

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SUPPORT RENDERED TO TEACHERS OF
LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS IN AN INCLUSIVE SECONDARY
SCHOOL IN THE OSHANA REGION IN NAMIBIA**

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the support rendered by education stakeholders to teachers of learners with visual impairments. This study was conducted at an inclusive secondary school in the Oshana region. The purposeful criterion sampling technique was used to select seven teachers who were teaching learners with visual impairments at the time of research to participate in the study. The interview guide was used as an instrument to collect data from the participants. With the permission of the respondents, a voice recorder was used and field notes were kept to capture the information during the interviews. Data were analysed by means of content analysis through coding and categorising into themes. The findings of the study revealed that only some of the education stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and the resource teacher, rendered meaningful support to teachers of learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, non-governmental organizations and Eluwa Special School provided material support while the resource teacher provided practical support. The findings of this study revealed that some of the reasons for the poor support from other stakeholders in inclusive schools were a lack of skills and knowledge regarding inclusive education. After critical examination of the findings of the study, various recommendations were made to Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, parents, teacher counsellor and the resource teacher regarding their support roles. The study also made recommendations for future studies.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the most important people in my life who keep me going every day: my two sons, Shikongo Junior Metusalem Shalongo and David Festus, and to my lovely mother, Lukas Aino. I love you very much.

DECLARATION

I, Sarti Mpingana Shivute, declare hereby that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work or part thereof, has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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Sarti Mpingana Shivute..... Date.....

LIST OF ACRONYMS

MOEVT : Ministry of Education and Vocational Training

IEP : Individualized Education Plan

ICEIDA : Icelandic International Development Agency

URT : United Republic of Tanzania

CPD : Continuous Professional Development

EFA : Education for All

UNESCO: United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

Namibia has committed itself to provide equitable and quality education to all through inclusive education. According to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (2009), achieving equity is a shared responsibility by all the stakeholders. All education stakeholders are required to be committed, accountable and willing to support teachers who are teaching all learners, including those with visual impairments (UNESCO, 1994). Prinsloo (2001) states that teachers need support from all educational stakeholders to provide inclusive education effectively.

In Namibia there are two special schools catering for the education of children with severe to profound visual impairments, one in the central part of the country and the other in the northern part of the country. Both these schools only accommodate children up to the end of junior secondary education (Grade 10). Children with visual impairments who attend special schools can proceed with senior secondary education (Grade 11 and 12) at any of the regular schools. When they join regular schools, children with visual impairments are taught by teachers who do not necessarily have training, experience or interest in supporting children with visual impairments. They may have subject knowledge but could lack the skills and pedagogy of teaching learners with visual impairments in regular schools (Möwes, 2007). This position is supported by Larsson (2010) who argues that teachers posted to teach in inclusive schools have inadequate knowledge of teaching in these schools. As a result, their teaching methodologies and assessment procedures are not conducive to learners with visual impairments. This may affect the education and performance of learners with visual impairments negatively. Teachers thus need support

in order to develop effective strategies to support learners with visual impairments and ensure that such learners are not only present in schools, but are enabled to adapt to the school culture and achieve academically. Lack of support from education stakeholders decreased the teachers' commitment to their work and affect the teaching of learners with visual impairments negatively (Möwes, 2007). With this study, the researcher investigated the extent and types of support that education stakeholders rendered to teachers who were teaching learners with visual impairments in one inclusive school in the northern region of Namibia.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teachers are the main role players in ensuring inclusive, quality education for all learners. The output of inclusive education is determined by the amount and quality of support that teachers receive at all educational levels (Norwich, 2008). Norwich (2008) adds that teachers need to be supported in gaining knowledge to adapt the learning environment, individualise the curriculum, as well as modify their teaching strategies to suit the needs of learners with visual impairments in the classroom.

Currently, there are regular schools where the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has initiated the piloting of inclusive education back in 1995. These include the school selected for this study. Teachers in this school are often trained during pre-service education programmes in regular education approaches with minimum skills and knowledge for specialized education in visual impairments. Many teachers who are allocated learners with visual impairments find themselves in a tricky situation: the teaching strategies they have been using successfully over the years are strongly based on vision and thus do not serve learners with visual impairments well. They are expected to

ensure the successful inclusion of these learners in all aspects of learning. Many teachers continue to experience challenges in managing their new roles as inclusive education teachers. They tend to feel that learners with visual impairments are ‘dumped’ on them, and that they are left to find their own way in this new area of inclusive teaching and assessment, especially for learners with visual impairments. Teachers often report a need for support from their peers, school management, advisory teachers, school inspectors and parents. Teachers are not trained to help learners with visual impairments to access learning material. They struggle with inclusive assessment criteria, managing differentiated learning styles in one classroom and are struggling with classroom management for learners with visual impairments. Many studies focused on learners support (Josua, 2013; Nghipondoka, 2001; Zulch, 2010) and leave a gap on teachers’ support. Therefore, there remains a lack of research on the support by education stakeholders that is needed by, and rendered to, teachers teaching learners with visual impairments, as little is known in this area in Namibia.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study was guided by the following objectives:

- To find out the types of support and quality teachers need and receive from education stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture officials in their various capacities, parents, teacher counsellor and the resource teacher who specialise in visual impairments.
- To find out how support for teachers of learners with visual impairments in regular schools can be strengthened to ensure full inclusion of learners with visual impairments in regular schools.

- To find out how the participation of education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments in regular schools can be improved.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was guided with the following research questions:

- What are the types of support and quality teachers need and receive from education stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture officials in their various capacities, parents, teacher counsellor and the resource teacher who specialise in visual impairments?
- How can support for teachers of learners with visual impairments in regular schools be strengthened to ensure full inclusion of learners with visual impairments in regular schools?
- How can the participation of education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments in regular schools be improved?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will raise awareness of the support needed by teachers teaching learners with visual impairments in regular schools. Scholars and researchers can benefit from the results of this study as it could be used as a reference, as well as entry point for other studies related to the topic. The study could help learners with visual impairments in regular schools to have better access to the curriculum through increased stakeholders-support.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study only focused on teachers of learners with visual impairments who, when asked about their roles as teachers of learners with visual impairments, might emphasise the

challenges they experienced and, therefore, were not able to realize the support they received that could make the teaching of learners with visual impairments pleasant. The scarcity of relevant literature in Namibia on teachers' support in relation to the teaching of learners with visual impairments in regular schools gave this study a limited, local literature review. The researcher, however, undertook a thorough and in-depth study, and adopted a case study approach to mitigate the identified limitations.

1.7 DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

Adaptation - These are changes to teaching strategies, materials and assessment that allow learners with special needs, including learners with vision impairments, to achieve the prescribed learning outcomes in the curriculum (Zulch, 2010).

Visual impairment - In this study, visual impairment refers to both blindness and low vision. This study adopted the educational definition of visual impairment which considers the ability or degree of a person to use his or her visual ability educationally. Educationally, a student with low vision is the one who has some vision (Scruggs, 2010).

The resource teachers – These are teachers who have specialised in educating learners who are visually or audibly impaired (Scruggs, 2010).

Teacher support – This refers to the assistance provided to teachers teaching learners with visual impairments (Habuleza, 2012).

Stakeholders-Refers to anyone who is invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students including administrators, teachers , parents, family, community members, non-governmental organisation and Ministry of education, Arts and Culture (Johnsen, 2011)

1.8 LOCATION OF THE STUDY

Namibia has few schools which are currently including students with visual impairments at a secondary level. The study was conducted in one region in the Northern part of Namibia. This region was selected because is among the few regions with schools including students with visual impairments at secondary school level. Therefore, a secondary school found in the region explained above was selected for the study. Considering the reason for the selection of a research site stated above, this school was selected because it is the only inclusive secondary school having students with visual impairments in the region.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an introduction to the study that explored the support rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments by educational stakeholders in an inclusive school. The researcher provided an orientation of the study to make the readers aware of the problem under investigation. The statement of the problem addressed the justification of the researcher on the current study and what the study strives to achieve. The significance of the study was highlighted and paved a way for investigation on the research questions which acted as guidance for stating the objectives to be achieved. The limitations of the study are stated; the key concepts from the study topic were defined and clarified to make the study more understandable to the readers.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework which guided the study and the literature review based on the main three objectives of the study such as; the support teachers received from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, parents, the resource teacher and the teacher counsellor. It also presented how to strengthen the support for teachers of learners with visual impairments in regular schools to ensure their full inclusion and how to improve the participation of education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments in regular schools. Finally, the conclusion was made based on the literature review.

2.2 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF INPUT-PROCESSES-OUTCOME-CONTEXT

An input-process-outcome-context framework is introduced as a basis for defining quality and to categorise different measures of quality in education. It will be shown that this framework can be used to clarify a broad range of quality interpretations: productivity, effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness, equity and a more eclectic use of quality indicators. This study is guided by the theoretical framework of input-processes-outcome-context by Peters (2004). This framework of input-process-outcome-context for inclusive education outlines what teachers, learners, parents, the community and the government should do to achieve the goal of education for all. This framework emphasises that demand issues, such as access to education, are affected by inputs at all levels which provide questionably predominant challenges to inclusive education.

The framework maintains that the school, the child, the family and the community form the most important network of inclusion. Other inputs include teachers' training,

curriculum content, teaching and learning materials, community support, government and non-government support, classroom management strategies, administrative and mentor support, as well as evaluation and supervision.

Furthermore, this framework also forms an open system which raises awareness, participation, sensitization and knowledge transfer among the education stakeholders. Schools should establish teacher-support teams where teachers can be encouraged, advised and support one another. Additionally, the essence of this framework is the provision of insight into the influence of environmental processes in human development. It also outlines the responsibility of the school, parents, community and government in contributing to the provision of inclusive education in order to bring about the personal development of all learners.

2.3 THE SUPPORT TEACHERS RECEIVE FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

2.3.1 Provision of in-service training

According to UNESCO (2004), teachers need to be trained professionally to teach learners with visual impairments. Through in-service training, teachers would gain skills and competencies, and develop positive attitudes which are critical for the inclusion of learners with visual impairments. It is also the responsibility of circuit and regional offices to provide training to teachers who are teaching learners with visual impairments. This is supported by Haitembu (2014) who maintains that in-service teachers training can assist teachers to adapt and make changes to the curriculum and assessment to fit the needs, interests and abilities of learners with visual impairments. It also assists teachers on the

teaching methodology and the teaching materials to use to teach learners with visual impairments.

Haitembu (2014) adds that regional and circuit offices should take the responsibility to provide information and in-service training in inclusive education to teachers. The regional and circuit offices can build teachers' capacity to teach learners with visual impairments, as well as develop their skills in offering peer support strategies through ongoing teacher training. It is also the responsibility of the regional and circuit offices to train teachers how to carry out learning support as it is a part of inclusive education that needs to be carried out in all the inclusive schools. Habulezi (2013) argues that, since teachers are not fully trained in inclusive education, they may struggle with the provision of learning support; thus, there is a need for assistance from regional and circuit officials. The findings of the study done by Habulezi (2013) reveal that teachers lacked special skills and knowledge to meet the diverse needs of learners with visual impairments. In interviews, teachers echoed frustrations about their lack of preparedness to function effectively in inclusive classrooms. Therefore, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should organise regular workshops for teachers who are teaching learners with visual impairments. Through workshops, teachers have opportunities to discuss various issues about inclusive education. This is supported by Möwes (2007) by revealing that, it is important for teachers to be provided with information on inclusive education. He argues that information sharing and teacher training can benefit teachers by empowering them and boosting their competencies in teaching learners with special needs. Information sharing will help teachers to gain new information and keep on updating their existing knowledge about inclusive education.

Nghipondoka (2001) argues that teachers find it difficult to differentiate in their planning and teaching to accommodate fully learners with visual impairments in the lesson. Therefore, it is important for the regional and circuit officials to train teachers on the planning of appropriate learning activities and the preparation of teaching aids. These are very important activities in inclusive classrooms, especially where learners with visual impairments are taught with their sighted peers. The Ministry of Education, Art and Culture (2013), states that all teaching staff should be trained in differentiated instruction and learning support provision. This is also in line with the findings of a study done by Ainscow and Miles (2009) which stated that it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to train teachers teaching learners with visual impairments on how to carry out learning support.

Pijl (2010) argues that it is essential in teachers' education to develop teachers' personal skills that can promote inclusive classroom environments that are supportive of participation and achievement for all learners. In agreement with this view, Piccione (2006) is of the opinion that training regular teachers is one of the foundations that can lead teachers to make inclusive education a successful reality. Furthermore, Ladbrook and Fields (2007) state that teachers require training and solid, structured support at all levels and from the wider community in order to meet the needs of all learners.

