious food, a healthy environment and shelter. If any of these are missing or in short supply, then the child's growth and development may be hampered. In simple terms, their ability to learn is reduced.
- The three most important 'foods' for the growth of the mind are language, play and love.
- Statements of rights and government policies may set aims, yet individual teachers can make inclusive education a success or a failure.
- When teachers take on the challenge of making their classrooms and schools more inclusive they become more skilful and better practitioners. This means that all pupils benefit, not only those with 'special needs'.

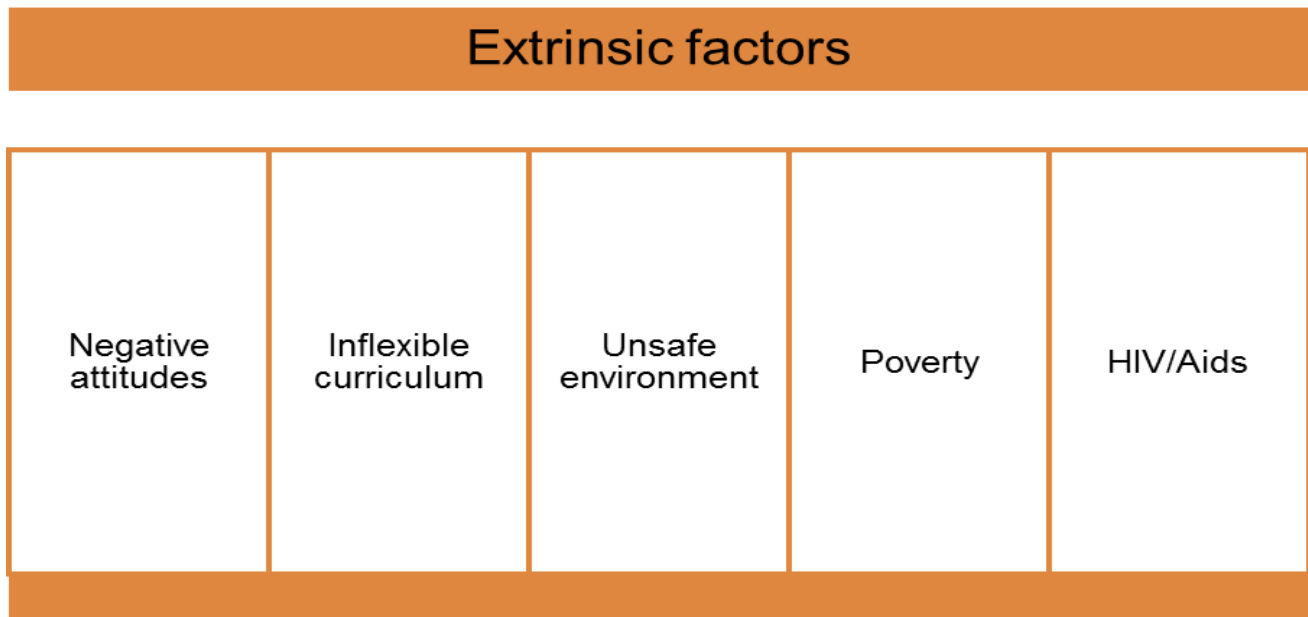
2.4 What is meant by 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' factors that can lead to learning difficulties?

Figure 6: Intrinsic factors that can cause learning barriers



When we discuss intrinsic factors that can cause learning barriers and lead to learning difficulties, we refer to factors within the learner himself. These include birth defects, physical impairments, neurological disorders, sensory impairments, medical conditions, intellectual impairment, attention deficit disorders as well as emotional issues.

When we talk about extrinsic factors that can cause learning barriers and lead to learning difficulties, we refer to factors outside the learner. These include factors within the family as primary educational institution, e.g. the child rearing style of the parents, child rearing errors made by the parents, the child's position in the family and in many cases the disintegration of family life. Also included are socio-economic factors that have a definite influence on the family and the child, e.g. poverty, unemployment, HIV/Aids, crime and the deterioration of value systems (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Extrinsic factors that can cause learning barriers**Activity 7**

- 1) *Think of your primary school class mates who experienced some sort of learning barriers. Draw two columns next to the learners' names – one for intrinsic factors and one for extrinsic factors.*
- 2) *Highlight the names of the learners who are currently experiencing some kind of learning difficulty.*
- 3) *Read through the names that you have highlighted carefully and try to write down one possible cause for each learner's learning difficulties. Think of both the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that were mentioned. For example:*

| Name of learners | Intrinsic factors | Extrinsic factors |
|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Ledwaba, T | | |
| Sethoga, Y | Hearing impairment | |
| Sema, S M | Emotional issues | HIV/Aids |
| Madiba, C B | Attention deficit disorder | |
| Sibanda, M C | | Poverty |



Feedback

You will probably be surprised to see how many different factors play a role in the learning readiness of your learners. In some cases there might be more than one factor that can have a negative influence on a learner's ability to learn. There might be quite a number of factors that you are unaware of at the moment, which you might only learn about once you interview the learner's parents. To us as teachers, it is very important to get to know our learners as thoroughly as possible. We need to know what our learners are struggling with in terms of emotional issues, physical issues, family issues, etc. Once you have a good knowledge of all the possible factors that can cause learning barriers and lead to learning difficulties as well as the effect they may have on learners' behaviour and performance in class, you will be able to understand your learners better. You will be able to identify these causative factors by observing the learners you work with.

2.5 How do these intrinsic and extrinsic factors cause learning difficulties?

Pinpointing the causative factors that lead to the learning difficulties a learner experiences is essential. You need to address these causative factors as well as support the learner in overcoming his learning difficulties simultaneously in order to successfully solve the learning problem. This means that you have to observe the learner carefully to determine what learning difficulties he is experiencing, e.g. lack of concentration, inability to complete work, reading difficulties, etc. These learning difficulties are the symptoms of the learning problem. You need to look deeper to find the cause thereof, e.g. emotional problems due to a broken family, an attention deficit disorder, ill health, etc. Treating the symptoms alone will not be effective. The causes of the learning problem need to be addressed.



