



Charles University in Prague
Faculty of Education

***Teachers' Perceptions of Inclusion of Students with
Special Needs in Mainstream Primary Schools in
Fiji.***

Salesh Sachin Deo

Master's Dissertation

Department of Special Needs Education
Faculty of Educational

This dissertation is submitted in part fulfilment of the joint degree of
MA/Mgr. Special and Inclusive Education- Erasmus Mundus, University of
Roehampton, University of Oslo and Charles University

Dissertation Supervisor: Mrs. Marie Komorná

Autumn 2016

DECLARATION

I Salesh Sachin Deo, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work to my best of knowledge and does not encompass of any material written or published, anywhere, by another person except where those are clearly mentioned with acknowledgement and with proper reference. This work has not been either in entirety or partially submitted to any educational institution to obtain any sort of accreditation or qualification. The author also confirms that the reproduction or publication of this work by Charles University Prague will not invade, in anyway, the author's rights.

Date: 18th day of November, 2016

Signature 

Copyright © 2016 Charles University

All rights reserved

ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research was to explore teachers' perceptions of inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream primary schools in Fiji. Teachers' perceptions are crucial as it determines how students with special needs are perceived and where they are placed to be educated. It also reveals the underlying reasons which could be used in making valid and effective decision for the future of inclusive education.

In addressing the research phenomena this study subsumed to qualitative approach for data collection via semi-structured interviews. This study was conducted in four different mainstream primary schools in Nausori District Fiji, which were practicing inclusion to some extent. A total of eight teachers, two from each school were selected as the participants for this study. The head teachers of respective schools assisted in identifying potential teachers as participants for this research study, maintaining low biasness.

This study found that teachers are knowledgeable and have deeper understanding of inclusive education. All eight teachers were supporting inclusive education and were in favour of inclusion of students with special needs. However, majority of them had reservations due to limited resources and specialists teachers or other personnel's. The study found that teachers that were in favour elucidated the benefits of inclusive education as; better educational outcomes of all students, social development, better peer sharing and collaboration, allowed teachers to upgrade their qualification and increased collaboration amongst them, and it is seen as cost- effective.

In contrary, those teachers with reservations and ambivalent perceptions revealed; lack of specialised teachers' and other resources personnel, negative perceptions of the teachers including to extra workload and students low academic achievements, schools: 1) inaccessible; 2) result oriented: and 3) protecting their image to be the best school. Finally, the finding also revealed that teachers encounter students with diverse cultural backgrounds hence, different cultural beliefs becomes barrier to inclusion. Teachers are vital players in the implementation and practices of inclusiveness therefore their perceptions needs to be supportive. This brings the concerned authorities especially the Ministry of Education and other government departments to provide all relevant resources and training to ensure that they have positive perceptions for sustainable inclusive education.

Key Words: Inclusion, Inclusive Education, Students with Special Needs, Participants.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my hearty acknowledgement and appreciation to all those who have contributed and support me in completion of this dissertation. This journey has been very challenging and difficult but also enjoyable.

First, I would like to acknowledge God for giving me strength and wisdom and guiding me through this journey

Second, I would like to acknowledge my wife, Susan Shivani Prakash for being together in this journey in all three countries and my two sisters Savita Wati Kumar and Sharmila Devi for their inexorable support and encouragement. Your endless assistance has had a significant impact in my life.

The European Union for providing this scholarship and giving me opportunity to make my dream come true. Many thanks and appreciation to all my course coordinators, Dr. Leda Kamenapoulou from the University of Roehampton (England), Professor Jorun Buli-Hormberg from the University of Oslo (Norway) and Professor Jan Siska and Sarka kanova, from Charles University(Czech Republic). The two lecturers, one from Norway and the other from Czech Republic for teaching Norwegian and Czech languages respectively.

I also would like to extent hearty thanks to my supervisor Mrs. Marie Komorná from the Department of Special Education of Charles University for guiding and assisting me through the process of conducting this research

Not forgetting to my Erasmus Mundus Masters in Special and Inclusive Education 2015-2016 Cohort. All our great moments and good times we've shared together I will treasure it. All your insights, contribution, and friendship have made my journey a memorable one.