Naanda (2001) stated that in Namibia teacher- education, there is an inclusive education provision in the Basic Education Teachers Diploma programme (BETD) which offered Inclusive Education course to teachers, but this course was just offered for short time and it gave introduction to inclusive education which was not enough to teachers to acquire relevant skills and knowledge to use during their teaching profession. Naanda (2001)

added that the Inclusive Education module that was offered to 2nd year students teachers at the University of Namibia did not prepare teachers well to teach learners with visual impairments. The content was very little for the student teachers to be well equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge, thus, there was a need for the teachers to be given in service training during their teaching at an inclusive school to be able to cope with the teaching of learners with visual impairments. Teacher education was seen as a challenge for Namibia as concerns inclusive education. The country still faced with a large number of teachers who are not qualified to teach learners with special needs in inclusive schools (UNESCO, 2001). Therefore, there was a need for in-service training of teachers, provision of materials and new methodologies would be important factors for teachers and teacher educators in Namibia. It is very important for all teachers' education institutions to infuse inclusive education theory and practice strategies in their programmes. Zimba, Möwes, and Naanda (2006) stated that, the teachers' institution should offer in-service programme through workshops, seminars and short courses to expose teachers to issues of Inclusive education such as teaching approaches and style, teaching materials and the use of valuable support service. Furthermore, Namibia teacher education should design and implement Inclusive education awareness programme for teachers, parents and civil society. Namibia needed a national teacher's education system that will fully prepare teachers to face all the challenges in an inclusive school.

This is supported by Mukhopadhyay (2013) adequate training in inclusive education is a critical prerequisite for teachers to function effectively in order to implement inclusive education successfully. Mukhopadhyay (2013) further adds that teachers should be trained to be creative and innovative so that they can produce their own instructional materials

and adapt these to suit the needs of learners with visual impairments. This can only be achieved through in-service training, possibly in conjunction with teacher education institutions.

A study conducted by Mostert (2001) states that most teachers in Namibia have had very little or no training in the area of special needs education and they are not in a position to give the necessary support to learners with special educational needs in the regular school system. These findings confirm the essence of professional development and in-service training for teachers, especially those in inclusive settings. Makuwa (2011) states that pre-service teacher training equips teachers with in-depth understanding of the school subjects that they are required to teach, as well as the pedagogical skills to support the learning process of learners with visual impairments. Makuwa (2011) adds that teachers need to be trained in the use of Braille, tactile materials, learning resources and residual sight, as well as in listening skills and mobility training.

Most teachers in Namibia had very little or no training in the area of special needs education and are not in a position to give necessary support to learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools. Teachers who are prepared at University of Namibia are not exposed to sufficient content and strategies for supporting the learning of learners with visual impairments because they were only given an introduction to inclusive education which didn't give detailed information about how to support learners with visual impairments. Therefore, teachers- education in Namibia should train teachers with necessary skills and knowledge in inclusive education. Teachers needed to be provided with information sharing workshops and seminars for them to be well equipped with skills to teach learners with visual impairments (Josua, 2013).

2.3.2 Provision of teaching and learning materials

Fields (2007) indicates that teachers should be provided with the necessary teaching materials. Regional and circuit offices should provide teachers with enough teaching and learning materials, and these are crucial in some teaching and learning activities, such as the modification of materials and different teaching methods (Van Roekel, 2008). Van Roekel (2008) further indicates that the flexibility of the curriculum and assessment is needed in an inclusive classroom to accommodate all learners. Therefore, teachers need assistance to adapt and make changes to the curriculum and assessment to fit the needs, interests and abilities of diverse learner population. The findings of the study by Haitembu (2014) indicate that regional and circuit offices should provide materials, and work together with schools to develop the materials needed to practise inclusivity. This is supported by Peters (2006), who argue that successful teaching and learning in an inclusive school demand the availability of assistive technology such as books in Braille, as well as other materials, like magnifying devices, talking computers and calculators. Therefore, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should provide teachers with all the necessary teaching and learning materials.

This is also in line with the study of Kiomoka (2014) which states that there is a need for the government, through the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT), as well as different stakeholders, to work together and show commitment in the provision of inclusive education. This should be done by providing enough and relevant materials for the teachers to make sure that the curriculum is flexible enough to meet the needs of each individual learner in all levels of education.

Ngonyani (2010) points out that a lack of instructional materials affects the teaching of learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools. Therefore, Ngonyani (2010) further urges the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to provide teachers with teaching resources as these are important during the teaching and learning process. This is also supported by Kiomoka (2014) who argues that the availability of teaching and learning materials can make the work easy, as well as enhance learning outcomes. Mwakyeja (2013) states that the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT) should prepare teachers' guides on inclusive education and teaching resource packs adapted from UNESCO. Through these documents, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has the intention of educating and creating awareness among teachers regarding adaptive teaching and creating an environment that responds to the individual needs of learners in order to meet the goals of Education for All (EFA).

Inclusive schools in Namibia still face the challenge of lacking of teaching and learning materials of learners with visual impairments which affected the teaching and learning process negatively. The schools are not provided with enough teaching and learning materials and this frustrated the teachers of learners with visual impairments because the learners with visual impairments would be left behind by the sighted learners (Zulch, 2010). The Ministry of education, Arts and Culture did not provide adequate teaching and learning materials to teachers teaching learners with visual impairments due to the fact that the Ministry of education, Arts and Culture sometimes did not have enough funds to buy the teaching and learning materials since these materials are very expensive (Emvula, 2007).

2.4 SUPPORT TEACHERS RECEIVE FROM PARENTS

According to Johnsen (2011), quality teaching and learning can only be achieved through parental involvement. Parents are important partners in assisting teachers in provision information about the needs and interests of their children. Furthermore, parents know more about their children's learning problems than anyone else and, therefore, can suggest better educational intervention. According to Xu and Filler (2008), involving parents will help teachers to adopt approaches that will respond to the needs of learners with visual impairments. This will help to increase teachers' knowledge of, and information about, teaching learners with visual impairments.

Rose (2010) argues that parents can contribute to the success of their children's learning. Rose (2010), furthermore, states that parents are the ones who know their children best. The collaboration between parents and teachers can help to solve the problems facing the children. Furthermore, Rose (2010) stresses that all parents can contribute valuable information regarding the performance of their children through ongoing communication with the teachers and, in so doing, they can meet their children's needs. He states that, to enhance quality education for all, parents should be involved in the education of their children. For this to happen, teachers should be in regular communication with parents to discuss the challenges that they face in teaching learners with visual impairments and to find solutions.

Mwakyeya (2013) opines that parents make a big contribution to the education of their children, and they are potential sources of information about the academic ability of learners with visual impairments. Furthermore, Mwakyeya (2013) argues that parents know their children best: they know what their interests are and what things are good for

them. They also know their educational needs. Parents provided the necessary information about their children's social, physical and emotional development. With this information, teachers can strive to structure and modify their teaching methods to help learners with visual impairments (Mwakyeja, 2013).

Josua (2013) stated that parental cooperation in Namibia is ineffective, parents seem to have a desire to actively participate in the education of their children but they failed because of obstacles such as education background, financial problem, parents' work situation, lack of transport money and time. Parents with low levels of education feel less confident about communicating with teachers of learners with visual impairments and parents felt that teachers are more capable of helping their children and thus tend to surrender and expect teachers to fulfil all the tasks. Josua (2013) further indicated that there is lack of effective communication between school and parents of learners with visual impairments and lack of information from school about how parents should involve in education decrease parents' involvement in education of learners with visual impairments. Parents of learners with visual impairments often complain of lack of transport money to come and visit the school and discuss the learners' progress with the teachers since they stayed outside the town (Josua, 2013).

Inclusive schools in Namibia also failed to involve parents in education of learners with visual impairments. Schools did not visit parents of learners with visual impairments to confirm information about the children's needs (Hamutenya, 2010). Teachers needed to motivate parents in various ways such as, informing parents about their rights of being involved in education and notify parents about the school programs, reporting to them on their children's success and explain to them the curriculum (Chen, 2008). Thus, effective

communication between school and home tended to be essential as it guided teachers to teach more effectively and benefited children to perform well. Such a link could be important to stop mistrust that seemed to exist between parents and teachers. It could be helpful if teachers visited parents at home to maintain a strong link with parents. There should be a good relationship between teachers and parents in order to share problems that might prevent the inclusion of learners with visual impairments (Epstein, 2002). Parents are the first teachers of children and such they have correct information about their problems and their needs of which teachers might not aware. Therefore, an effective link between parents and teachers is necessary in sharing ideas on how to solve children's problem that might delay their studies (Hamutenya, 2013). Furthermore, teachers of learners with visual impairments needed to be trained to become competent in encouraging parents to involve in education of learners with visual impairments fully. In addition to this, the school should design a variety of school-to-home communication strategies with all the families of learners with visual impairments each year about school programmes and learners' progress in order to promote effective communication with the families (Hamutenya, 2013).

2.5 SUPPORT FROM THE RESOURCE TEACHERS

Scruggs (2010) states that resource teachers help classroom teachers with lesson preparation, and provide guidance to teachers on how to teach learners with visual impairments. They can also monitor teachers by conducting field visits to monitor the implementation of inclusive education at school level. Every school should have access to resources, such as specialist support for addressing learning difficulties. The specialist support would be geared to giving the teachers advice rather than taking responsibility

away from them (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture 2013). The resource teachers can also coach classroom teachers on specific topics or skills on an individual or group basis when needed. Mwakyeja (2013) opines that no single teacher can have all the skills necessary to meet the learners' needs in an inclusive school. Therefore, the resource teachers should help general teachers in the preparation of teaching materials and the learning environment that suit learners with visual impairments. The resource teachers will be responsible for teaching skills like reading and writing by using Braille. This improves instruction and communication between the teacher and learner, as well as increase enthusiasm for teaching. The resource teachers should also be responsible for helping the general education teacher to manage the classroom. They should also help set classroom rules and routines, working with the regular classroom teachers to create classroom climate that benefits learners with special needs, including those with visual impairments. It is also a resource teacher's job to be aware of individual learners' behaviours, and provide discipline accordingly. Alberto Education Resources (2010) indicates that the resource teachers may work together to plan and deliver institutional programmes that are considered to meet the needs of learners.

In the Namibian education system, resource teachers played the major role in assisting teachers of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school. The resource teachers assisted teachers of learners with visual impairments with the preparation of notes in Braille, preparation of lessons, teaching techniques, classroom management, and adaptation of teaching and learning materials, curriculum adaptation and encourage teachers to show learners with visual impairments love and affection (Josua, 2013). Furthermore, the resource teachers assisted teachers to identify the strengths and needs of

learners with visual impairments in the classroom and the resource teachers work with the classroom teachers to address the diverse learning needs of learners in the school by sharing information. Besides that, the resource teacher faced many challenges in inclusive schools in Namibia such as workload. The resource teachers are not only responsible for assisting teachers of learners with visual impairments in various activities, but they also have subjects to teach. This is too much for them because they perform two tasks at the same time and this caused them not to finish their syllabus on time because they spent much time on assisting teachers of learners with visual impairments. Therefore, it is convenient for all the inclusive schools in Namibia to have two resource teachers to reduce the workload (Josua, 2013).

2.6 SUPPORT FROM TEACHER COUNSELLORS

The American School Counsellor Association (2005) states that teacher counsellors should assist teachers with classroom management, assessment needs and lesson preparation. Teacher counsellors are essential resources and great partners for teachers who are teaching learners with visual impairments. Teacher counsellors help teachers to understand the whole learner and provide teachers with professional advice regarding how to deal with learners with diverse needs.

Teacher counsellors are important part of educational leadership team and provide valuable assistance to students and teachers. Teacher counsellors work together with teachers to meet the needs of learners with visual impairments. They work collaboratively with teachers to decide on what actions need to be taken to address issues interfering with a students learning process and they assisted teachers with classroom guidance activities. Besides that, teacher counsellors assisted teachers to deal with students' behaviour

effectively (Majomo, 2013). Furthermore, teacher counsellors provided guidance to teachers on how to deal with diverse learners in inclusive schools. As effective discipline practice are very important for sustaining academic achievement, teachers got help from school counsellors for low achievers students, behaviour problem and family related problem and they found this useful. Majomo (2013) said teachers were reluctant to seek the counsellor's assistance in coping with classroom management and they behave as if they had no difficulty with managing inclusive classrooms.