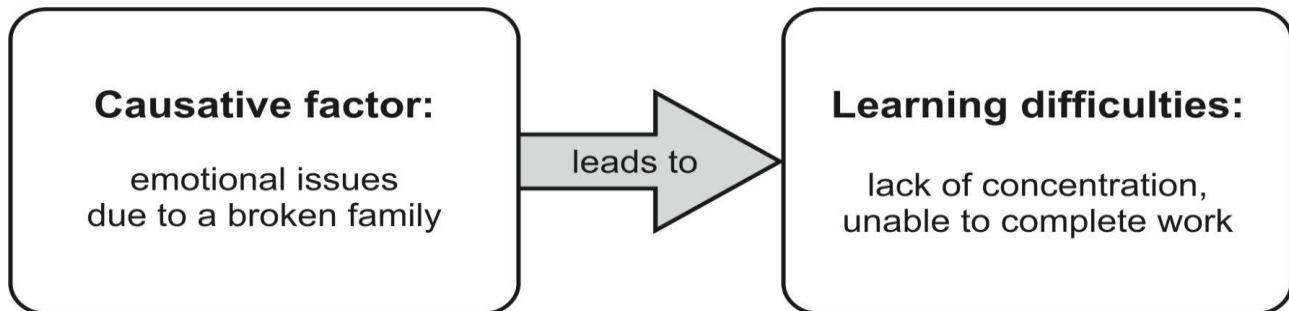
Activity 8

Read the following case study:

Billy's parents got divorced three months ago. Billy is living with his mother and his younger brother is living with their granny. They visit their father every second weekend.

Billy's teacher can see a definite change in his behaviour and performance in the class. He struggles to concentrate on his work and hardly ever completes a task. He seems to be frustrated and often gets into fights with his classmates.

Figure 8: Intrinsic and extrinsic factors leading to learning difficulties



By observing him, Billy's teacher could see a change in his behaviour and his class work. As his class teacher she has a responsibility to support Billy and help him to overcome these learning difficulties (lack of concentration and inability to complete tasks). Focussing on the learning difficulties alone will only treat the symptoms, but not solve the problem. Billy needs emotional support as well. The fact that Billy is emotionally unstable at the moment is the actual cause of his learning difficulties, and that needs to be addressed. His teacher will have to look deeper and get to the root of the problem. Inviting Billy's mother to an interview will be a good starting point.



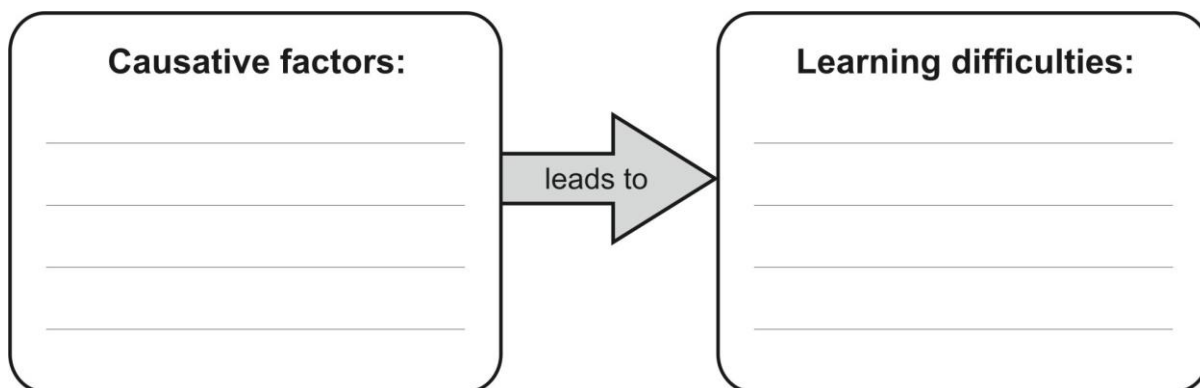
Activity 9

1) *Read the following case study and then identify:*

- a. *The causes of the learning difficulties*
- b. *The learning difficulties as they manifest in the classroom*

Tebogo's father lost his job six months ago and the family is struggling financially. His mother works at night and earns a small salary, but it is not enough to support the family and provide for all their needs. Many days Tebogo has to go to school without breakfast or a sandwich in his lunchbox. He struggles to concentrate and sometimes falls asleep in class. He rarely does any homework because his parents are not able to help him. He failed the last three spelling tests.

Figure 9: Intrinsic and extrinsic factors leading to learning difficulties activity



Feedback

From analysing this case study, you can see that factors like financial difficulty at home, hunger and a lack of parental support can lead to learning difficulties in class such as a lack of concentration, a lack of energy and an inability to complete homework tasks, result in poor performance in tests.



Stop and think

If you were Tebogo's teacher, what would you do? Would you:

- Punish him for homework not done and tell him to finish his homework during break?
- Tell him to write every spelling word he had incorrect 10 times?

Sadly, this is exactly what happens in so many of our se classrooms. Some teachers seem to think they can correct the 'symptoms' they see by punishing the learner. They never stop to think about the reason/s why the learner is failing tests and not completing homework tasks.



Activity 10

How would you advise Tebogo's teacher if she were a colleague of yours?



Feedback

As an Inclusive teacher you need to have compassion with your learners. Never assume that a learner is plain lazy or naughty. If a learner is not coping in class the way you expect him to, there is a reason for it. You need to find out what that reason is in order to support the learner.

The abilities to identify learners with learning difficulties through observation and determine the causative factors of those learning difficulties, are skills that no inclusive teacher should be without.

Only then you will be able to address the diverse needs of your learners and support each learner by providing the best education and learning support possible in order for him to reach his full potential.



Activity 11

For this activity we will use the document “Barriers to learning and development”.

To benefit from this reading task, you need to focus on one section at a time and read it at least 3 times. Underline important issues.