I also extend my acknowledgement to the Ministry of Education for granting me study leave as well as approval to conduct this research in Fijian schools. The four head teachers for allowing their staff to be the research participants from Nausori District. Also a hearty appreciation for all my research participants' for their precious time, support and co-operation.

Finally, I also would like to extend my acknowledgment to my families, friends and work colleagues. Thank you all for the great support.

ABBREVIATIONS

CRPD	Convention Rights for People with Disabilities
DI	Demographic Information
EARC	Education Assessment Resource Centre
EFA	Education for All
FNCDP	Fiji National Council for Disable Persons
FPC	Fiji Paralympic Committee
FSAD	Fiji Sports Association for Disable
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act
IE	Inclusive Education
IS	Inclusive Sports
PWD	People with Disabilities
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEP	Special Education Policy
SIE	Special and Inclusive Education
SSN	Students with Special Needs
UNESCO	United Nations Education for Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nation
UN	United Nation
WHO	World Health Organization

Table of Contents

DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABBREVIATIONS.....	v
1 Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Dissertation Outline	1
1.2 Introduction	1
1.3 Significance of the study	2
1.4 Background Information on Education of SSN in Fiji	2
1.5 My Interest in Doing This Research.....	4
1.6 Purpose of the Study and Description of the Authenticity and Participants	5
1.7 Statement of the Research Phenomena and Questions.....	6
2 Chapter 2: Literature Review	7
2.1 Chapter Outline.....	7
2.2 Introduction	7
2.3 Rationale for Inclusive Education.....	8
2.4 Definition of Inclusive Education	8
2.5 Inclusive Education as Human Rights.....	9
2.6 Objective of Inclusive Education	9
2.7 Opportunities of Inclusive Education	10
2.7.1 Teachers Perceptions	10
2.7.2 Educational Outcomes	10
2.7.3 Social development.....	11
2.7.4 Resources Utilized by Non-Disable Peers and Others.....	12
2.7.5 Professional Development	12
2.7.6 Collaboration; Teacher to Teacher.....	13
2.7.6.1 Collaboration; Teacher to Parents	13
2.7.7 Cost effective.....	14
2.8 Limitation of Inclusive Education	14
2.8.1 Funding.....	14
2.8.2 Schools	15
2.8.3 Specialized Personnel.....	15
2.8.4 Attitudes.....	15

2.8.5	Policies.....	16
2.8.6	Physical Limitation.....	16
2.8.7	Early Identification	17
2.8.8	Cultural Beliefs and Attitudes	17
2.9	Chapter Conclusion	18
3	Chapter 3: Research Methodology	19
3.1	Chapter Outline.....	19
3.2	Research Problem	19
3.3	Research Paradigm.....	19
3.3.1	Interpretive Paradigm	19
3.4	Research Approach	20
3.4.1	Qualitative Methodology	20
3.5	Limitations of Adapting this Approach.....	22
3.6	Sample.....	22
3.7	Research Instrument.....	23
3.7.1	Interviews.....	23
3.8	Research Process.....	24
3.8.1	Letter from Charles University (See Appendix 3).....	24
3.8.2	Approval from Ministry of Education Fiji (See Appendix 4).....	24
3.8.3	Letters to All Head Teachers (See Appendix 5).....	25
3.9	Ethical Consideration	25
3.9.1	Confidentiality and Potential Risk of Participants.....	25
3.9.2	Consent from Participants.....	26
3.10	Research Tools	26
3.11	Pilot Study	26
3.12	Data Collection	27
3.13	Data Analysis	28
3.14	Validity and Dependability.....	29
3.14.1	Validity.....	29
3.14.2	Credibility	29
3.15	Chapter Summary	29
4	Chapter 4.....	30
4.1	Chapter Outline.....	30
4.2	Importance of Demographic Information.....	30