In Namibian education system, teacher counsellors are appointed on voluntary basis, they have to do their counselling work in addition to their normal teaching load and receive no remuneration of formal acknowledgement for their work. Therefore, teacher counsellors in Namibia did not get time to support the teachers of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school due to the workload. Teacher counsellors in Namibia were not qualified to give counselling service to teachers because they were appointed from a pool of ordinary teacher due to the lighter workload they had and no training was given to them. They were primarily teachers with full teaching load and other related responsibilities. Most of teacher counsellors were not adequate trained in the school counselling, they were only introduced or sensitised into issues related to counselling at University of Namibia through Guidance and Counselling course which was too theoretical then practical and this course did not prepare the teacher counsellors with necessary skills and knowledge to assist teachers in inclusive schools (Mushaandja, Haihambo, Vergnani and Frank, 2013). They further added that teacher counsellors without formal professional preparation and training are incompetent to address in totality the academic, education concern of students.

They revealed that there is a shortage of formally professionally prepared and trained teacher counsellors.

Teacher counsellors without in-depth training in special needs education are ineffective and inefficient to provide support to teachers of learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools (Mushaandja, Haihambo, Vergnani and Frank, 2013). Teacher counsellors in Namibia did not have professional qualification in school in counselling and the pre service and in service training they received were inadequate. Therefore, it is good for the teacher counsellors in Namibia to take part in professional development to acquire skills and knowledge to assist teachers to address the needs of learners with visual impairments. In the absence of continuous staff orientation and development programme, teacher counsellors may find it difficult to cope with the service provision for teachers of learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools.

The ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in Namibia has now implemented the appointment of full –time life skills teachers who are now carrying the primary responsibility of counselling while the teacher counsellors are rendering additional support such as psychological support to teachers and learners.

2.7. STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

Teacher-support teams should be established where teachers can be advised, encouraged and support one another for the successful inclusion of learners with visual impairments (Zulch, 2010). Haitembu (2014) urges that collaboration among education stakeholders

should be strengthened. Teachers should be provided with information-sharing meetings and seminars.

The study done by Haitembu (2014) recommends that, teachers should be provided with information-sharing meetings where they can share information and experiences in order to learn from one another. The study also suggests that circuit offices should encourage team-teaching, collaborative problem-solving and weekly subject meetings to provide opportunities for teachers to share effective methods and ways to handle learners with visual impairments. Chambulila (2013) opines that there is a need to develop a research-based teacher education. It is through research that teachers are likely to develop skills and knowledge to determine and address children's needs. Research based teacher education assisted teachers to acquire relevant skills and knowledge on how to teach learners with visual impairments and how to address the challenges they faced in inclusion of learners with visual impairments.

In Namibian education system, teachers of learners with visual impairments face many challenges in teaching learners with visual impairments which call the input of all the education stakeholders to assist teachers of learners with visual impairments. Namibian teachers need to be exposed to issues of inclusive education approaches and styles, teaching materials and use of available support service through workshops, seminars and short courses during their teaching profession to acquire necessary skills and knowledge in inclusive as teachers were not provided with adequate inclusive skills at teacher-education institution. Teachers are unqualified to teach learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school. Therefore, teachers needed to be provided with information sharing

workshops and seminars to acquire necessary skills in an inclusive education (Zulch, 2010).

2.8. IMPROVING THE PARTICIPATION OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS IN THE TEACHING OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

Haitembu (2014) urges that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should conduct awareness campaigns for all the teachers of learners with visual impairments in inclusion activities to empower them with knowledge to cater learners with visual impairments in Inclusive Education. Haitembu (2014) adds that teachers should be provided with in-service training on inclusion so that they will be able to cater learners with visual impairments. The educational support units which is established at tertiary education institutions for Continuous Professional Development (CPD); in-service training, such as courses or workshops provide all education stakeholders with insight understanding of inclusive education, as well as provide support to teachers in developing their capacity and confidence in inclusive education by using practical methods rather than just training workshop (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2013).

Furthermore, Alberto Education Resources (2010) suggests the creation of a ministerial team that will work with stakeholders at all levels to build understanding and support for the vision of inclusive education. Alberto Education Resource (2010) adds that it is crucial to create clear, multi-level, consistent and transparent communication regarding an inclusive education among all the stakeholders to assist teachers of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school. Furthermore, Alberto Education Resource (2010) promotes establishing an inclusive education advisory committee at school-jurisdiction level and a school-based inclusive education advisory committee, which includes teachers,

administrators and other stakeholders to develop a jurisdiction, implementation plan, guide implementation activities and reflect on the evidence gathered about implementation for successful inclusion of learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools.

Alberto Education Resources (2010) suggests the provision of ongoing professional development during the school day to allow teachers of learners with visual impairments to learn and share strategies to support inclusive practices. Alberto Education Resource (2010) adds that it is good to recognise that teachers in their early years of practice may need additional or different professional development and support during their teaching profession in inclusive schools.

There are three essential components of capacity building in an inclusive education. Firstly, increasing awareness and attitudinal change through advocacy. Secondly, creating professional training through pre-service training and build on existing human resources. Teachers' education program should be developed to prepare teachers to teach in inclusive schools. Teachers should be provided with pre-service training programme at all the teachers' education institutions to be well prepared with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools.

2.9 CONCLUSION

From the literature review, the researcher concluded that teachers of learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools can only provide quality education to learners with visual impairments if all education stakeholders such as parents, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, teacher counsellors and the resource teachers actively involve in education of learners with visual impairments by providing teachers with materials supports and in

class support. Due to lack of skills and knowledge to teach learners with visual impairments in an inclusive classroom, it is important for teachers of learners with visual impairments to be provided with pre-service training programme at teachers' education institution for them to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to teach learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools. It is also crucial for teachers of learners with visual impairments to be provided with the in-service training during their teaching profession to update their professional skills and knowledge to teach learners with visual impairments. Besides that, awareness should be created for all education stakeholders to be aware of their importance of supporting teachers of learners with visual impairments. Teachers of learners with visual impairments should be provided with information sharing workshops for them to be well equipped with necessary skills to deliver quality education to learners with visual impairments.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research methodology that was used in this study. This includes the research design, population, the sample size and sampling procedures, research instrument that was used in this study and data collection procedures. It also discusses the method used to analyse the data, the pilot study, the results of the pilot study and ethical consideration.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher used a qualitative descriptive case study research design to collect information from the participants in order to understand the phenomenon which is the support rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments by education stakeholders under study from the perspective of those involved in the research (Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen, 2010). This study employed this approach and design in order to obtain detailed account of teachers' support from education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school.

3.3 POPULATION

Population is defined as the set of all elements or the large group to which a researcher wants to generalize his/her research results (Belli, 2008). The target population of this study consisted of all the eleven teachers teaching learners with visual impairments in all the subjects in the selected school in the Oshana region.

3.4 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Sample is the selection of participants from the population (Newby, 2010). The researcher used a purposive, criterion sampling technique to select seven teachers, who

were currently teaching learners with visual impairments at the time of the research, to participate in the study. All the teachers, who were between 25 and 40 years old and had been teaching learners with visual impairments for more than two years, were selected.

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Interview

To allow collection of detailed information from the teachers about the support rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school, interview method was deemed convenient. Interview is defined as the form of data collection that involves direct interaction between a researcher and the respondents (Gall and Borg, 2007). According to platton (2002) interview allowed the researcher to enter another person's world to comprehend a person's inner perspective to outward.

The researcher used an interview guide, through probing questions, to collect data from the teachers because it allowed the participants to express their opinions, beliefs, feelings, insights, attitudes and experiences about the support rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school by education stakeholders.

The interview guide can be defined as the type of interview that has both closed and probing, open-ended questions, in order to obtain rich information from the research participants (Gall, 2007).

The questions in the interview guide were developed from the main objectives presented in chapter one. The researcher used a voice recorder, with the permission of the respondents, and note-taking to keep record of the information collected in the interview. A voice recorder was used in this study to maintain the original data. It was also used

because it ensured continuity in the interview because it ensured descriptive validity and it allowed the researcher to refer back to the interview and listen to the interview data again, as well as sped up the interview sessions and, thereby, saving time (Mills and Airasian, 2009). Mwakyeja (2013) states that, through the establishment of trust and rapport with respondents, a researcher is likely to gather information that he/she would not be able to secure by any other method of data collection. Through the interview, the respondents had a wide opportunity of expressing themselves and sharing much information about the support that they received from education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments in their school (See Appendix A).

3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The researcher secured ethical clearance from the University of Namibia Postgraduate Studies Committee and then wrote a letter to the Director of the Oshana educational region, as well as to the school principal, to request for authorization to conduct the study. All letters outlined the purpose and intention of the study. The process of collecting the data was carried out after school so as not to interrupt the schools activities (See Appendix B).

3.7 PILOT STUDY

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the researcher conducted a pilot study at a selected special school in Oshana Region which had similar basic characteristics to those of the targeted school in the actual study. The sample of the pilot study consisted of 5 teachers teaching learners with visual impairments. Before the interview was carried out during the pilot study, the purpose of the study was explained to all the respondents and a letter of consent was signed by the participants to indicate their willingness to participate

in the study. The respondents granted the researcher permission to use the voice recorder during the pilot study. After the interview was conducted, the respondents were asked to comment or suggest how best the questions could have been asked to yield the necessary information and inform adjustment by the researcher. The researcher transcribed the recorded responses and checked the unexpected answers that happened as a result of misinterpretation of interview questions.

3.8 RESULTS OF THE PILOT STUDY

The pilot study results indicated that the instrument was reliable and valid since the majority of the questions were understood by the respondents. The pilot study further indicated that some research questions needed to be formulated and some were removed in the interview guide. Furthermore, some questions were combined and some probing questions were added to enable a clear understanding of some of the questions. The following are some of the changes that were made in the instrument as a result of the pilot study.

- The pilot study revealed that question 6 “special education teacher” to change to resource teacher.
- Question 11 and 7 were the same, so question 11 was completely taken out.
- Question 8 and 12 were combined and the interviewed questions were reduced to 13 questions since the participants marked that there were repetitions.

Some challenges were observed during the pilot study. Some of the participants were busy with the administrative work after school and this made the researcher to conduct the interview late. Some teachers refused to be interviewed because they were going home.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher utilised content analysis to analyse the data through coding and categorising them into themes. The data were presented and analysed according to themes such as support that teachers of learners with visual impairments get from the following education stakeholders: Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, parents, the resource teacher, and the teacher counsellor, the most interesting aspects of teaching learners with visual impairments, the levels of participation of education stakeholders in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments, strengthening support for teachers of learners with visual impairments and improving the participation of education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments.

The summary was given at the end of every category and the theme that was taken from the field notes. The data obtained through interviews were presented and analysed as follows: Firstly, the researcher listened to the interviews from the voice recorder and transcribed them one by one. The researcher read the transcribed data several times. The data were organized and synthesized to generate meaningful themes and reoccurring patterns. The emerged themes were discussed with relevant quotations from the participants and relevant literature was cited to support the findings of the study.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher obtained ethical approval from the University of Namibia Postgraduate Studies Committee (See Appendix D) and from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (See Appendix E) to carry out this study in the selected school. The respondents were informed about the study before data collection through the use of a consent letter.

The letter of consent contained important information about the study in order to ensure voluntary participation (See Appendix C).

To ensure confidentiality, the name of the region, the school and participants in the entire study were represented with alphabetic letters. The respondents were informed that the results of the study will only be used for the purposes of the study, and the findings will be shared during a teachers' information sharing workshop. The research material was kept in a locked location and will be disposed of by shredding paper-based document after only three to four years.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter described the research design, population, sample size and sampling procedures, Research instruments, data collection procedures, pilot study, results of the pilot study, data analysis and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data gathered by means of the research tool as discussed in the previous chapter. It starts with the description of the participants and presentation of the results from the interviews. The results are presented according to categories and themes that were generated from the research objectives.

4.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE

To protect the respondents' anonymity, the names of the participants were not used; instead letters were used to present the respondents. Letter T stands for teacher and letter A stands for First teacher, B second, C third, D fourth, E fifth, F sixth and G seventh teacher.