- 1) Number the paragraphs of the introduction from 1-6.*
- 2) Read each paragraph twice and underline the issues you regard as important.*
- 3) Answer the questions that follow by going back to the particular paragraph as indicated for each question.*
- 4) After completing this activity, you should have a good understanding of the responsibility of the education system with regard to the right of all learners to quality education.*

Barriers to learning and development

It is universally recognised that the main objective of any education system in a democratic society is to provide quality education for all learners so that they will be able to reach their full potential and will be able to meaningfully contribute to and participate in that society throughout their lives. The responsibility of the education system to develop and sustain such learning is premised on the recognition that education is a fundamental right which extends equally to all learners. Exercising this responsibility involves ensuring that the education system creates equal opportunities for effective learning by all learners.

There is a critical need to confront a historical assumption in our country that there are two distinct categories of learners in our country. That is, those learners who form the majority with ‘ordinary needs’ and a smaller minority of learners with ‘special needs’ who require support or specialised programmes in order to engage in some form of learning process. This assumption, which is also evident in other parts of the world, defined the nature and organisation

of educational provision in South Africa prior to 1994. Within this assumption it is recognised that it is primarily the latter category of learners whose educational needs have not been met: they may have been provided with a separate, sometimes inadequate, system of education, they may have been excluded from the system or they may have experienced learning breakdown.

Thus the notion of 'learners with special education needs' has become a catch-all phrase to categorise all those learners who somehow do not 'fit into' the mainstream education system and to describe the complex array of needs which they may have. This assumption not only serves to divide the learner population, but it also fails to describe the nature of need which is regarded as 'special'. Most importantly, this assumption provides no insight into what has caused the learning breakdown or why such learners have been excluded from the system. In a country where the education system is premised on the notion of a rights culture, it is imperative that the system is able to not only prevent learning breakdown and exclusion, but that it is also able to promote equal opportunities for effective learning by all learners.

In order for the system to do this it is imperative that policy aimed at the creation of education and development for all learners recognises a range of different needs among the learner population. Most importantly, such policy needs to be based on an analysis of those factors which ensure that the education system remains inaccessible to a significant majority of learners and which continue to lead to high levels of learning breakdown.

In trying to deal with the many concerns which arise out of these conceptualisations, the *Education white paper 6* supports the recognition that a range of needs exists among learners and within the education system which must all be met if effective learning and development is to be provided and sustained. In recognising this, it follows that the education system must be structured and function in such a way that it can accommodate a diversity of learner needs and system needs. It is argued that it is when the education system fails to provide for and accommodate such diversity that learning breakdown takes

place and learners are excluded. It is also argued that a complex and dynamic relationship exists between the learner, the centre of learning, the broader education system and the social, political and economic context of which they are all part.

All these components play a key role in whether effective learning and development takes place. When a problem exists in one of these areas it impacts on the learning process, causing learning breakdown or exclusion. Thus, if the system fails to meet the different needs of a wide range of learners or if problems arise in any of these components, the learner or the system may be prevented from being able to engage in or sustain an ideal process of learning. Those factors which lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision, have been conceptualised by the policy on inclusive education as barriers to learning and development.

It is only by focusing on the nature of these barriers, what causes them and how they manifest that we can begin to address problems of learning breakdown and ongoing exclusion. Most importantly, it is only by focusing on them in this way that we can begin to identify components of the education system which must be present and supported if quality education is to be equally provided, promoted and sustained for learners with different needs in this country. Similarly, such an analysis provides guidance on the nature of the mechanisms and processes which must be set up and sustained in order to enable learner needs and system needs to be met.



Activity 12

Answer the following questions based on the introduction of the Barriers to learning and development document.

- 1) What is the responsibility of the education system with regard to the fundamental right of all learners to receive good education?
- 2) According to the author there seems to be a historical assumption that we have two distinct categories of learners in our country. Which two categories is he/she referring to?
- 3) Why were the educational needs of the learners with 'special needs' not met within this assumption?
- 4) This assumption caused a division in the learner population. What other negative effects did it have? Name three.
- 5) The education system must be able to:
prevent _____ and
promote _____
- 6) What are regarded as barriers to learning and development by the policy on inclusive education?
- 7) What are the three issues we need to focus on in addressing learning breakdown and exclusion?



Feedback

The author of this document refers to 'learning breakdown' as the stage when the learning process does not take place the way it should. Previously in this unit we referred to the same issue as the 'learning difficulties' that learners experience when they are unable to perform the way we expect them to.



Key points

- Every learner is a unique individual with unique needs and in many cases unique learning difficulties.
- There are numerous factors that can cause learning barriers and lead to learning difficulties. If these barriers are not addressed, it will lead to serious learning problems for the learner.
- We distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic factors that cause learning barriers.
- Intrinsic factors are those factors within the learner himself/herself, e.g. birth defects, physical impairments, neurological disorders, sensory impairments, medical conditions, intellectual impairment, attention deficit disorders as well as emotional issues.
- Extrinsic factors are factors from outside the learner, e.g. the child rearing style of the parents, child rearing errors made by the parents, the child's position in the family, disintegration of family life, poverty, unemployment, HIV/Aids, crime and the deterioration of value systems.
- We can regard the learning difficulties that manifest themselves in the classroom, e.g. lack of concentration, unacceptable behaviour, etc. as the 'symptoms' of the above mentioned underlying causes of learning barriers.
- In order to successfully support the learner, we need to address both the underlying causative factors and the learning difficulties simultaneously.
- The abilities to observe the learners, identify learning difficulties and diagnose the causative factors, are skills that no Inclusive phase teacher should be without.
- A thorough knowledge of both the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can lead to learning barriers, is essential.
- The responsibility of the education system, and therefore every individual teacher, is to create equal opportunities for effective learning by all learners.

You will learn more on intrinsic factors that can lead to learning barriers in module ETH306W

UNIT 3: EXTRINSIC FACTORS THAT CAN LEAD TO LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

3.1 Introduction

If an environment does not function the way it should, the child's needs are not met and this will inevitably have a serious effect on the child's education in school and also during the rest of his life. As educators of young children, it is important to have knowledge of and insight in the different extrinsic factors that may negatively impact on the child's development, learning and participation.