4.3	Section 1: Results	32
4.3.1	Teachers Knowledge of Inclusion.....	32
4.3.2	Teachers Understanding of Inclusive Education	32
4.3.3	Methods of Including During Teaching	34
4.3.4	Reasons for Referring Back to Special Schools.....	35
4.3.5	Right Time for Inclusion and Whether Teachers are in Favour or Not	36
4.4	Advantages of Including SSN in Mainstream Schools	37
4.4.1	Educational Outcome.....	37
4.4.2	Peer Sharing and Collaboration.....	37
4.4.3	Social Development.....	38
4.4.4	Benefits to Teachers.....	39
4.4.4.1	Qualification (Knowledge and Skills).....	39
4.4.4.2	Collaboration amongst Teachers	39
4.4.5	Cost effective.....	40
4.5	Limitations of Being Inclusive.....	41
4.5.1	Lack of Qualification.....	41
4.5.2	Teachers Perceptions	41
4.5.2.1	Where SSN Should be Educated Based as their Rights to Education.....	41
4.5.2.2	Extra Work Load	42
4.5.2.3	Schools	43
4.5.2.4	Cultural Beliefs	43
4.6	Section 1 Summary.....	44
4.7	Section 2 Discussion	45
4.7.1	Discussion.....	45
4.7.2	Importance of Demographic Data.....	45
4.7.3	Teachers Knowledge and Understanding of IE	45
4.7.4	Methods of Including During Teaching	46
4.7.5	Potential Benefits of Inclusion	47
4.7.5.1	Educational Outcomes	47
4.7.5.2	Peer Sharing and Collaboration.....	48
4.7.5.3	Social Development.....	49
4.7.6	Benefits to Teachers.....	50
4.7.7	Cost-Effective	51
4.8	Limitations.....	53

4.8.1	Lack of Qualification	53
4.8.2	Teachers Perceptions	54
4.8.3	Schools	55
4.8.4	Cultural Beliefs	56
4.9	Chapter Conclusion	57
5	Chapter 5.....	58
5.1	Chapter Outline.....	58
5.2	Limitations.....	58
5.3	Strengths	59
5.4	Implications	59
5.5	Suggestions for Improvement.....	60
5.5.1	More Qualified Teachers.....	60
5.5.2	Changing Teachers Perceptions	61
5.5.3	Schools	61
5.6	Recommendations for Future Studies	62
5.7	Conclusion	62
6	Reference.....	64
7	Appendix	71
7.1	Appendix 1	71
7.2	Appendix 2	74
7.3	Appendix 3	76
7.4	Appendix 4	78
7.5	Appendix 5	79
7.6	Appendix 6	80
7.7	Appendix 7	81
	Figure 1 Map of Fiji.....	1
	Figure 2 Demographic Information	31

1 Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Dissertation Outline

This dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter provides a brief introduction of this research, significance of the study, background education and my personal interest. Chapter two illustrates on the literature of inclusive education, the significance of inclusiveness, teachers perception of inclusive education, the benefits of including SSN and challenges that are encountered of becoming inclusive. The third chapter provides on the methodology used in order to gather data of the intended research. It highlights on the research paradigm, approach and the design adopted by the researcher. Adding on, it also discuss on the data collection process, data analysis, authenticity, as well as the ethical issues. Chapter four focuses on the analysis of the data collected from this research from eight teachers from the four primary schools from Nausori District in Fiji. Secondly, with reference to the literature in chapter two it will provide discussion of the research findings. Conclusion, evaluation, limitations of the research will be presented in chapter five. Finally, chapter five sum up by sharing recommendations and significance of future research.

1.2 Introduction

This research study is on; Teachers' Perception of Inclusion of Students with Special Needs in Mainstream Primary Schools in Fiji. The research proposes to explore rural primary schools teacher's perception of including students with special needs (SSN) in general classroom. As the Fijian government is shifting towards inclusive society, especially starting from education department, it is important to understand the views of teachers who are at the front line and key players in implementing this philosophy. The research phenomenon will elaborate and reveal the insights information on how inclusion is perceived by teachers of rural primary schools teachers. In order to answer these phenomena, this study subsumed to qualitative methodology via semi-structured interviews of primary school teachers to hear their views and knowledge on the research phenomena. SSN in particular for this research are those with physical impairments, visual and hearing impairments, intellectual impairments, chronic health conditions, learning disabilities and emotional and behavioural disorder.