Table 1: Demographical data of teachers teaching learners with visual impairments

Respondents	T. A	T. B	T. C	T. D	T. E	T. F	T. G
Age	25	32	30	40	28	27	38
Years of teaching experience	1	2	1	5	5	2	10
Training to teach learners with visual impairments in regular schools	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

Most teachers were between 25 and 40 years old. Their teaching experience was between one and ten years. Among the seven teachers, only two received basic training on inclusive education during their teacher education. Teacher F indicated that he had attended a

workshop which was organised by the lecturer of the University of Namibia. The aim of the workshop was to guide them how to deal with learners with different disabilities at schools. The workshop was not specifically for learners with visual impairments, but it was general for all types of disabilities. Teacher F added that the knowledge acquired from the workshop assisted him only a little in the teaching of learners with visual impairments. This was just done as a once-off training. Teacher F wished that it would be done every term or year. The other five respondents never went through any training on inclusive education while teaching at an inclusive school.

4. 3 THE MOST INTERESTING ASPECTS OF TEACHING LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

The respondents were asked to describe what they found most interesting about teaching learners with visual impairments.

Teacher E said that teaching learners with visual impairments was very interesting because learners with visual impairments co-operated and showed interest during the lessons. Teacher F also found it interesting to teach learners with visual impairments because he never thought that learners with visual impairments could learn like other learners without disabilities. He added that *“learners with visual impairments are eager to learn because they will look for you if you didn’t turn up for the class”*. He added that learning to operate the Braille machine when teaching learners with visual impairments was very interesting. This was also found by teacher C who stated that:

“I get to learn that learners with visual impairments can learn in a normal way like others. They can give constructive ideas or opinions that are different or the same with learners with vision”.

Teacher A indicated that learners with visual impairments were amazing; they had good memories and some were performing better than learners with vision. They were actively participating in the class and kept the class lively. They were confident enough and would not let a teacher leave the class without asking questions for clarification. Teacher A added that learners with visual impairments were trying to be up-to-date with all the information regarding education so that they would not be left behind. Teacher A further added that the most interesting thing in teaching learners with visual impairments was that they were good at listening, they had good memories and could recall easily. In addition to this, they were good at oral presentations. They were willing to acquire skills and knowledge provided by sighted teachers. Teacher A added that *“in fact, that you have given an opportunity to a child to learn, you also learn a lot from them”*.

Teacher E said that teaching learners with visual impairments was a challenge. The teacher found that: *“nothing is interesting in teaching learners with visual impairments because, as a teacher, you are trying to equip learners with visual impairments with information for them to be up to date with the rest but the system is not supportive at all”*.

Teacher A also indicated that there was nothing interesting in teaching learners with visual impairments and that it was very stressful.

From these findings, it can be deduced that the respondents were in two categories: those that were surprised and amazed by the potential and eagerness to learn by learners with

visual impairments as well as the skills of managing Braille that teachers acquired through teaching learners with visual impairments and those that associated teaching learners with visual impairments with stress and frustration. The support that teachers need from stakeholders was clearly differ.

4.4 SUPPORT THAT TEACHERS OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS NEEDED

The respondents were asked to mention the types of support that they needed to teach learners with visual impairments.

All the teachers indicated that they needed more training how to read Braille. All the teachers added that they need more teaching aids, such as Braille machines, Braille papers and Acrobats. They added that they needed support from the community, as well as from the parents. All the teachers indicated that the community should donate the school with the following teaching and learning materials such as Braille machines, Braille papers, acrobats and embossers. The parents should become actively involved in the education of the learners by paying regular visits to the school in order to discuss with the teachers the important information regarding the interests, abilities and skills of their children. This information assisted teachers with better intervention on the teaching and learning of learners with visual impairments. Parents should also support the school financially so that money would be used to buy teaching materials.

Teacher G indicated that they needed to be provided with enough radios for listening and the Acrobats programme to help those with low vision to be able to read on the chalkboard.

Teacher B stated that the government should provide them with workshops on how to

teach learners with visual impairments. Teacher B further added that all the teachers of learners with visual impairments should be continuously trained to write and read Braille so that it would be easy to prepare learners' notes.

Teacher G indicated that the school should be provided with another resource teacher who would be only responsible for producing notes in Braille and transcribing the answer scripts into Braille for marking. The current resource teacher at the school could not manage to do Braille on time because she was also teaching her own classes. Teacher G added that learners should be provided with literature books in Braille, especially in English. Teacher C further emphasised that they needed the resource teacher to guide them on how to modify and adapt the teaching and learning materials to suit the needs of learners with visual impairments and also to guide them on how to come up with the right practical activities for learners with visual impairments. Teacher C further added that they needed training on the methods or approaches to teaching learners with visual impairments, as well as constant guidance how to help the learners with visual impairments.

4.5 SUPPORT THE TEACHERS RECEIVED FROM THE EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

The respondents were asked to mention the types of support that they received from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, parents, the resource teacher and the teacher counsellor.

4.5.1 Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

Out of seven teachers only two indicated that they received some support from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. The rest of the teachers indicated that they did not receive any support from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Teacher G indicated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture sent them some documents about what they should do to teach learners with visual impairments. Teacher G further added that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture provided them with the teaching materials such as Braille paper, Braille machines, acrobats and embossers. This is supported by Peters (2006) who argues that successful teaching and learning in an inclusive school demand the availability of assistive technology such as books in Braille, as well as other materials, like magnifying devices, talking computers and calculators. Therefore, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should provide teachers with all the necessary teaching and learning materials. Teacher E indicated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture conducted a one-week workshop in 2015, where they were taught how to read some Braille letters. Teacher E further stated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture only supported them in terms of supplying resources but not in terms of continuous professional development.

With regard to the need for professional development, teacher E said that: *“As a teacher for learners with visual impairments, I need to update my professional skills and knowledge for me to deliver quality education to learners with visual impairments”*.

4.5.2 Support from teacher counsellor

All the teachers indicated that they had not received some degree assistance from the teacher counsellor since they started teaching learners with visual impairments due to lack of skills and knowledge in an inclusive education. All the teachers indicated that the teacher counsellor was voluntarily and was not trained on how to assist teachers of learners with visual impairments. These findings are also supported by the findings of the study done by Mushaandja, Haihambo, Frank and Vergnani (2013) most of teacher counsellors were not adequately trained in the school counselling and they were only introduced or sensitised towards issues related to counselling at the University of Namibia through the Guidance and Counselling course which was too theoretical then practical and this course did not prepare the teacher counsellors with necessary skills and knowledge to assist teachers in inclusive schools. Therefore, teacher counsellors in inclusive schools are not qualified to give quality support to teachers of learners with visual impairments.

4.5.3 Support from resource teacher

The respondents were asked to mention the support that they received from the resource teacher.

Teachers G, Teacher C, Teacher A and Teacher F indicated that the resource teacher helped them to transcribe test and examination question papers into Braille. They indicated that the resource teacher helped them with typing or putting the information into Braille. They helped teachers to transcribe the Braille materials into readable content, with the typing of normal tests and examinations, and put these into the Braille format that could be read by learners with visual impairments. This is supported by Mwakyeja (2013) opines that no single teacher can have all the skills necessary to meet learners' needs in

an inclusive school. Therefore, the resource teachers should help general teachers in the preparation of teaching materials and the learning environment that suit learners with visual impairments. Mwakyeja (2013) states that resource teachers should be responsible for teaching skills like reading and writing using Braille machine. Teacher G, Teacher C, Teacher A and Teacher F further indicated that the resource teacher encouraged teachers to show learners with visual impairments love and affection. Teacher G, Teacher C, Teacher A and Teacher F further added that the resource teacher encouraged teachers to ensure that the basic needs for learners with visual impairments are met by engaging parents and community in providing learners with visual impairments with all the basic needs because the school alone did not meet the basic needs. Teacher G added that the resource teacher also assisted teachers of learners with visual impairments with the adaptation of the curriculum to suit the needs of learners with visual impairments. The resource teacher guided teachers regarding the best teaching methods and encouraged teachers to prepare their notes in advance, so that learners with visual impairments would not be left behind by sighted learners. Teacher A and B indicated that the resource teacher assisted teachers to recognise the children's strength and weakness and plan their lesson accordingly. Teachers B, D and E indicated that they were not receiving any support from the resource teacher.

From these findings, it was clear that the respondents had mixed feelings regarding the support that they got from the resource teacher. Some respondents revealed that the resource teacher worked hard to assist teachers of learners with visual impairments with the preparation of notes in Braille, classroom management, teaching methodologies and adaptation of teaching and learning materials. Some respondents did not appreciate the

work for the resource teacher and some recognised the workload for the resource teachers because the resource teacher got classes to teach and this caused her not to assist the teachers of learners with visual impairments in various activities fully. Thus, some respondents suggested for the school to have two resource teachers to reduce the workload for the current resource teacher.

4.5.4 Support from parents

The respondents were asked how the parents support them in inclusion of learners with visual impairments.

All the teachers indicated that parents did not support them in any way. They did not visit the school to see how their children were taught or encouraged them to study, because learners with visual impairments didn't show an interest in education. The teachers indicated that they took the parents' responsibilities to identify the needs of the children, buying the learners some basic needs. Teacher B indicated that they encouraged the children to take education seriously. Teachers indicated that parents never involved in their children's education. Teacher A and Teacher C indicated that the school always invited parents to the meeting at school but they never turned up to discuss the learners' progress and meet the learners' education needs. Teacher C further indicated that parents always complained the transport money to come and attend the meeting. This is in line with the findings of the study done by Rose (2013) teachers should be in regular communication with parents to discuss the challenges that they face in teaching learners with visual impairments and to find solutions.

4.5.5 Support teachers received from other education stakeholders

The respondents were asked to mention the types of support that they received from other stakeholders that were not mentioned above.

Teacher A and Teacher G indicated that they had received support from other stakeholders that were not mentioned above, such as non-governmental organisations or agencies, like the ICIEDA organisation from Finland and individual people, such as businessmen. Teacher A and Teacher G indicated that ICIEDA donated the teaching and learning materials such as Braille machines, an embosser, Braille papers and a thermoform machine. They also indicated that they received support from the Eluwa Special School who lent them a Braille machine to make notes and print activities for the learners with visual impairments. Eluwa Special School helped them with a Braille machine when theirs was not in a good condition. They further indicated that Eluwa Special School helped with computer work using soft copies to transcribe the examination papers into Braille. They further added that one teacher from the Eluwa Special School helped them with repairing their machines when theirs were not functioning. This is supported by Vayrynen (2008) special schools should become an educational resource for the inclusive schools by providing in-service training and consultation in foundational skills in Braille for the teachers in inclusive schools.

Teacher E added that he received support from individual people and business community members who donated teaching and learning materials, and sometimes they pledged money for Braille papers. Teacher E indicated that she received support from her colleagues. They support them with the lessons preparation, creating concrete and

touchable teaching aids and also helping one another with how to present a particular lesson.

Teacher E also indicated that teachers received support from the Oniipa ELCIN Rehabilitation Centre. The Oniipa ELCIN Rehabilitation Centre helped order Braille papers, as well as the printing of some texts which were too long for the resource teacher to transcribe into Braille. The rest of the teachers indicated that they did not receive any support from any other stakeholders.

The findings clearly indicate that different stakeholders provided teachers with practical support and materials support. It is also a clear indication that there is a good relationship between the school and those stakeholders helping the school with the teaching and learning materials for the teachers to deliver quality education to learners with visual impairments.

4.5.6 Stakeholders' participation in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments

The respondents were asked to mention the stakeholders which fully participate in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments in their school.

4.5.6.1 Resource teacher

Three teachers indicated that the resource teacher fully participated in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments in their school. The resource teacher made sure that the notes for learners with visual impairments were transcribed into Braille. The resource teacher encouraged teachers to show learners with visual impairments love, and affection.

The resource teacher borrowed Braille paper from Eluwa Special School when theirs were finished.

Teacher B stated that the rest of the teaching staff also participated fully because they tried their best to make sure that learners with visual impairments received the same quality education as other learners.

4.5.6.2 Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

Teacher D indicated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture fully participated in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments because they provided teachers with a Braille machine, even though they provided this too late and thus forced the school to borrow the machine from Eluwa while they were waiting for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to deliver a Braille machine.

4.5.7 Participation of the rest of the stakeholders

The respondents were asked how was the participation of the rest of the stakeholders such as parents and the teacher counsellor.

The respondents indicated that the participation of parents and the teacher counsellor was very poor because they hardly ever supported teachers of learners with visual impairments. They further stated that stakeholders failed to fulfil or maintain all the basic needs and wants for an inclusive school in order for the school to be at the level of other inclusive school providers. They further explained that the participation was very poor because they were not given any support at all.

“As teachers teaching learners with visual impairments, we are on our own. We never see parents and the teacher counsellor assisting in any way. Parents never come to school to talk to the teachers and to the learners about the teaching and learning progress”.