Having completed the first four units you have realised the importance of understanding different barriers to learning as a cornerstone when teaching children with diverse needs. This unit will provide you with an opportunity to understand some of the extrinsic factors impacting towards learning and participation of many of the children we have in your schools.



Other media

Reading material for Unit 4

- 1) "Education white paper 6: Special needs education: building an inclusive education"
- 2) "Barriers to learning and development"
- 3) "Draft guidelines for inclusive learning programmes 2005"
- 4) "HIV/AIDS statistics for 2010"
- 5) "Understanding and responding to children's needs in inclusive classrooms"

3.2 Outcomes for Unit 4

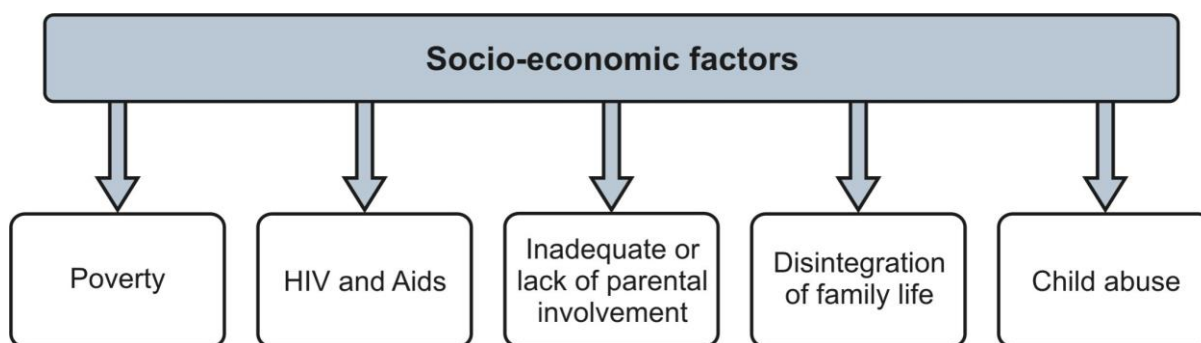
After working through this unit you will be able to explain the following factors influencing learners' learning and participation in school and class activities:

- Poverty and unemployment
- HIV and AIDS
- Inadequate or lack of parental involvement
- Disintegration of family life
- Child abuse

This unit aims to provide you with detail information on these extrinsic factors as barriers to learning. As mentioned earlier, barriers to learning experienced by many of the children in our schools are either intrinsic or extrinsic or both.

Many learners are faced with challenges resulting from their circumstances at home and/or the community they live in that have a negative impact on their learning and participation in school. According to *Education white paper 6, 2008* and other related documents there are many socio-economic conditions that have been identified as causative factors leading to learning barriers, namely:

Figure 15: Socio-economic factors that influence learning



We will now take a closer look at each of these issues to determine the extent of the negative impact it has on a learner's learning ability and development.

3.3 Poverty and unemployment

In South Africa as one of the developing countries, poverty is still common and has stricken most disadvantage people along time ago. Urbanisation is a worldwide and ever-intensifying phenomenon. The biggest problem facing South Africa is that urbanisation is escalating out of control in and around all major cities. A lack of job opportunities drives people to the cities (many of these people are immigrants from other African countries). The mushrooming of squatter camps made the major cities of South Africa dangerous and unhealthy to live in. Transport services are degenerating and the general standard of living is dropping rapidly in middle and lower economic class households. Insecurity, hunger, fear and the stress of high-density living cause a lot of tension. Adults and young people in some communities do not even attempt to maintain reasonable standards of self-respect, honesty, hygiene, home management, sexual morality, tidiness, cleanliness, responsibility and companionship.

The destruction of infrastructures in many urban and semi-urban areas is a aggravating factor. The culture of non-payment of loans and municipal accounts as well as the ever-increasing number of people in the cities are the most important reasons for this state of affairs.

These conditions are still regarded as the leading socio-economic factors that negatively affect a child's learning ability and development. The effects of family poverty interfere with optimal development on many levels. For example, the conditions under which poor families live often include inadequate and overcrowded housing, poor sanitation and hygiene facilities, insufficient water supplies and restricted food resources. Children may be suffering from ill health from very early on in their lives. Malnutrition can affect the growing brain, which in turn affects the child's learning capacity. Health and other social services are often difficult to access in poor communities, and information about health and child development that is available to parents is inadequate. Parents are often unable to access appropriate help, information or advice easily, and all this will impact on the development of their children in many ways. It is therefore important for all teachers to understand how barriers to learning can be created and reinforced under conditions of poverty. There is a strong link between poverty, unemployment and parenting.

To add to these difficulties, many schools in poor communities are themselves often under-resourced and are unable to assist parents or the learners in any way. This makes the child's situation and experience of learning even more difficult.



Stop and think

- Poverty in South Africa manifests as:
 - Ill health
 - Undernourishment
 - A deprivation of rights
 - Backlogs in education
 - An unsupportive environment
 - Communication and language deficiencies
 - Limited social status and
 - A negative view of the future

- These conditions are created by factors such as:
 - Inadequate education
 - Low wages
 - Unemployment
 - Technological backwardness
 - Overpopulation
 - Conflict, violence, crime and substance abuse



Activity 23

- 1) *Read p.15 and 16 of the document Guidelines for inclusive learning programmes (DoE, 2005).*
- 2) *Name 15 learning barriers that may be created as a result of socio-economic factors.*
- 3) *Write down five suggestions to overcome these socio-economic barriers.*

3.4 HIV and AIDS

One of the major challenges facing the lives of many children in South Africa is the issue of HIV/Aids. This is an epidemic that has infected and affected many children in a variety of ways, and is often a barrier to children's learning. HIV/AIDS affects children themselves, it affects their parents and other family members, it affects the communities they live in, and it affects their schooling.