1.3 Significance of the study

The significance of this research is to explore teachers' perception of inclusion of SSN in mainstream primary rural schools in Nausori District, Fiji. The current situation and placement of SSN in the country is being compromised by the new concept of inclusion, creating misconception between the educators of primary schools and other concerned stakeholders. Hence, educating SSN in mainstream with non-disable peers is ambivalent and became highly debatable. Therefore, these children are either dropped out, referred to special schools from mainstream primary schools or are left behind at home; as family prioritise education for other siblings or due to other reasons. Conducting this research will bring up the issues that can be considered to be the possible underlying reasons from teachers perspective, as their decision contributes on the placement of these students and where they receive education. This study intend to discover teachers opinion and knowledge of Inclusive Education (IE), create awareness amongst the communities on the significance of being inclusive, allow Ministry of Education (MoE) to alter and make necessary amendment within their instructions and policies, encourage parents and provide guidance to send their children to nearby schools without hesitation and as their rights. Finally, it anticipates contributing towards the literature at the national and international level especially in peer reviewed journals.

1.4 Background Information on Education of SSN in Fiji

The enactment of IE in Fiji is not a new idea or phenomena. The inception of IE could be discovered around or in early 1960s, where SSN were educated together with their non-disable peers in the country by catholic schools (MoE, 2013). Notably, students with severe disabilities were left out due to unexplained reasons thus resulted in erection of few special schools in the capital city of Fiji. This influenced in the development of other special schools in late 1960s and by 1980s several other special schools were seen in major towns and cities. These special schools attracted and enrolled many SSN from nearby communities and villagers. The main reasons for their enrolment were; 1) transportation provided to and from students home, 2) accessibility to education, 3) various type of therapy especially for physically, visually, intellectually disabilities, and 4) other additional services. The schools were mainly located in the capital city including: school for students with visually impaired (Fiji school for the Blind), hearing impaired (Gospel school for the Deaf), intellectually impaired (Suva Special), physically impaired (Hilton Special), a vocational centre for students over 18 and adults, Early Intervention

for children for under 8 years. While other towns and city had one or two special schools consisting students with all types of disabilities. Therefore, this benefited SSN and their families or caregivers and masked the concept of inclusion.

On the other hand, this disadvantaged those SSN who were very far away from urban centres. Considering the geographic structure of Fiji, it comprises of more than 300 islands making accessibility difficult and unbeatable for many SSN from outer islands, rural, and remote rural areas. Some of the possible reasons for these limitations could be; 1) different cultural background; 2) poor economic status; 3) Distance; travelling from rural, remote rural and maritime becomes difficult due to high fare, long distance of traveling and costs doubles as someone has to accompany the child; 4) in accessible public transportation and those from outer islands their situation becomes extreme worse as they depend on small boats or punts as their means of travelling which are limited, expensive, inaccessible and unsafe.

Then in 2010, major reforms was initiated by the new government and one of their priorities, was the reintroduction of IE. With the financial support from international donor agency IE was piloted in the country. According, to their requirements and conditions, five primary schools were selected around the country to pilot IE. At the same time, MoE requested other primary schools to implement and practice IE accordingly. While this was in progress MoE reviewed Special Education Policy (SEP) and later including in the new 2013 Fijian Constitution disability rights. The new set of principles in the SEP provides essential features and pivotal factors in grounding inclusive practices. These principles are; 1) experience sense of belonging and should be accommodated in mainstream class regardless of their severity of disabilities; 2) they can learn when supported and provided with appropriate learning needs, environment, tools, motivation and parental support; and 3) have the right to fully participate in every school activities to maximise quality learning so that their potential and achievement be recognised in reach (MoE, 2013). Moreover, the Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons (FNCDP), (2008) is an umbrella body and an extended arm of Ministry of Social Welfare responsible for providing support and services concerning SSN. According to FNCDP's national policy, one of their objective is 'Effective Education Service and Programmes' which elaborates to strengthen, implement and review special and inclusive education (SIE) for all children in schools, homes and communities in line with the national constitution. Evidently, rapid increase in the number of SSN in primary schools was recorded after the first few months

of the initiation of IE. This was the influence of IE and also many head teacher anticipated that they would receive same type of assistance and support as it was for the piloted schools. This ideology brought positive atmosphere and began to fulfil the objectives of inclusion in line with 2004 IDEA objectives and instructions. IDEA (2004), states that all schools have responsibilities and obligations to provide education to all SSN in mainstream regular schools.