4.5.8 Reasons for poor participation of education stakeholders

The respondents were asked the reasons for poor participation of education stakeholders in an inclusive education.

Teachers G and Teacher A indicated that the reason for the poor participation of the above stakeholders in inclusive schools was ignorance. They did not know the challenges that teachers faced in teaching learners with visual impairments since they never turned up at the school to find out what was happening. They added that regional officers, officially appointed to represent the teachers teaching in an inclusive school, knew very well that they had sent learners with visual impairments to their school; yet they did not even know the inside of the school in question. Teacher G and Teacher A further indicated that: *“the region knew exactly that we had learners with visual impairments but they did not even bother to enquire how many learners met the tertiary education requirement after the examination so that we could tell them the number of those who had qualified for tertiary institutions and explain to them why others did not make it to universities”.*

Teachers F and Teacher E indicated that other stakeholders, especially the parents, did not know the importance of participating in their children’s education. This is supported by the findings of a study done by Booth (2011) which revealed that the participation of other stakeholders was very poor due to the lack of understanding of inclusive education,

especially among parents. Teacher F and Teacher E further stated that there was poor awareness about the needs of the learners with visual impairments among the stakeholders.

Teacher B indicated that the reason for the poor participation of parents and the teacher counsellor in an inclusive education was the poor communication between the school and parents and the teacher counsellor. This is supported by The New Brunswick Association for Community Living (2007) found that the poor participation of other stakeholders was caused by a lack of collaboration among teachers of learners with visual impairments and other education stakeholders. Teacher B further stated that: *“our school does not go to all the stakeholders” to remind them about their responsibilities maybe they forgot them*”. Teacher B added that parents and the teacher counsellor lacked the skills and knowledge of an inclusive education, which hampered them to help the school. Teacher B further stated that stakeholders did not understand the issue of inclusive education and the need for them to be fully involved.

4.5.9 Impact of support from educational stakeholders on teachers of learners with visual impairments

All seven teachers indicated that the support they received enabled them to teach learners effectively, and they wished this support would be given to them every year. The respondents also indicated that the support helped them to increase their knowledge of

teaching, and they were relieved from stress. Additionally, the respondents indicated that this support motivated them. It was an indication that, at least, there were people who saw the good in what they were doing and who were willing to help them. The respondents further stated that the support encouraged teachers to try their best and work hard for the children to be successful in their lives. The respondents added that the teaching process would be effective once the resources were available.

4.5.10. Improving participation of education stakeholders in teaching learners with visual impairments

The respondents were asked how to improve the participation of education stakeholders in teaching learners with visual impairments.

Teachers B and Teacher G indicated that education stakeholders needed to be made aware of the challenges teachers who were teaching learners with visual impairments, faced. Perhaps they needed better understanding of the school and the needs of the learners with visual impairments. Teacher B and G added that education stakeholders needed to be given training to have basic knowledge of inclusive education in order to teach learners effectively.

Teachers D and C indicated that these stakeholders should be encouraged to visit the school regularly and respond promptly to the pleas and cries of the school. Teacher D and C also added that education stakeholders needed to be given training in an inclusive education in order to operate effectively with teachers and learners. Teacher D and C added that these stakeholders needed information-sharing meetings to discuss all the challenges that were encountered by teachers and learners in inclusive schools; they

should also discuss solutions to these problems. Awareness should be raised for these stakeholders to become fully involved in the teaching and learning of learners with visual impairments. This is supported by Haitembu (2014) urges that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should conduct awareness campaigns for all the regional and circuit officials in inclusion activities to empower them with knowledge of inclusion to be able to monitor and supervise the provision of Inclusive Education.

Teachers B and F indicated that: *“the advisory teacher for special education in the office of special education in the region should be encouraged to start doing the work that he or she was trained for”*.

Teacher B and F further said: *“Advisory teacher for special education was there but even when one asked her or him about the number of learners with visual impairments at the inclusive school, she or he would not know because she or he never visited the school and contributed to the teaching and learning of learners with visual impairments.* Teacher B and F further urged that this current official should be fired because teachers did not see the use of someone being in the office without doing anything. Teacher E indicated that education stakeholders should be involved in the continuous training of teachers in order for them to be well-equipped with the skills and knowledge needed for inclusive education. This is supported by Alberto Education Resources (2010) who asserted that, providing ongoing professional development during the school day to allow teachers of children with visual impairments to learn and share the strategies to support inclusive practices.

4.5.11 Suggestions for strengthening support for teachers of learners with visual impairments

The respondents were asked to suggest the ways for strengthen support for teachers of learners with visual impairments.

Teachers D and Teacher A indicated that teachers needed to be trained how to write and read Braille. They also had to be provided with support materials to be used to teach learners with visual impairments. Teacher D and A further added that teachers should be given relevant education about the approach and methodology to teach learners with visual impairments. Besides that, they further stated that seminars should be conducted where the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture explained the notion of inclusive education to all the stakeholders. Finally, they emphasised that enforcement was needed for all the education stakeholders so that they would actively participate in the teaching of learners with visual impairments. Teacher C indicated that teachers should be sent to other inclusive schools inside and outside the country in order to observe how others were teaching the learners with visual impairments and by so doing enhance the capacity of teaching learners with visual impairments. Teacher C further indicated that schools should be provided with inclusive teaching and learning materials, and teachers should be well trained and well advised to use the teaching and learning materials effectively to meet the needs of learners with visual impairments.

Teacher E indicated that workshops should be conducted to discuss strategies to teach learners with visual impairments. Information-sharing workshops should be conducted every term for teachers to be well equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge to teach

learners with visual impairments. These findings are supported by the study of Haitembu (2014) recommends those teachers teaching in inclusive schools should be provided with information-sharing meetings where they can share information and experiences in order to learn from one another. Teacher E further stated that inclusive education teachers should work together with the resource schools which catered for learners with visual impairments to help one another with teaching and learning materials and also to share the best teaching methods to cater fully for learners with visual impairments.

4.5. 12 Conclusion

It is evident from this chapter that teachers of learners with visual impairments are not fully supported by the education stakeholders. They continue to face challenges in teaching learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school such as lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of skills and knowledge to teach learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school which could have been deviated by support. However, there is evidence that some stakeholders such as Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and non-governmental organisations provided teachers with the teaching and learning materials such as Braille papers and Braille machines but the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture failed to provide in-service training to teachers of learners with visual impairments to acquire necessary skills and knowledge to teach learners with visual impairments. There is also evidence that the resource teacher support teachers of learners with visual impairments by preparing the notes in Braille and adaptation of teaching and learning materials. Besides that, some respondents revealed that some stakeholders such

as parents and the teacher counsellor did not render support to teachers of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school due to lack of skills and knowledge of inclusive education.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter briefly discusses the findings and conclusions of the study and provides some recommendations. Firstly, the participants' profiles were discussed. It included the ages of the participants, their teaching experience and their training in an inclusive education. This chapter, therefore, discussed the results of this study in relation to the research objectives and reviewed literature on inclusive schools in the area under study.

5.1.1 Participants' profiles

The respondents were asked to provide their age, teaching experience, and their education in inclusive education.

The results of the participants' demographical information showed that most of the participants were aged between 25 and 40 years. Two participants were males and 5 were females. There were thus more females than male teachers in the sample. This could be due to the fact that more females entered the teaching profession. The findings indicated many teachers were inexperienced to teach learners with visual impairments, as the findings indicated that, five teachers had taught learners with visual impairments for a time period between one and five years and only one teacher had taught learners with visual impairments for ten years. As far as the teachers' education was concerned, the findings of this study indicated that only two participants were trained to teach learners with visual impairments through the workshops which were conducted during the teaching period in this inclusive school. The rest of the participants indicated that they had not received any training in teaching learners with visual impairments.

5.1.2 Most interesting aspects of Teaching Learners with Visual Impairments

Judging from the responses of this study, one can conclude that many teachers did not find the teaching of learners with visual impairments interesting. This could be attributed to the challenges that teachers faced in teaching learners with visual impairments. These challenges hampered many teachers from enjoying the teaching of learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools. Contrary to the responses above, some of the findings of this study provided that teaching learners with visual impairments was very interesting because learners with visual impairments were eager to learn and they had good memories. The findings of this study further revealed that it was very interesting to teach learners with visual impairments because they were good at oral presentations and could learn in the same way as sighted learners. The findings further indicated that learners with visual impairments participated actively in class and in most cases performed better than learners with sight. The findings are in line with those of a study done by Larsson (2010) who found that learners with visual impairments had better listening skills than learners with vision, and they showed critical thinking, as well as provided constructive ideas in class. The findings of the study by Larson (2010) further revealed that learners with visual impairments had good problem-solving skills.

5.2 THE SUPPORT THAT TEACHERS OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS NEEDED

The respondents were asked the support that they needed in inclusion of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school.

The respondents revealed that they needed different support such as professional development needs, collaboration needs and in class support.

5.2.1 Professional developments support

The findings of this study revealed that teachers needed more in service training to be provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach learners with visual impairments and provide quality education to learners with visual impairments. The current study concurs with the study of Möwes (2007) that revealed that it was important for teachers to be provided with information on inclusive education. Möwes (2007) further argues that information-sharing benefits school by empowering and boosting teachers' confidence in teaching learners with special educational needs. Information-sharing workshops will help teachers to gain new information and keep on updating their existing knowledge about inclusive education.

From the findings, the respondents clearly revealed that they needed training on the adaptation of teaching and learning materials to suit learners with visual impairments and assessment criteria to use to assess learners with visual impairments. Teachers were not trained to work with the teaching materials such as Braille machine to make notes for the learners and the typing of tests and examinations. The findings of this study revealed that teachers needed to be provided with the workshops to be taught how to use the Braille machine. This is supported by the findings of a study done by Kapinga (2012) that indicated that teachers should be provided with in-service teacher education to be well equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge for an inclusive education. The finding of this study indicated that teachers needed in-service training on the methods or approaches to teaching learners with visual impairments, and they needed constant guidance how to help them. The finding of this study is supported by the findings of Josua (2013) that revealed that teachers needed to be provided with tailor-made, in-service

training and workshops to support them in an inclusive education. The findings of this study revealed that the government should provide teachers with workshops regarding how to teach learners with visual impairments on a term or weekly basis.

From these findings, the researcher concluded that, teachers did not have sufficient competencies and skills to support the learning of learners with visual impairments due to lack of training to teach the learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school. Therefore, all the respondents requested to be provided with workshops and seminars to acquire skills and knowledge to support learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school.

5.2.2 Collaboration needs

The respondents expressed a need for co-teaching among education stakeholders such as Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, parents, advisory teacher for special education and the resource teachers in an inclusive school. Some of the respondents confirmed that teamwork is one of the factors which enhanced success in inclusive schools. The findings of this study further stated that working in teams in the profession facilitated the spirit of togetherness and fostered academic excellence in the learners with visual impairments. The findings of the study was supported by Booth (2010) pointed that for the building of an inclusive school, there is a need for all the education stakeholders to work in collaboration and in solidarity for successful inclusion of learners with visual impairments.

5.2.3 In class support needs

The findings revealed that they need co-teaching since no single teacher can have all the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the needs of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive classroom. The findings of this study suggest that schools should be provided with more resource teachers who will be responsible to make notes with the Braille machine and transcribe the answer scripts into Braille for marking, because the resource teacher currently in the school could not manage to prepare notes on time as she was also teaching her own classes.

This finding is supported by the findings of Josua (2013) that revealed that the resource teacher did not find adequate time to transcribe notes for the learners with visual impairments due to high demand and teaching load. The finding of the study done by Josua (2013) further revealed that teachers relied on the assistance and support of the resource teacher who could also be occupied with a teaching load and was set up for burn-out due to high demand. The findings of this study revealed that teachers needed another resource teacher to help them with the preparation of the teaching and learning materials to suit the needs of learners with visual impairments, lesson preparation and teaching methodologies to teach learners with visual impairments in inclusive classrooms. These findings are in line with Scruggs (2010) teachers who specialised in visual impairments should be part of the teaching in an inclusive classroom to assist teachers of learners with visual impairments with the adaptation of teaching and learning materials, assessment criteria and the teaching methodologies. The findings revealed that teachers needed to be guided and shown how to assess the education needs of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive classroom.

From the findings; one concluded that assessment of learners' needs help teachers to know the learning abilities, learning styles and the learning needs of the learners with visual impairments in order to plan teaching accordingly. This study further revealed that teachers needed to be provided with more teaching and learning materials, such as Braille machines, Braille papers and Acrobats. Furthermore, the findings of the study indicated that teachers needed to be provided with enough radios for listening and needed to be provided with Acrobats to enable those learners with low vision to read on the chalkboard.