Children who are infected with HIV, or who have AIDS need special care and treatment both inside and outside of school. Apart from affecting the child's health directly, this disease can also affect the child's emotional well-being and the child's general energy levels. This presents a barrier to the child's learning. Having one or both parents who are ill is a serious event in a child's life. It means that the parent is not available to take care of the child, to provide support for the child, and to participate in the child's schooling. These issues impact negatively towards the child's schooling. According to several findings there are many AIDS orphans and child-headed households and these numbers are increasing at an alarming rate. Children as young as three years sometimes live in the streets because they have no one to take care of them. Children as young as 14 and 15 often act as heads of households. They have to provide for the basic needs of their siblings without any income – often also without housing, water and electricity. They often get involved in criminal activities such as theft to get money to buy food for themselves and their siblings. These children are so traumatised that they lose all interest in

learning. They have little hope of attaining academic achievements and no hope of a prosperous future. A child with no parents, or a child who is trying to take care of younger siblings, cannot put effort into learning at school. Communities on the other hand are also affected by the impact of HIV and AIDS and as a result community members find it difficult to help its children who experience the same challenge.



Activity 24

Use the document on “HIV/AIDS statistics for 2010” and complete the following:

- The total number of South Africans living with HIV is _____ million.
- _____% of adults aged 15-49 years are HIV positive.
- New HIV infections for 2010 is estimated at _____ of which _____ are children.
- The estimated number of AIDS orphans is _____ million.

3.5 Inadequate or lack of parental involvement

Parents or primary caregivers of learners are an important source of support for teachers working with a child. The reason we need to have the parents in the team of people working with their children is because of the most important role that they play in the education of their child. One of the most critical roles is that they are the people that can provide useful information about the child’s physical and emotional well-being, the needs of the child, the needs of the family concerning the child as well as his or her learning styles. Supporting a child in overcoming learning barriers is much more difficult if the people in the child's home life are not involved. Such a lack of involvement is often due to an inability of the parents or caregivers to become involved.

It is clear that most parents are concerned about the welfare and progress of their children at school, but when difficulties arise for the child, some parents, especially those that are not adequately involved in their child's learning process, do not understand the nature of the difficulty, and are unable to support the child. For a child to learn and develop effectively he needs the support of his parents or caregivers in order to meet all his educational and other needs.



Activity 25

- 1) *Read p.105 – 107 “Working with families” in the document Understanding and responding to children’s needs in inclusive classrooms.*
- 2) *Write down 10 suggestions of how schools can make parents feel welcome and get them involved in the learning process of their children.*

3.6 Disintegration of family life

Social problems contribute towards the breakdown of families and other social structures. Many children find themselves growing up in a single-parent household and are raised by a single parent. Those children are much more likely than those in intact families to become the victims of poverty and violence. Many of them end up depending on welfare societies for survival. Think of what happens to a child whose parents just got divorced. Apart from the child's learning and development that are negatively influenced, each child's own identity is very much tied to that of his family. When the family disintegrates, a child's sense of self is threatened, even if he maintains strong ties with both parents. It has been found that disintegrated families often result in a lack of care, love and acceptance, which has a significant impact on the child's learning and development.



Activity 26

- 1) *Read through the notes on 'family incompleteness' and 'working mothers' again.*
- 2) *Make a list of problematic issues for a child that can result from the disintegration of family life, e.g. a lack of security.*

3.7 Child abuse

Child abuse implies more forms than just hitting or physical violence. Emotional abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and neglect are also forms of child abuse and can cause just as much lasting trauma to a child's learning, development, participation and well-being.

Sometimes cultural values, the standards of care in the community, and poverty may also impact negatively towards the child's development. For learners who survive the abuse, the emotional trauma remains for a long time and this makes it difficult for them to learn and reach their full potential. An Inclusive education policy emphasises the importance of collaboration between schools and communities which plays a critical role in assisting families that are in need of information and assistance. Early identification of child abuse is very important and the following are some of the signs that can alert the teacher about any form of abuse in a child: depression, fatigue, poor self-esteem, sexual acting out, inability to trust others, aggression, disruptive behaviour, anger and rage, self-destructive behaviour, suicidal thoughts, passivity, withdrawing, anxiety and fears, sudden deterioration of school work, etc. Abuse is a repulsive act committed by an adult and directed at a defenceless child who ought to be protected rather than abused. There are no accurate statistics and what is reported represents only the tip of the iceberg. Families and communities tend to deny the existence of the phenomenon or to remain silent about it.

Typical effects of abuse on children are:

- Low self-image
- Self-blame
- Violent behaviour
- Brain and other physical damage
- Emotional problems
- Negative vision of the future
- Death

It is also true that many child abusers were themselves victims of abuse when they were young. Criminal behaviour in later life is often the result of being abused as a child. The saddest aspect is that children are often abused by people close to them, against whom they have not been warned, namely fathers, acquaintances, teachers, priests and peers.

Children often believe that they are actually the guilty party in this process.

It is important that teachers take certain steps to help protect children against possible abuse. Schools are often the only places where children can be supported and protected against abuse. Teachers should be aware of the different forms of child abuse as well as the consequences thereof.

3.7.1 Forms of child abuse

- Physical assault and injury
- Neglect: emotional, social and physical
- Psychological abuse (e.g. rejection)
- Sexual abuse

3.7.2 Non-sexual offences

- Assault
- Assault with the intent to inflict bodily harm
- Murder

- Physical neglect
- Abandonment
- Psychological or emotional abuse

3.7.3 Sexual offences

- Indecent assault
- Incest
- Rape
- Sodomy
- Inappropriate fondling
- Forcing children to watch pornography and sexual scenes
- Indecent exposure
- Talk to shock or involve a child in sexual acts
- Use of children in pornographic material
- Prostitution

3.7.4 Sexual abuse of a child

- When a child is involved in sexual activities that he does not understand.
- When a child cannot legally and on an informed basis consent to the acts concerned.
- When the acts are socially unacceptable.
- When there is an unequal relationship of authority between the perpetrator and the victim.
- The child cannot defend himself or resist the adult.
- When the child cannot cope emotionally with the sexual exposure.
- When at some point the child realises that what is happening is socially unacceptable and is something to be ashamed of.

