# Exploring Full-Service School teachers' self-efficacy within an inclusive education system

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### Introduction

- This study forms part of an international collaborative research project among South Africa, Finland, China, Slovenia, Lithuania and England.
- ► The main purpose of this comparative project was to produce a knowledge base that sheds light on the nature of the development of inclusive education in different countries from a teacher's perspective.
- During Phase 1 of the international study, data were collected by using The Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) scale (see Forlin et al., 2011:50).
- ► The data on the South African teachers' self-efficacy indicated that many teachers experience a lack of self-efficacy in the implementation of inclusive education (Savolainen *et al.*, 2012:65).
- ► The data from the first quantitative phase indicated that many South African teachers experience a lack of self-efficacy in the implementation of inclusive education.

## Purpose

- The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' sense of selfefficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system
- The <u>focus of this paper</u> will be on what influences full-service school teachers' sense of self-efficacy, either <u>enabling</u> or <u>disabling</u> them in terms of implementing inclusive education successfully

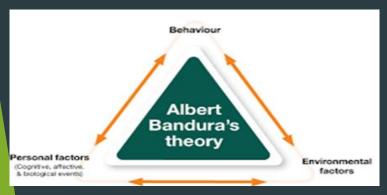
## Research questions

- What is <u>self-efficacy</u>?
- What knowledge, skills and values are regarded as essential for teachers' sense of self-efficacy in inclusive education?
- What are the factors that <u>enable</u> or <u>disable</u> teachers' sense of self-efficacy to implement inclusive education successfully?
- What are the <u>needs of teachers</u> to be self-effective in an inclusive education system?
- Which <u>recommendations</u> can be developed to enhance teachers' self-efficacy in an inclusive education system?

### Theoretical framework

## Bandura's social cognitive theory

- Self-efficacy is <u>best understood</u> in the context of <u>social cognitive theory</u> (Maddux, 2000:6; Pajares, 2004; Redmond, 2010; Locke & Latham, 2002).
- Theory expounds the understanding, nature and causes of human behaviour and motivation (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009:1059)



Relevance for this study for an in depth understanding of what self-efficacy is and how it can be applicable to teachers (Bandura, 1977; 1986; 1988;1999; 2005)

## Bronfenbrenner's Bio-ecological framework

- Multi-dimensional modal of human development
- Levels of interactive systems
- Resulting in physical, biological psychological, social and cultural change, growth and development
- Human behaviour, experiences and actions cannot be understood if the contexts in which they occur are not considered (McCormick, 2006; Noonan & McCormick, 2006; Filler & Xu, 2008),
- The teacher does not exist in isolation from surrounding systems (role players the Department of Basic Education, learners, parents, the school, as well as community members, determine successful teaching)
- Bronfenbrenner's (1986; 1979; 1977) bio-ecological model for human development is applicable as a theoretical framework for this study, since various factors in the different system levels will be taken into consideration when data are collected and analysed.

# Research design and methodology

A qualitative study within a constructivist research paradigm

#### Data collection methods:

- (1) Semi-structured individual and group interviews with teachers who took part in Phase 1
- (2) Collages
- (3) Field notes of a personal journal
- (4) Open questionnaires

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### Sample selection and context

- Participants were <u>purposively</u> selected
- Two full-service schools from the same sample that completed the questionnaire in phase 1 (Referred to as school A and B)
- Specific criteria for selection;
- Teachers who had <u>taken part in Phase 1</u> of the research project;
- Qualified teachers <u>currently working</u> in these full-service schools and teaching within an inclusive education system/ setting/environment; and
- Teachers who were willing and committed to participate in this study.
- A total of <u>21 teachers participated</u> in this research,
- School A = 11 participants
- School B = 10 participants

## Interview schedule (Focus group and individual interviews)

- How do you <u>feel about teaching</u> within an inclusive education system?
- ► Tell me what the <u>term teacher self-efficacy</u> means to you?
- ► Tell me about the <u>importance of self-efficacy</u> for teachers?
- What do you think <u>affects</u> teachers' selfefficacy?
- What do you think can <u>enhance</u> teacher's selfefficacy?

## Focus group interviews

- Semi-structured focus group interviews (2 from each school)
- 5 to 6 participants each focus group interview
  - School A (6 participants focus group1 and 5 focus group 2 = 11)
  - School B (5 participants focus group 1 and 5 focus group = 10)
  - A total of 21 teacher participants

### Individual interviews

- Semi-structured
- ► Face-to-face
- School A = 5 participants
- School B = 5 participants
  - Also completed the <u>collage</u> <u>activity</u>

## Collages

- During individual interviews :
- Participants got the opportunity to express their feelings about their self-efficacy in teaching within an inclusive education system.
- School A = 5 participants
- School B = 5 participants
- During the interviews about the collages I followed a certain process, since they had completed two collages.