The map shown in figure 1 illustrates the special schools in major towns and cities, and also the inclusive schools, with an overview of the country geographic structure for a better understanding.

1.5 My Interest in Doing This Research

I started my teaching profession since 2000 and ever since I have been engaged in teaching SSN in Fiji. In 2002, I graduated with certificate in special education from teachers college notably during this period special education was at its peak. I also became one of the sport representatives in the Fiji Sports Association for Disables (FSAD) which advocated of sports for SSN at district and national level. Then in 2006 Australian Sports Commission came in and introduced us with Inclusive Sports (IS). We organised several workshops and events on IS to raise awareness together with various sports activities including SSN in their communities and other mainstream schools within each districts. We faced many challenges on answering questions on how and why, and will this is possible. The introduction IE became a hot agenda and many special educators thought that special school will close thus many critiques emerged. Thus in late 2010, University of the South Pacific (USP), (as one of the largest tertiary institute) offered Bachelor's degree in Special and Inclusive Education, so I capitalised on this opportunity and graduated in 2012 with this degree. I also became secretary of Fiji Paralympic Committee (FPC), a sporting body for people with physical disabilities. In 2012 London Para-Olympic one of our Para-athlete won and became first ever gold medallist enlightened the nation, and became famous as well as an eye opener for many. Hence, the philosophy of inclusion could not be overstated during then. In 2013, I was promoted as the Head teacher of a special school and during this period I encountered many challenges and questions by other heads teachers, parents, community members and