3.7.5 Relationships between victims and perpetrator

- Stepfathers and biological fathers form the greatest number of perpetrators.
- Mothers' male friends and live-in family members are next in line.

- 20% of perpetrators include friends, neighbours, teachers, church and youth group leaders, employers and unknown persons.

3.7.6 The causes of child abuse

i) Child factors

- The child who was unwanted.
- Children who are chronically ill, tense or emotionally demanding.
- The child who is not the gender that the parent expected or wanted.
- The child who has to deal with parental projections and often has to compensate for his weaknesses.
- Orphans and street children who have no protectors.

ii) Stress factors

- Job insecurity and financial needs of parents
- Large families
- Sudden and radical changes in life pattern
- Dislocation
- Single parenthood
- Alcohol and drug abuse

iii) Parent factors

- Parents live under difficult financial and / or job circumstances.
- They experience inadequate social support.
- They experience conflict regarding the available time and energy.
- They have unsuccessful relationships.
- They feel humiliated, inadequate and inferior because of the behaviour of other people.
- They experience an unsatisfactory sex life.
- They believe that the child should satisfy their needs, and not the other way round.
- They had poor relationships with their own parents.
- They experience personality deficiencies, such as psychological disorders and a low self-concept.
- They were often abused or neglected as children.

- They seek satisfaction of their own emotional needs from the child.
- The inexperienced parent may subject the child to unreasonable demands and expectations.
- The psychopathic parent believes that he is mentally healthy and that he is not abusive.

3.7.7 Warning signals

Teachers should be alert to behavioural aspects that can suggest that a child has been abused, e.g.

- A sudden deterioration of schoolwork, unexpected failure and incidents of truancy
- Unusual over-dependence
- Depression
- Aggression
- Eating or sleeping problems, a drastic change in eating or sleeping habits
- Sexual behaviour that is inappropriate at a particular age
- Stealing
- Lying
- Undesirable lifestyle and changes in habits
- Injuries to sexual organs
- Bed-wetting
- Avoidance of eye-contact, nervousness and lack of confidence
- Fatigue
- Wearing of thick layers of clothing as if to hide his body or something that has happened to his body
- Self-destructive tendencies, engaging in life-threatening activities and talking about suicide
- Criminal behaviour
- Refusal to submit to medical examinations at school

3.7.8 Preventative actions by schools

Teachers should regard it as their duty to identify abused children in their classrooms and to refer them and their families for assistance and support.

The school can be used as a community centre and can present short courses on the following:

- Parental guidance
- Marriage counselling
- Family enrichment courses
- Family therapy
- Divorce counselling
- Psychotherapy
- Therapy for abused children
- Preventative strategies

3.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, we have realized that there are many socio-economic factors in a child's circumstances and life experiences that can become a barrier or contribute to creating a barrier to learning. Many of these socio-economic factors have been caused by the implementation of previous political and socio-economic policies. Inclusive Education looks at the situation a little differently. It tries to see beyond the child him or herself, and beyond purely medical issues that may be operating, to the social contexts in which children live and learn. It places teachers on the frontline in terms of working with children who experience barriers to learning. All children need to receive the correct amount and quality of support from the educational system. Families and teachers need to be supported so that they can respond appropriately to the learning and other needs of children from a range of cultural, socio-economic and language backgrounds.

THEME C
LEARNING AND LEARNER SUPPORT
FOR INCLUSIVITY

UNIT 4: CLASSROOM SUPPORT

4.1 Introduction

This unit aims to provide guidelines to student teachers on the monitoring and reporting of some reading intervention strategies. The primary focus of this unit is on the strategies related to phonological awareness.

4.2 Outcomes for Unit 1

At the end of this unit you will be able to:

- Understanding the concept of curriculum differentiation
- Describing the importance of curriculum differentiation
- Discussing benefits and challenges in differentiating the curriculum
- Exploring parts of the curriculum to be differentiated
- Describing factors that determines curriculum differentiation

4.3 Curriculum differentiation

The differentiation of the curriculum is a common practice and forms a key principle of Inclusive education. There are various terms describe the concept of curriculum differentiation. These terms include differentiated instructions; curriculum adaptation; curriculum augmentation, curriculum modification.

Curriculum differentiation is defined as an inclusive education practice that recognises the uniqueness of each learner's learning style and learning needs irrespective of the child's abilities. UNESCO (2004) views curriculum differentiation as the process of modifying or adapting the curriculum based on the different ability levels of the learners in one class to ensure that none of the learners are excluded from learning and participation during class activities. This implies that teachers modify their teaching methods and strategies, teaching and learning resources, assessments methods, learning activities and learners' products to provide

learning opportunities for each learner in the classroom and to meet their learners diverse learning needs in order to facilitate their success (Tomlinson, 2009).

Significance of curriculum differentiation in classroom context

- Curriculum differentiation has long been identified as the most logical way to:
- Acknowledges that each learner learns differently,
- Respond to learners' diversity in their learning environment,
- Promotes the progress of each learner in a general curriculum curriculum,
- Maximises learners' growth and facilitate individuals' success,
- Serves as a way to accommodate extreme diverse groups of learners who represent diverse ethnicity, languages, customs, experiences and ability levels,
- Ensure that learners participate actively in their learning where they are able to apply what they have learned,
- Enables all learners to experience success, prevents occurrence of learning gaps among learners,
- Provides opportunities for cognitive development,
- Reduces challenging behavior in learners and it is a means to make inclusion a reality.