From the findings, one can conclude that teachers of learners with visual impairments struggled to teach learners with visual impairments in the inclusive classrooms due to lack of teaching and learning materials and due to lack of skills and knowledge to use the materials to deliver quality lessons to the learners with visual impairments in an inclusive classroom. It was very crucial for the school to be provided with another resource teacher to assist teachers of learners with visual impairments to overcome all the challenges that teachers encounters in teaching learners with visual impairments in an inclusive classroom such as adaptation of teaching and learning materials, teaching strategies, the use of Braille machines and inclusive classroom management.

5.3 SUPPORT FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

The findings of the study revealed that most of the teachers indicated that they did not receive support from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Contrary to the above findings, some of the findings revealed that some teachers indicated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture had sent them some documents about what they should do to teach learners with visual impairments. The findings revealed that the Ministry of

Education, Arts and Culture provided teachers with teaching materials. In addition, it was revealed that the Ministry Education, Arts and Culture only provided teachers with a one-week workshop where they were taught how to read some Braille letters. The findings of this study also revealed that the Ministry of Education, arts and Culture only supported teachers in terms of supplying resources but not in terms of teachers' continuous professional development. These findings are supported by the study done by Ekims and Grimes (2009) which revealed that monitoring and supervision of an inclusive education at schools were of the important responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. The findings further revealed that regional and circuit officials found it important to supervise how schools were providing an inclusive education and monitor how they catered the learners' needs. As was found by Zimba, et al. (1999) and Kisanji (1999), teachers in an inclusive school in Namibian lacked skills in an inclusive education. It is, therefore, crucial for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to monitor and supervise the processes of inclusion to render support when needed.

Ekims and Grimes (2009) argues that schools are most effective if all stakeholders are fully involved and understand the importance of responding to teachers' needs. It is notable that the involvement of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in responding to teachers and learners' needs will help schools to feel supported and work harder. In a study done by Haitembu (2013), the author advises that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should persistently work together with schools to practise an inclusive education. The findings further communicate that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should work together with teachers and parents to address the learners' needs. It is important for various stakeholders in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to

understand the importance of an inclusive education and the importance of their involvement in the teaching and learning of learners with visual impairments. Ladbrook (2009) indicates that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is expected to establish programmes that can offer valuable support to teachers in an attempt to empower them to offer an inclusive education effectively and successfully. This is in line with the findings of the study done by Maswanya (2007) indicated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should make an effort to incorporate inclusive education components in teachers' education programmes to help teachers acquire the necessary skills to teach in inclusive classrooms. Teachers are encouraged by the government to undertake professional development training to equip them with the necessary, most current knowledge of teaching in an inclusive classroom.

From the findings, the researcher concluded that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture only supplied teaching and learning materials such as Braille papers, Braille machines and embossers to teachers of learners with visual impairments and failed to provide teachers with professional development training to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge on how to use the teaching and learning materials to teach learners with visual impairments. The teachers needed to be provided with information sharing workshops every term to ensure that teachers are well equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to give quality education to learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school. The one week workshop that was given to the teachers was not enough for the teachers to be in a right position to give the necessary support and quality education to the learners with visual impairments in an inclusive classroom.

5.4 SUPPORT FROM THE TEACHER COUNSELLOR

The respondents were asked to mention the support that they received from the teacher counsellor.

The findings of this study revealed that all the teachers indicated that they had not received any assistance from the teacher counsellor since they started teaching learners with visual impairments. The findings of this study revealed that the teacher counsellor did not render any support to teachers; this may be due to the lack of skills and knowledge about an inclusive education. The teacher counsellor might not understand the importance of full participation in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments. The findings of the study done by Rayle (2006) states that a teacher counsellor is an essential resource and great partners for teachers who are teaching learners with visual impairments; they help teachers understand the totality of the learners and provide teachers with professional advice on how to deal with learners with diverse needs. Mushaandja, Haihambo, Frank and Vergnani (2013) states that the teacher counsellor should attend the training organised by the regional school counsellor as well as senior school psychologists in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to be well equipped with skills and knowledge to assist teachers in an inclusive school. The findings of this study suggested the awareness needs to be raised to enable them to be well equipped with information about inclusive education.

5.5 SUPPORT FROM THE RESOURCE TEACHER

The respondents were asked to mention the support that they received from the resource teacher.

The findings of the study revealed that the resource teacher helped teachers to transcribe tests, notes and question papers into the letters that the learners could read. Furthermore, the findings showed that the resource teacher helped others to transcribe the Braille materials into readable content and helped teachers with the typing of tests and examinations, as well as transcribing these into the Braille formant that could be read by learners with visual impairments. This is supported by the findings of a study done by Spungin (2002) which suggests that it is important to consult the resource teacher regarding the preparation of materials prior to the lesson because different learners use different materials depending on the degree of their visual impairments. The findings furthermore, showed that the resource teacher should help to clarify the lesson to teachers and if possible should teach them before the main session starts (Spungin, 2002). The findings of this study further showed that the resource teacher always encouraged teachers to show learners with visual impairments love and affection. The resource teacher also provided teachers of learners with visual impairments with notes before the lesson, so that the learners with visual impairments would not be left behind by sighted learners. Contrary to the above findings, some of the findings revealed that sometimes the resource teacher didn't get adequate time to offer the teachers support due to the fact that the resource teacher got classes to teach.

From these findings, the researcher concluded that the resource teacher is very committed and hardworking because she assisted teachers of learners with visual impairments with the preparation of teaching and learning materials and at the same time she got classes to teach. The researcher concluded that the resource teacher had workload due to the multi tasks that she performed at the same time because the resource teacher had classes to teach and had the responsibility to Braille the notes for the learners. This is too much for her because it delayed her to complete her syllabus on time and if she didn't assist the teachers of learners with visual impairments to prepare notes in Braille then the teaching and learning process will be affected and the learners with visual impairments will be left behind. Therefore, it is will be good for the school to be provided with another resource teacher to reduce the workload of the current resource teacher.

5.6 SUPPORT FROM PARENTS

The respondents were asked to elaborate the support that they received from the parents.

The findings of this study revealed that teacher did not receive any support from parents. The findings further showed that parents did not visit the school to see how their children were taught and to encourage them to study. The findings revealed that teachers encouraged the children to take education seriously and teachers took parents 'responsibilities to identify the needs of their children, buying the learners some basic needs, instead of the parents to be responsible. This is also in line with the findings of the study done by Gardner and Davies (2001) which revealed that parents offered a huge contribution to the education of their children and they were potential sources of information about the academic writing of learners with visual impairments. Furthermore, this study is in line with the study of Rose (2010) who stresses that all parents can

contribute valuable information on the performance of their children through ongoing communication with teachers to meet children's needs. The findings further showed that parents knew their children better than teachers. They knew what their interests were and what was good for them. The findings further showed that parents knew their educational needs and could plan for the future on behalf of their children. Having this information, a teacher will strive to structure and modify his/her teaching methods to help learners with visual impairments in their educational endeavours.

The findings of the study by Gardner and Davies (2001) revealed that teachers lacked important information about learners with visual impairments because their parents, whom they would collaborate with to understand their children, were not readily available. This is also supported by the findings of the study done by Mmbaga (2012) revealed that collaboration between teachers and parents of learners with visual impairments was lacking due to the fact that these parents were living outside the region; therefore, they could not come to school every time they were needed at the school. The findings further indicated parents were important in providing information for the learning of their children. This information helped in preparation of Individualized Education Plan. It is through this IEP that a teacher will be able to plan his or her teaching in an inclusive class (Mmbaga, 2012). The findings revealed that the lacking of collaboration between teachers and parents affected the process of preparation and implementation of IEP; learners with visual impairments could not benefit from the teaching process. The findings of the study revealed that parents did not support teachers of learners with visual impairments due to the fact that parents did not understand their importance of actively participation in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments.

From the findings, one can conclude that teachers had very little contact with the parents of learners with visual impairments. This showed that the communication channels between the parents and teachers were not open. When the teachers were asked what they did to involve the parents of learners with visual impairments in education of their children, teachers answered that the school invited parents to the parents' meeting through written letter and telephonically but the parents did not turn up for the meeting to discuss the learners' progress and meet the learners' educational needs. The findings of this study further revealed that parents complained of the transport money to come and visit school since most of the parents lived outside the town.

Contrary to the above findings, some of the respondents revealed that school did not do anything to involve the parents of learners with visual impairments due to the fact that the school did not acknowledge the expertise of the parents regarding their own children as this contribute to more successfully and balanced collaboration and implementation of an inclusive education. This finding is supported by Zulch (2010), in spite of the priceless input parents could give to an inclusive education, many parents felt disempowered and unimportant. They were often unacquainted with the rights in education of their children and felt that the experts in this case the teachers, knew best. Some teachers judge parents as inadequate and this created a hostile atmosphere resulting in parents avoiding their involvement. From the findings, one can conclude that parents needed to be mobilised to participate and actively involved in education of learners with visual impairments.

5.7 TYPES OF SUPPORT FROM OTHER EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

The findings of this study revealed that teachers received support from non-governmental organisation agencies, such as the ICIEDA organisation from Finland, individual people such as businessmen, Eluwa special School, colleagues and Oniipa ELCIN Rehabilitation Centre. The findings revealed that there was a great interrelationship between the school and these stakeholders. The findings revealed that Non-governmental organisations played the major role to ensure the successful teaching and learning of learners with visual impairments by providing teachers with the teaching and learning materials such as Braille papers, an embossers, Braille machines and thermoform machines.

The findings revealed that community members such as businessmen donated teaching and learning materials which was the great challenges to teachers of learners with visual impairments. From the findings, one can conclude that there was a great collaboration between the inclusive school and the resource school. The findings revealed that Eluwa Special School assisted teachers with a Braille machine when theirs are not functioning and Eluwa Special School assisted teachers with computer work using soft copies to transcribe the examination papers into Braille. The findings of this study revealed that teachers from Eluwa Special Education shared ideas and knowledge with the teachers of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school on how to teach learners with visual impairments, classroom management and how to use the Braille machine. The findings further revealed that one teacher from Eluwa Special Education assisted teachers with repairing their machines when they were not functioning. The findings of this study revealed that Oniipa Rehabilitation Centre assisted teachers with the Braille papers, as

well as some of the printing of some texts which were too long for the resource teacher to transcribe into Braille.

From the findings, one can conclude that there was a team work in the inclusive school because the findings revealed that teachers received support from their colleagues in the school. The supports are such as planning lesson together and creating concrete and touchable teaching aids and also helping one another with presentation of a particular lesson.

5.8 STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATING IN THE INCLUSION OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

The respondents were asked to mention the stakeholders which fully participated in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments in their school.

5.8.1 Resource teacher

The findings of the study revealed that the resource teacher fully participated in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments in the school. The resource teacher made sure that the notes of the learners with visual impairments were brailled. Furthermore; the findings revealed that the resource teacher borrowed Braille papers from the Eluwa Special School when theirs were finished. The findings revealed that the resource teacher guide teachers of learners with visual impairments to recognise the children's strength and weakness and plan their lessons accordingly. The findings of this study further revealed that the resource teacher assisted teachers of learners with visual impairments with adaption of the curriculum to suit the needs of learners with visual impairments.

5.8.2 Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

The findings of this study further revealed that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture also participated fully in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments because they provided teachers with Braille machines even though they took time to provide these materials to the school. This is also supported by the findings of the study done by URT (2007) which revealed that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture made efforts to change the vision of inclusive education among stakeholders gradually to a new perspective of understanding it as a system to support all learners, regardless of their differences. To achieve this, there is a unit of special needs education in the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) that prepares teachers' guides on inclusive education and resource packs adapted from UNESCO. Through this, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture supports education and creates awareness among teachers about how to adapt their teaching and create an environment that responds to the individual needs of learners, in order to meet the goal of education for all. The findings of this study further stated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture encouraged teachers to work in co-operation with the family, parents and the community at large to determine the needs of every learners with special educational needs URT (2007). This is also supported by Maswanya (2007) revealing that increasing awareness among people about inclusive education for learners with visual impairments.

5.8.3 The rest of the teaching staff in school

The findings of this study revealed that the rest of the teaching staff in the school also participated fully because they tried their best to make sure that learners with visual impairments received the same quality education as other learners. The findings revealed that the rest of the teaching staff provided the support by planning lesson together and creating concrete and touchable teaching aids and also helping one another with presentation of a particular lesson.