## Collages process

- ▶ First round I asked them "how they experienced the exercise?",
- Secondly, "tell me about what every symbol or picture presented"? I for example pointed at something on the collage and asked: "Tell me about this here"?
- These first two rounds included the participant reflecting on one collage at a time, for example the first collage and then the second next, in the same individual interview.
- After they had reflected on each collage, in the third and last round, I placed the collages vertically next to one another in front of them, collage one on the one side and collage two on the other side.
- In order to gain more in-depth understanding of how teachers' selfefficacy can be enhanced, I asked them "How can we go from collage A to collage B, what must happen for a teacher to make that progress?"
- This clearly helped them to reflect and think about ideas to enhance teachers' self-efficacy, and therefore added to richer data in my research.

## Example of a collage completed by a participant

Collage A Illustration of current sense of self-efficacy



Collage B: Illustration of optimal sense of self-efficacy to be



## Open ended questionnaire

- Based on the <u>findings of the previously</u> mentioned <u>data collection methods</u>, suggested recommendations to enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy were compiled.
- A <u>qualitative open questionnaire</u> was then designed based on these recommendations.
- Participants were asked to evaluate if the recommendations reflected the findings as well as the usefulness and appropriateness
- School A = 5 participants
- School B = 5 Participants

## Data analysis

- Constant comparative analysis to identify patterns in the data which are arranged in relationship to one another.
- ▶ All statements <u>relevant to the topic</u> were identified
- Key words and <u>descriptive phrases</u> were used to make notes
- Codes were then put into <u>categories</u>
- Then organized <u>into themes</u> that could be compared between the different research questions.

#### Trustworthiness

Triangulation, including the comparison of the <u>different</u> <u>data sources</u> to verify themes across all sources.

## Findings

#### Categories and Themes







## 1. Defining teacher self-efficacy

- Teacher selfefficacy as a
- Low vs high teacher selfefficacy

concept

- > Traits
- > Skills

# 2. Ecosystemic factors currently enabling teachers' self-efficacy

- School environment
- Personal factors
- Reinforcing external influences

## 3. Ecosystemic factors currently disabling teachers' self-efficacy

- Lack of knowledge and skills
- Disabling factors as influenced by the Department of Basic Education
- Disabling factors within the school system
- Other discouraging external factors

## Ecosystemic factors currently enabling teachers' self-efficacy

#### Discussion

#### 1. School environment

- Learning through exposure
- Positive influences of others in the school
- Successful teaching strategies within the classroom.

#### 2. Personal factors such as

- Own personal effort
- Personal background experience
- Religious views
- Significant others
- Positive views on inclusive education
- 3. Reinforcing external factors
- Current rewarding opportunities
- Continuous professional development

#### Conclusions

- Training opportunities which include more exposure to learners with barriers will enhance teachers' sense of selfefficacy
- Increased support from others within the school environment
- Personal effort from the teacher self, increases motivation.
   Significant others motivate and inspire
- Continuous professional development opportunities for professional and personal development need to be addressed as enabling factors, in order to develop and enhance teachers' sense of self-efficacy, within an inclusive full-service school.

## Ecosystemic factors currently disabling teachers self-efficacy

#### Discussion

#### 1. Lack of knowledge and skills

- > Lack of confidence in teaching
- > The teacher as person as barrier
- > Physical and psychological problems

#### 2. Disabling factors as influenced by the Department of Basic Education

- Ineffective implementation of inclusive education
- Inadequate training
- Incompetent DBE leaders/managers
- ▶ Lack of support or acknowledgement from DBE
- Curriculum constraints
- 3. Disabling factors within the school system
- > School management
- Lack of support and resources
- Peer relations
- Parents
- Overcrowded classrooms
- 4. Other discouraging external factors
- Negative influences from media
- Disrespect and false perceptions by society

- Conclusions
  - Increased and improved training on inclusive education and how to support learners with barriers, will therefore make teachers feel more confident in their teaching.
  - Increased support from the DBE and school management, peer teachers and parents
  - Opportunities to collaborate with other peer colleagues
  - More positive comments from the media and appreciation from peer teachers, learners, parents, DBE and school management

## THANK YOU