4.4 Challenges with regard to the Implementation of curriculum differentiation in the classroom

Implementation of curriculum differentiation in our schools, is still limited due to:

- Teachers are not aware of their learners' interest and their diverse learning needs,
- Teachers regard diversity as a problem rather than strengths of modern classrooms,
- Teachers believe that differentiation of the curriculum falls outside their responsibility,
- Teachers think that differentiating the curriculum will expose their learners' differences,
- Teachers regard curriculum differentiation not feasible in terms of preparation of learners to quality adult life,
- Teachers are resistant in using various strategies of curriculum differentiation and

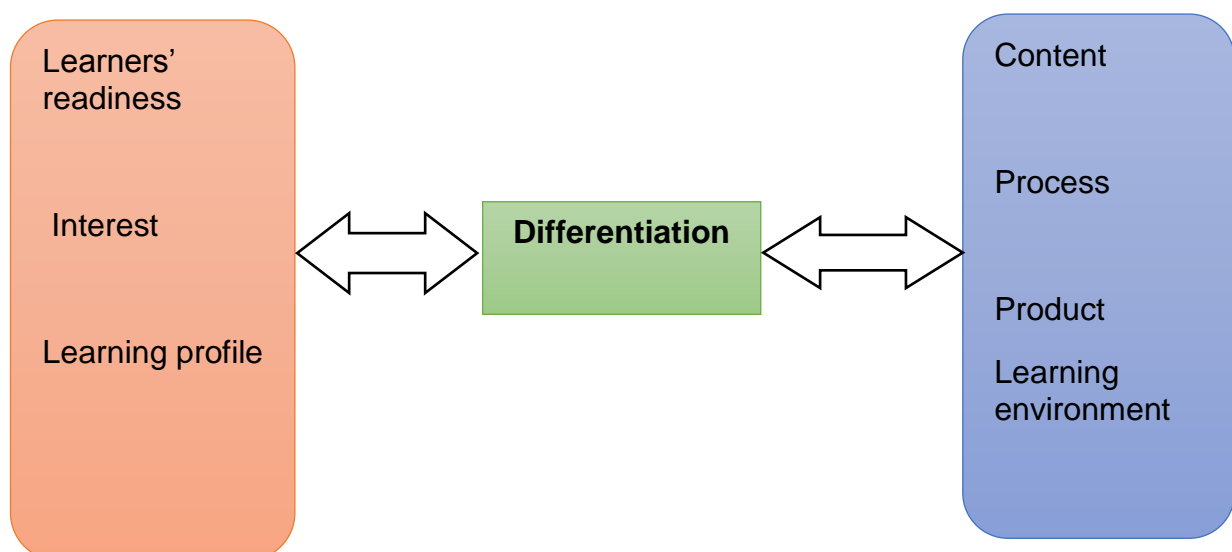
- Teachers demonstrate in-sensitivity when addressing cultural and racial issues when they teach diverse learner population.

4.5 What do we need to be able to differentiate the curriculum?

Implementation of curriculum differentiation relies on skillful teachers for its planning and implementation. The teacher who implement curriculum differentiation ensure that the learning environment and opportunities exclude no child. Effective implementation of curriculum differentiation:

- is proactive rather than reactive,
- employs flexible use of small teaching-learning groups in the classrooms,
- varies pacing as a means of addressing learner needs,
- varies the materials used by individual learners and small groups of learners in the classrooms,
- is knowledge centered, and
- is learner-centered.

Curriculum differentiation “is a philosophy of teaching purporting that learners learn best when their teachers effectively address variances in readiness level, interest, and learning profile to differentiate the content, process, product, and learning environment (Tomlinson, 2004) presented by figure 4.1 below.



(adapted from Tomlinson, 2004; 2010)

4.5.1 Determining factors for differentiation of the curriculum

- (i) Readiness level
- (ii) Learners' interest
- (iii) Learner's profile

4.5.2 Parts of the curriculum to be differentiated

(i) Differentiation of the content

Content of the curriculum consists of what is been taught and the manner in which learners access learning materials. It refers to what the learner is expected to learn, which includes facts, concepts, and skills the learner acquire within the learning environment.

Other authors use the concept of multi-level teaching which refers to teaching pedagogy whereby one concept or topic is presented to the learners at various levels of complexity. This implies that the teacher provides learners with the same curricular areas but at varying levels of difficulty. For example, during a Life Skills which is one of the four learning areas in the FP curriculum, learners who function at the high level can record the types and number of vehicles that pass through an intersection per hour while the low functioning groups can draw the picture of what they saw at an intersection.

(ii) Differentiation of the process

The word process is refers to the technique or instructional strategies that the teacher uses to present information to the learners and how the learner makes sense of the content. This includes strategies such as small group instruction, cooperative learning, demonstrations, using peers or adults reading aloud to the learner as well as uses of multisensory approaches. For example, in a history class, one learner might be unable to read the history text book but can arrive at the same understanding of the content by watching a video. Another form of strategy to differentiate the learning process especially when the content is challenging, is through peer tutoring where learners can work with each other to improve their performance.

Differentiation of the process can also imply to the provision of extra assistance outside classroom hours, giving individual feedback and encouragement on classroom performance. Other strategies that can be used to facilitate differentiation process can include dividing the class into four ability groups or dividing them into mixed-ability in which learners with more experience help learners with less experience.

These strategies that are presented in figure 3.3 below include cooperative learning, peer tutoring, demonstrations, aided language stimulation as well as the use of multisensory approach.