5.9 PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS AND THE TEACHER COUNSELLOR

The respondents were asked to describe the participation of the rest of the stakeholders such as parents and the teacher counsellor.

The findings of this study revealed that the participation of the above mentioned education stakeholders were very poor because they hardly ever supported the teachers of learners with visual impairments. The findings revealed that these stakeholders failed to fulfil or maintain all the basic needs and wants for an inclusive school in order for the school to be at the level of other inclusive school provider. From the findings, one can conclude that these stakeholders were not actively participating in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments due to the fact that they didn't know their importance of participating in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments. There is lack of collaboration between the school and these stakeholders. The school didn't actively involve these stakeholders in an inclusive school by explaining their importance of actively participation in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive education. Therefore, there is a need to mobilise the parents of learners with visual impairments and the teacher counsellor to participate and actively get involved in the education of learners with visual impairments.

The school should invite parents and the teacher counsellor to the meeting to discuss the learners' progress and educational needs for learners with visual impairments.

5.10 THE REASONS FOR THE POOR PARTICIPATION OF THE REST OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

The respondents were asked to explain the reason for the poor participation of the rest of the education stakeholders such as parents and the teacher counsellor.

The findings of this study revealed that the reasons for the poor participation of these stakeholders in an inclusive school were their ignorance. The findings further revealed that education stakeholders did not know the challenges that teachers faced in teaching learners with visual impairments since they never turned up at the school to find out what was happening. The school also didn't consult those education stakeholders and explained to them the importance of inclusive education and their importance of participating in the education of their children for them to be well equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge of inclusive education.

The findings of this study are supported by those of Booth (2011) who revealed that the participation of stakeholders was very poor due to the lack of understanding of an inclusive education, especially among parents. The findings further showed that it was very challenging for the parents to participate fully in the education of learners with visual impairments due to the distance between the school and home. Some parents did not have money for transport to visit their children at school to establish their progress. The findings of this study, furthermore, indicated that some stakeholders, especially parents, did not understand the importance of inclusive education and they did not know the importance of participating in their children's education.

In additions, the findings of this study further showed that there were poor awareness-raising campaigns among the stakeholders about the needs of learners with visual impairments. The New Brunswick Association for Community Living (2007) found that the poor participation of these stakeholders was caused by a lack of collaboration among teachers of learners with visual impairments. Furthermore, the findings of this study established that the poor participation of these stakeholders in an inclusive education was caused by the poor communication between the school and the stakeholders. They added that education stakeholders lacked skills and knowledge of inclusive education which hampered them to help the school. The findings further showed that stakeholders did not understand the issue of inclusive education. This caused them to be uninvolved in inclusive schools.

5.11. IMPACT OF SUPPORT FROM EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS ON TEACHERS OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

The respondents were asked to describe the impact of support from education stakeholders on teachers of learners with visual impairments.

The findings of the study revealed that this support enabled teachers to provide quality education to learners with visual impairments and they wished this support would be given to them every year. The findings further revealed that the support helped them to increase their knowledge of teaching and relieved stress. The findings further revealed that this support motivated the teachers; it was an indication that there were at least some people who saw the good in what they were doing and were willing to help teachers. In addition, the findings further showed that this support encouraged teachers to try their best and work hard for the learners with visual impairments to be successful in their lives. The findings

revealed that the teaching process would be effective once the resources were available and quality lessons would be delivered to learners with visual impairments. Contrary to the above findings, some findings revealed that there was no impact on the teaching of learners with visual impairments since they did not receive any support from the stakeholders. They were always frustrated because there was a lack of teaching and learning materials and they were also not trained to teach learners with visual impairments.

5.12 IMPROVING PARTICIPATION OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS IN THE TEACHING OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

The respondents were asked to explain how to improve the participation of education stakeholders in teaching learners with visual impairments.

The findings of this study indicated that education stakeholders needed to be made aware of the challenges teachers of learners with visual impairments faced. Perhaps they needed a better understanding of the inclusive school and the needs of the learners with visual impairments. The findings further showed that they needed to be made aware of the challenges that teachers of learners with visual impairments experienced. In addition, the findings indicated that education stakeholders needed to be given training to have basic knowledge to work with teachers of learners with visual impairments effectively.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that these stakeholders should be encouraged to visit the school regularly and respond promptly to the pleas and cries of the school. The findings revealed that stakeholders also needed to be given training in inclusive education in order to operate effectively with teachers and learners in an inclusive school. Moreover, the findings further revealed that these stakeholders needed information-sharing meetings to discuss all the challenges that were encountered by teachers and learners in the inclusive

schools and solutions to these problems. Awareness should be created for these stakeholders to become fully involved in the teaching and learning of learners with visual impairments.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that advisory teachers for special education in the region should be encouraged and motivated to actively participate in an inclusive school. The findings of this study indicated that education stakeholders should be involved in the teachers' continuous training for them to be well equipped with the necessary inclusive skills and knowledge.

5.13 STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

The findings of the study indicated that teachers needed to be trained in writing and reading the Braille. They should be provided with support materials to use to teach learners with visual impairments. The findings indicated that teachers should be given relevant training in the approach and methodology to teach learners with visual impairments. In addition, the findings indicated that the environment should be conducive and disability-friendly. The findings also indicated that seminars should be conducted where the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture especially the special education department or unit, explained to all stakeholders the notion of inclusive education should be conducted.

The findings further indicated that enforcement was needed for all stakeholders so that they could all participate actively in the teaching and learning process of learners with visual impairments. The findings indicated that teachers should be sent to inclusive schools catering for visual impairments inside and outside the country in order to observe

how others were teaching learners with visual impairments. The findings revealed that schools should be provided with enough teaching and learning materials and teachers should be well trained and well advised to teach learners with visual impairments. The findings further showed that workshops should be held to strengthen the teaching strategies of learners with visual impairments. The study done by Booth (2011) indicates that teamwork is one of the factors which enhance success in any organisation. Working in teams in the teaching profession facilitates the point of togetherness and fosters academic excellence in the learners with visual impairments. The study further states that to build an inclusive community, there is a need to collaborate with colleagues and have solidarity which can help understanding how the school can achieve changes. Information sharing workshops should be conducted every term for teachers to be well equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge of teaching learners with visual impairments. The findings further showed that inclusive teachers should work together with the resource school teachers who catered for learners with visual impairments to help one another with the teaching and learning materials, as well as share the best teaching methods to use in order to cater fully the learners with visual impairments.

5.14 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research findings were presented and discussed in accordance with the following themes. The most interesting aspects of teaching learners with visual impairments, the support that teachers of learners with visual impairments needed, the support that teachers received from the following education stakeholder such as Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, parents, the teacher counsellor, the resource teacher, the participation of education stakeholders in the inclusion of learners with visual

impairments in an inclusive school and the impact of support from education stakeholders on teachers teaching learners with visual impairments. In the next chapter the focus would be on the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Conclusions were made based on the findings of the study. Some recommendations for improvement of the teachers' support in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments were pointed out for further studies in the areas into which the current study ventured.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to investigate the support rendered by education stakeholders to teachers of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school. The study was built around three research objectives. The first objective was to investigate the types and quality of support that teachers needed, and received, from education stakeholders, such as officials in their various capacities at the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, parents, the teacher counsellor and the resource teacher who specialised in visual impairments. The second objective was to find how support for teachers of learners with visual impairments in regular schools could be strengthened to ensure the full inclusion of learners with visual impairments in regular schools. The third objective was to find how the participation of education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments in regular schools could be improved.

The conclusion on the support was discussed as follows:

6.2.1 Support from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

The findings of this study indicated that many respondents did not receive support from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Only a few respondents indicated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture provided teachers with teaching and learning materials, such Braille papers, the Braille machines and the embossers. Furthermore, they revealed that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture sent teachers documents with information how to teach learners with visual impairments. In addition to this, the findings indicated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture provided teachers with a one-week workshop where they were taught how to read some Braille work. Moreover, the findings revealed that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture only supported teachers in terms of supplying resources but not in terms of teachers' continuous professional development.

6.2.2 Support from the teacher counsellor

The findings of this study revealed that teachers had not received any assistance from the teacher counsellor since they started teaching learners with visual impairments. This might be due to the lack of skills and knowledge about inclusive education. The findings further revealed that, maybe; teacher counsellor did not know their job descriptions and that was why they did not help in any way. The findings of this study further suggested that the teacher counsellor might not understand fully the importance of their participation in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments. It is clear that this research confirms literature that indicates that the teacher counsellors do not render support due to their lack of skills and knowledge. Therefore, this study concludes that there is a need for creating

awareness among the teacher counsellor to be well-equipped with information about inclusive education and to realise the importance of being actively involved in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments.

6.2.3 Support from the resource teacher

The findings revealed that the resource teacher helped teachers to transcribe the Braille materials into readable content and with the typing of tests and examinations. The findings further revealed that the resource teacher assisted teachers of learners with visual impairments with the adaptation of teaching and learning materials and the resource teacher encouraged teachers of learners with visual impairments to show learners with visual impairments love and affection. The findings further showed that the resource teacher helped to clarify the lesson. The findings also showed that the resource teacher also provided teachers with notes in advance so that learners with visual impairments would not be left behind by sighted learners. Some respondents revealed that the resource teacher does not find adequate time to transcribe the work of learners with visual impairments due to high demand and teaching load. Therefore, there is a need for the school to have two resource teachers to reduce the workload.

6.2.4 Support from parents

The findings of this study revealed that teachers did not receive any support from parents. The findings further showed that parents did not visit the school to find out how their children were taught and encouraged them to study. This study concurs with Gardner and Davies (2001) who revealed that teachers lacked important information about learners with visual impairments because parents with whom they should collaborate to understand their children were not readily available. The findings revealed that the school invited

parents to visit school in order to discuss the learners' progress but the parents did not turn up due to lack of skills and knowledge of inclusive education and they did not know the importance of their actively participate in inclusion of learners with visual impairments in an inclusive school. The findings further revealed that parents complained of transport money to come and visit school since they lived outside the town. This is also supported by Mmbaga (2012) who revealed that collaboration between teachers and parents of learners with visual impairments was lacking due to the fact that these parents were living outside the region; therefore, they could not manage to come to school every time they were needed. In addition, the findings further indicated that parents were important in providing information about the learners. This information helped in the preparation of IEP. It is through this IEP that teachers will be able to plan their teaching in an inclusive classroom. Therefore, awareness is needed to be raised for parents to gain the skills and knowledge necessary in inclusive education because they lacked skills and knowledge. It is through creating awareness that parents will be taught the importance of becoming involved in the teaching and learning of their children.

6.2.5 Improving participation of education stakeholders

The respondents were asked to explain how the participation of education stakeholders in teaching of learners with visual impairments improved.

The findings of the study revealed that education stakeholders needed to be aware of the challenges teachers of learners with visual impairments faced in the inclusive schools. The findings of this study further revealed that education stakeholders needed better understanding of inclusive schools and the needs of learners with visual impairments. In

addition, education stakeholders needed to be given training in order to have a basic knowledge about working with teachers of learners with visual impairments. Furthermore, the findings indicated that stakeholders should be encouraged to visit the school regularly and respond promptly to the pleas and cries of the school. Furthermore, awareness should be raised for these stakeholders to become fully involved in the teaching and learning of learners with visual impairments. Finally, the findings of this study indicated that education stakeholders should be involved in the teachers' continued training so that they would be well equipped with the necessary inclusive skills and knowledge.

6.2.6 Suggestions to strengthen support for teachers of learners with visual impairments

The findings of the study indicated that teachers needed to be trained in the writing and reading of Braille. They should be provided with support materials to teach learners with visual impairments. In addition, the findings further suggested that teachers should be given relevant training about the approach and methodology to teach learners with visual impairments. The findings also indicated that seminars should be conducted, where the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, especially the special education department or unit, explained to all stakeholders the notion of inclusive education. The findings further suggested that enforcement was needed for stakeholders so that they could participate actively in the teaching and learning process of learners with visual impairments. Furthermore, the findings indicated that teachers should be sent to other inclusive schools with learners with visual impairments inside and outside the country in order to observe how others are teaching learners with visual impairments. The findings further revealed

that schools should be provided with enough teaching and learning materials and teachers should be well trained and well advised to teach learners with visual impairments.