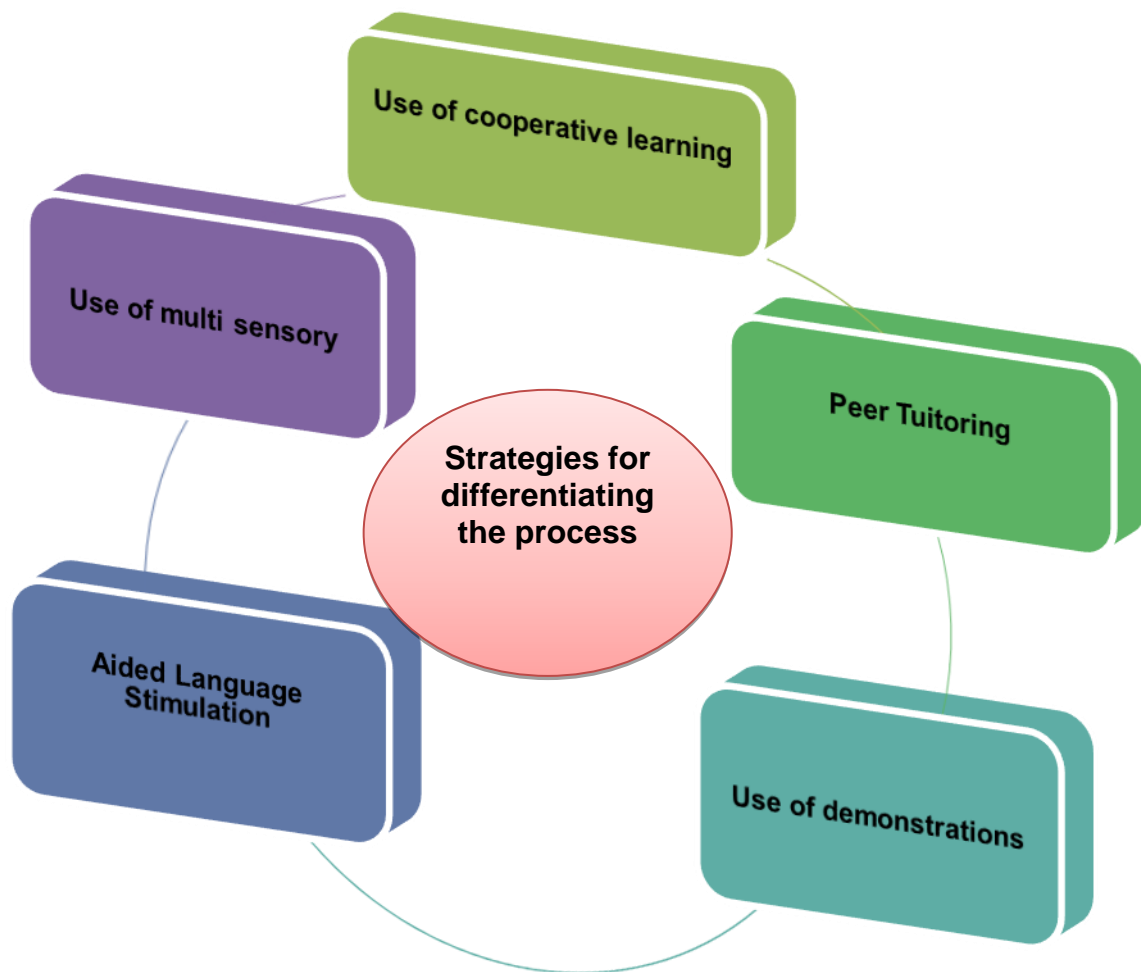


Figure 4.2: Strategies to differentiate process to meet the needs of heterogeneous classrooms

The aforementioned strategies will now be discussed in more detail.

- Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning serves as a departure from the traditional teaching approach, in which learners work independently, to a cooperative learning approach where learners assist one another in the learning process.

Cooperative learning groups usually ranges from two to six students. The groups should be larger when materials are scarce, or when limited time is available to complete the activities. If students are younger or inexperienced with cooperative learning activities, the group size should be smaller. Students should not work in groups of four or more if they have not mastered the pre-skills of group work .

- Peer tutoring

During cooperative learning, the teacher can assign a peer to assist learners who have difficulties in understanding the content. As much as peer tutoring serves as one of the teaching strategies to meet learning needs of heterogeneous classrooms, no learners should ever be forced to assist other learners.

- Demonstration method

During the demonstration, the learner watches how another person who can either be an adult or another peer handles and completes the tasks. Demonstration has been found to be more directive as the teacher does the project and the children watch. For example, in a Grade two class, a language teacher can demonstrate the story about why the rock rabbit does not have a tail.

- Multisensory approach

Teaching strategies that addresses a variety of learning preferences and styles should be a fundamental consideration when differentiating instruction. Learners learn through many senses, and as a result, teachers need to use numerous modes to enhance oral presentation and provide multisensory input for learners.

- Aided Language Stimulation (ALS)

Aided Language Stimulation is a teaching approach where the teacher uses speech, gestures and picture to enhance interaction and participation in all learners including those who present with complex speech difficulties. These types of teaching strategies allow learners who cannot express themselves to participate pointing to pictures or graphic symbols during teaching and learning process.

(iii) Differentiation of the product

Differentiation of the product serves as the most observable means of differentiation that reveals the content and the process by which learning occurs. It refers to the output through which the learner demonstrates what they have learned which enables the teacher to determine whether goals that were set have been achieved. In other words, during the differentiation of the product, teachers uses various forms of assessment that allows learners to demonstrate and apply what he or she has learned and apply knowledge and skills after significant instruction

Differentiating the product also:

- Encourage learners to demonstrate what they have learned in various ways;
- Allow various working arrangement such as working alone or in groups;
- Encourage the use of various resources in preparation of the product;
- Allow the use of various assessment methods;
- Provide product assignment at varying degree of difficulties, determined by the learners' readiness.

(iv) Differentiation of the learning environment

The learning environment does not only refer to the physical setting of the class, but is also refers to the emotional context in which learning occurs. Differentiation of the curriculum serves as one of the essential steps for effective learning for all learners. It ensures that learners feel safe and secure which also allow them to take risks and express their understanding or lack of understanding, for example, teachers can also organise the learning environment by altering classroom structure to allow learners move within and between the groups. Effective differentiation of learning environment present with the following characteristics:

- The teacher is responsive to the needs of all learners in all domains,
- All learners feel secured and safe, both physically and affectively,
- The teacher provides each learner with the necessary support,
- Individual differences are welcomed and accepted,
- Learners learn to support and respect one another as learners,
- Both the teacher and learners shares decision-made with regard to classroom daily routines, management, and classroom operation,
- Physical arrangements are flexible to meet the needs of each learner, and
- A range of resources are available to support teaching and learning.

4.6 Conclusion

In this unit you have learnt about the differentiation of the curriculum as a key strategy to inclusive education. This knowledge will assist you to help all learners learn and participate during school and class activities.

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