Moreover, the findings further showed that workshops should be held to discuss the strategies to teach learners with visual impairments. In addition, information-sharing workshops should be conducted every term for teachers to be well-equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge of teaching learners with visual impairments. Finally, the findings further suggested that inclusive teachers should work together with the resource school who catered for learners with visual impairments to help one another with teaching and learning materials, as well as sharing the best teaching methods to use in order to cater fully the learners with visual impairments.

From the findings, one could conclude that collaboration and team work among education stakeholders foster academic excellence in an inclusive school. As education is a shared responsibility, every education stakeholder is expected to be actively involved in the education of learners with visual impairments by providing quality and needed support to teachers teaching learners with visual impairments through workshops and seminars for teachers to acquire necessary skills and knowledge to provide quality education to learners with visual impairments. There should be an open communication channel between the teachers and all the stakeholders to discuss the needs of teachers of learners with visual impairments and to be aware of all the challenges that teachers of learners with visual impairments faced in teaching learners with visual impairments and provided solution. Furthermore, collaboration between the inclusive school teachers and the resource school needed to be strengthening to share the ideas and knowledge on how to teach learners with visual impairments and support each other with the adaptation of curriculum, classroom

management, teaching methodologies and adaptation of teaching and learning materials and assist each with the teaching and learning materials. Furthermore, teachers of learners with visual impairments should be provided with the in-service training to acquire quality skills and knowledge to deliver quality education to the learners with visual impairments.

6.3 RECOMMEDATIONS

This was a qualitative research case study; therefore, its findings cannot be generalised to all the inclusive schools in Namibia, but they may be applicable to other inclusive schools facing the same situation as the one researched in this study. Therefore, these recommendations are particular for the school studied, as well as for other similar schools in Namibia. Recommendations were made to all the education stakeholders regarding the support that they rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments.

6.3.1 Recommendations to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

- It is clear from the findings of this study that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is not fully supporting teachers of learners with visual impairments in the inclusive schools. The findings indicated that teachers were facing challenges regarding teaching and learning materials in the inclusive schools. Therefore, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should provide schools with enough teaching and learning materials for the successful inclusion of learners with visual impairments. This will also help the teachers to feel supported and enjoy the teaching process without stress.
- As it was revealed by the findings of this study that teachers lacked skills and knowledge to teach learners with visual impairments, it is recommended that the

Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should provide training and professional development for teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for inclusive education. It is also recommended that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should provide teachers with weekly information-sharing workshops to educate them regarding making classrooms inclusive to learners with visual impairments, in particular, through the adaptation of the teaching and learning environment, and also to educate them regarding the best teaching methodologies to teach learners with visual impairments.

- Furthermore, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture especially the special education department or unit, should conduct seminars to explain to all stakeholders the notion of inclusive education as this could help teachers be more creative, responsible and committed in inclusive education.
- It is also recommended that all stakeholders in inclusive education should work together as a team. Having a clear understanding and smooth communication could help to reduce the misunderstandings that impede the teaching and learning of learners with visual impairments. Finally, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should support teachers in terms of supplying resources and teachers' continued professional development.
- It is recommended that the MOEVT should incorporate inclusive education in the curriculum of general teachers' education so that at least every graduate teacher would have some basic skills and knowledge regarding how to handle an inclusive classroom.

6.3.2 Recommendations to teacher counsellor

- As it was clearly revealed by the findings of this study that teacher counsellor did not render any support to teachers; it may be due to a lack of skills and knowledge of inclusive education. It is recommended that awareness should be created in order for teacher counsellor to be well-equipped with information about inclusive education, and to realise the importance of being actively involved in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments.
- Teacher counsellor should be fully trained at teachers' education institutions for them to have necessary skills and knowledge about inclusive education in order to assist teachers of learners with visual impairments.

6.3.3 Recommendations to the resource teacher

- It was noted that the resource teacher was overloaded, because she had her own classes to teach, as well as transcribe notes into Braille for the learners with visual impairments. This is too much for her; therefore, it is recommended that the school should be provided with another resource teacher who will only be responsible to make notes with the Braille machine and transcribe the answer scripts into Braille for marking, because the current resource teacher in the school could not manage to prepare notes on time because she had classes to teach.
- It is also recommended that the resource teacher and teachers of learners with visual impairments should be sent to other inclusive schools inside and outside the country to observe how others are teaching learners with visual impairments.

6.3.4 Recommendations to parents

- The findings of the study noted that parents did not support teachers in any way due to the fact that parents did not understand the importance of inclusive education; that was why they hardly ever visited the school to see how their children were taught. It is highly recommended that awareness needs to be raised among the parents so that they would know the importance of inclusive education and be informed about the importance of their participation in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments. Parents should be trained through workshops to equip them with the necessary skills for supporting teachers of learners with visual impairments.
- Furthermore, it is recommended for the school to create strong interpersonal relationships between parents and teachers so that parents would be fully involved in the education of learners with visual impairments. The school should invite parents to school meetings and elect them as school boards in order for them to be well-equipped with information about inclusive education. Furthermore, the school should create open communication channels with the parents to discuss the learners' progress.
- It is recommended that the parents of learners with visual impairments should be educated and made aware of the importance of educating learners with visual impairments, as well as make them participate actively in the education of learners with visual impairments. The school should create avenues for parental participation and encourage parents to get involved. It is recommended that the school should hold parents' days and give them roles that will affirm them.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

- Similar studies can be carried out in other secondary schools in other regions so that the findings could be compared and generalisations made.
- In-depth studies could be carried out on how to improve the teachers' support for full inclusion of learners with visual impairments in inclusive schools.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE TEACHERS

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SUPPORT RENDERED TO TEACHERS OF LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS AN THE INCLUSIVE SECONDARY SCHOOL IN OSHANA REGION IN NAMIBIA

I am Shivute Sarti, a Master of Education in Inclusive Education student at University of Namibia. I am carrying out a study titled: **An investigation of the support rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments in the inclusive secondary school in Namibia.** I therefore kindly request you to provide me with relevant information for my study by responding to the interview questions I will be asking u. The information that will be gathered from you will be treated confidentially and will not be shared with any authorized persons. Your identity will be protected at all times.

Instructions

- There is no right and wrong answers to questions contained in this interview.
- You are not required to provide your name.
- Please answer all questions to the best of your ability as honest as possible.

SECTION A: Biographical information

1. Age

2. How long have you been teaching learners with visual impairments in your school?

.....

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3. Were you trained to teach learners with visual impairments in regular schools?

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4. What do you find most interesting (satisfying) in teaching learners with visual impairments?

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SECTION B: Questions regarding the support that rendered to teachers teaching learners with visual impairment by education stakeholders in regular schools.

5. What support do you need as a teacher for learners with visual impairments?

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6. What support do you receive from the following education stakeholders?

6.1 Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

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6.2 Teacher counsellor

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6.3 Resource teacher

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6.4 parents

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7. Apart from getting support from the mentioned education stakeholders, where else do you receive support and what types of support do you receive from those stakeholders?

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8. Among the above mentioned education stakeholders, which ones fully participate in the inclusion of learners with visual impairments in your school?

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9. Would you say the participation of the other of the education stakeholders is poor?

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10. What are the reasons for poor participation of other education stakeholders in the inclusive schools?

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11. What are the impacts of the support that you get from education stakeholders on your teaching of learners with visual impairments?

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12. How can the participation of education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments in your school be improved?

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13. What do you think should be done to strengthen the support for teachers of learners with visual impairments in regular schools in order to ensure full inclusion of learners with visual impairments in your school?

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Thank you for your time!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

APPENDIX B: THE REQUEST FOR THE PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN OSHANA REGION

Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

Private Bag 5518

Oshakati

Dear Sir / Madam

RE: Requesting for permission to conduct an Educational Research in Oshana Region.

I am a student at University of Namibia pursuing a master degree in Inclusive Education. I do hereby kindly request permission from your office to conduct a study at Gabriel Taapopi Senior Secondary School in Oshana Region as partial fulfilment of the requirement of the Master's degree at University of Namibia.

The study title is: **An investigation of the support rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments by education stakeholders in an Inclusive Secondary School in the Oshana region in Namibia.** The study will aim to find out the types of support teachers need and receive from education stakeholders such as Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture , parents, teacher counsellor and resource teacher who specialized in visual impairments, to find out how support for teachers of learners with visual impairments in regular schools can be strengthened and to find out how the participation of education stakeholders in the teaching of learners with visual impairments in regular schools can be improved.

The findings of the study will help the education stakeholders to know the support that they should render to teachers of learners with visual impairments. It also provides insight understanding of inclusive education among education stakeholders. Besides that, this study helps the policy makers and the curriculum developer to highlight the expectation of all education stakeholders' inclusive education. The study will take place on the 2016. Care will be taken to avoid interruption of normal school program. Therefore, the interview will be conducted after school to avoid disruption of teaching process. The participation in the study will be entirely on a voluntary basis and all the data collected will be treated confidential.

Please find the copy of the research permission letter and ethical clearance Certificate from the University of Namibia.

Yours Faithfully

.....

Sarti Mpingana Shivute

APPENDIX C: TEACHERS' CONSENT FORM

I would like to invite you to participate in an educational research project which aims **to investigate the support rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments by education stakeholders in regular schools.**

Your participation in this research may entail voice recorder interview and the participation will be done on voluntary basis. To ensure confidentiality, a code number will be assigned to you and you have right to withdraw from participating any time you wish.

Please tick the appropriate choice beside each statement

1. I agree to participate in the research titled **“An investigation into the support rendered to teachers of learners with visual impairments by Education stakeholders” as outlined in the consent letter.**

YES

NO

2. I agree to have the interview voice recorder

YES

NO

Participants’

name.....

Participants’ signature..... Date.....

APPENDIX D: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: FOE/144/2016

Date: 5 December, 2016

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Title of Project: An Investigation into the Support Rendered to Teachers Teaching Learners With Visual Impairments By Education Stakeholders

Nature/Level of Project: Masters

Researcher: S. M. Shivute

Student Number: 200629077

Faculty: Faculty of Education

Supervisors: Dr. C. Haihambo (Main) Mr. E. Louis (Co)

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The UREC retains the right to:
 - (i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
 - (ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.

Prof. P. Odonkor: UREC Chairperson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Odonkor', written over a horizontal line.

Ms. P. Claassen: UREC Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Claassen', written over a horizontal line.

**APPENDIX E: APPROVAL LETTER FROM OSHANA DIRECTORATE
OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE**



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

ASPIRING TO EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION FOR ALL

Tel: 065 - 230057

Fax: 065 - 230035

*Private Bag 5518
Oshakati, Namibia*

Email: hilmashapaka@yahoo.com

Enquiries: Hilma Shapaka/Ester Sakaria

Ref: 15/2/18

Dear Ms. Shivute


Subject: Permission to conduct an Educational Research in Oshana Region


The Oshana Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture acknowledges receipt of your letter dated 26 January 2017 on the abovementioned subject.

We are pleased to inform you that permission has been granted for you to conduct an educational research at Gabriel Taapopi Secondary School. Please take note that teaching and learning activities should not be disrupted and that participation should be voluntary. We advise you to contact the school in advance to make all the necessary arrangements.

We wish you all the best of luck in your study.

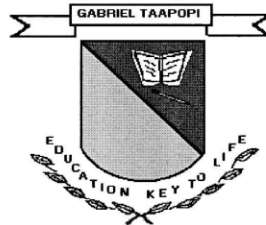
Yours sincerely,


Hileni W. Amukana
Director of Education, Arts and Culture



All official correspondence should be addressed to the Chief Regional Officer

APPENDIX F: APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE SCHOOL TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH



GABRIEL TAAPOPI SECONDARY SCHOOL

Tel No: (065) 230345(w)
Fax No: (065) 230394
Inquiries: Mr. S.N.N. Eelu

Private Bag 5532
OSHAKATI
10 February 2017

Ms Sarti Shivute
University of Namibia
Main Campus
Windhoek

Re: Permission to Conduct Research on "An investigation into the support rendered to teachers teaching learners with visual impairments by Education stakeholders"

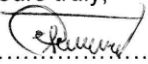
Dear Ms Shivute

I am glad to inform you that permission has been granted to conduct a research on **"An investigation into the support rendered to teachers teaching learners with visual impairments by Education stakeholders"** at our school.

We trust that your study will add to existing knowledge, which in return will facilitate the discovery of the most suitable method of teaching in an inclusive setting and consequently improves the quality education, thereof. We also look forward to your positive advocacy to the best inclusive education pedagogy and hope that the matter which is currently a challenge in many schools countrywide will be simplified through your research study.

We wish you success in your studies.

Yours truly,


Sakaria NN Eelu
Principal