Map of Fiji

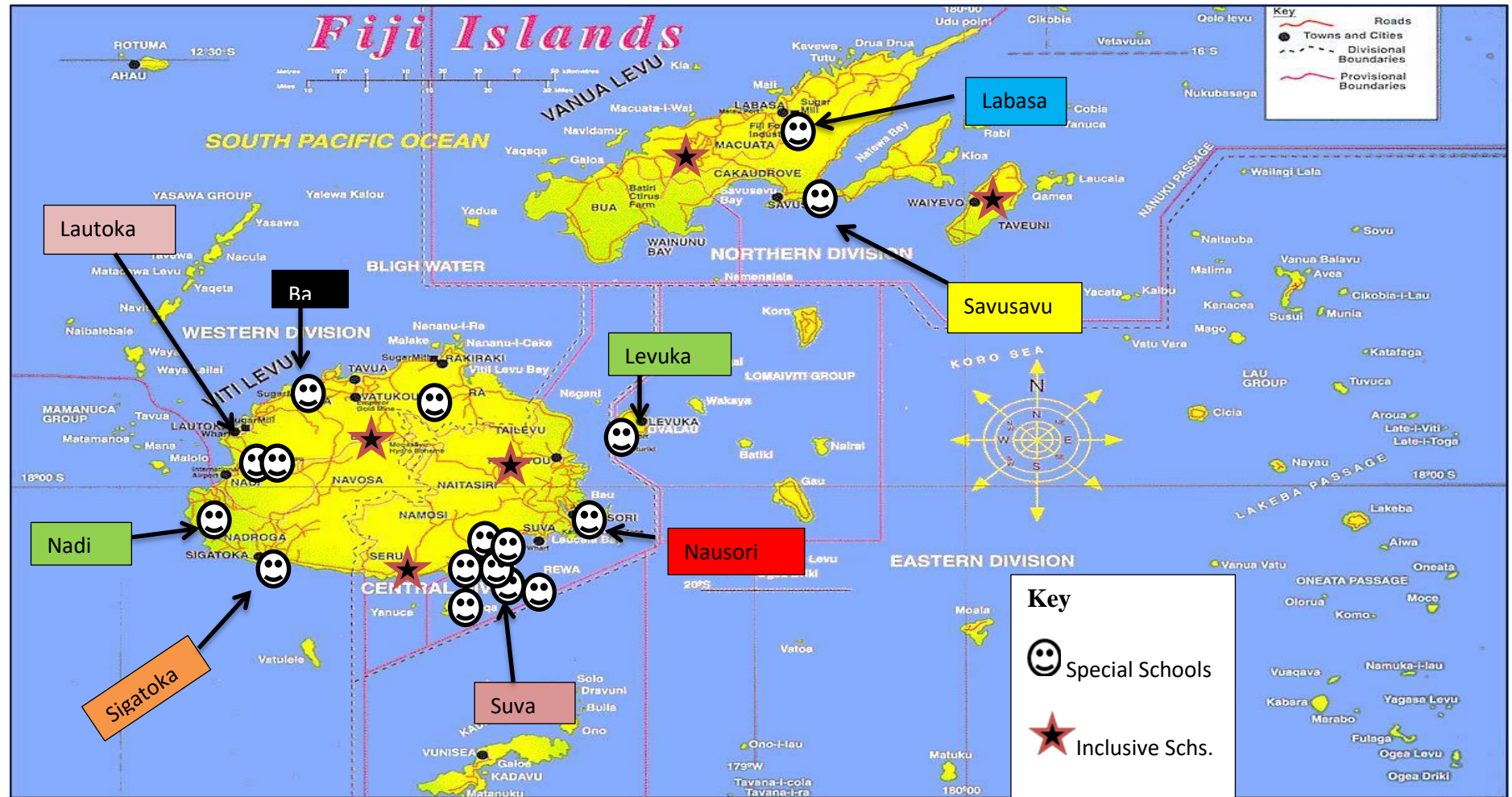


Figure 1 Map of Fiji

primary school teachers to share on inclusive education. Having limited knowledge and a leader it was very challenging in this competitive field. Meanwhile, within 2 years of its introduction the concept of inclusion started to deteriorate. Many SSN were referred back to the special schools where I was the head teacher. Questioning respective schools heads to explain the reasons for their referrals based on the new government's policy of IE. Apparently, no valid answer was provided but majority stated lack of finance as they response. Followed by other reasons such as; low academic achievements, students were disruptive, behavioural issues, children require special education and lowed teachers overall performance. This developed into a sensitive issue and argument creating confusion amongst parents of where their children will be educate; special or mainstream schools. Moreover, other limitations and problems began to emerge which obviously made inclusion seems very difficult concept. This encouraged me to further upgrade my qualification and find the possible solution of the underlying reasons. Therefore, I decided to explore and investigate primary schools teachers' perception from rural schools in the same district where I have been the head teacher.

1.6 Purpose of the Study and Description of the Authenticity and Participants

The United Nations Education for Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 1994) advises all governments to become inclusive with policies in place to govern the inclusion of SSN regular classrooms. Inclusion is becoming a global agenda highlighting on its significances and according to UNESCO (1994), it is a crucial aspect to human nobility, to the enjoyment and practice of their rights. Inclusion is generally perceived as providing and educating all students in regular classrooms regardless of their needs and abilities (Buli-Holmberg & Jeyaprabhan, 2016). Adding on, the Salamanca Statement calls for and encourages all countries to be 'inclusive'. It provides opportunities to schools in improving their effectiveness, decreasing expenses for the whole education department and notably, it is seen and identified globally as one of the possibly remedy to marginalisation and exclusion of SSN

Hence this research was conducted in four mainstream primary schools in Nausori District in Fiji. These four schools were selected from this district based on my personal experience where SSN were referred to my special schools. These respective schools have been practicing inclusion to some extent. Head teachers from these schools were

approached after MoE's approval and the potential participants were selected by the respective head teachers as the potential participants for my interviews.

1.7 Statement of the Research Phenomena and Questions

This research proposes to examine teachers' perception of inclusion of SSN in rural mainstream primary schools in Nausori, Fiji. The ideology of inclusion is brilliant, as well as sensitive which require crystal effective direction on its implementation process. Therefore, this study will anchor on the following with three guiding questions:

What are the teachers' perceptions on inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream primary schools in Fiji?

- 1) What is general teachers' knowledge of inclusion?
- 2) What are teachers' perceptions on the advantages of including students with special needs?
- 3) What challenges do teachers encounter in facilitating students in mainstream primary schools?

2 Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Outline

This chapter provides discussion of the relevant literature of inclusion of SSN in mainstream primary schools that has been researched earlier. It begins with a brief introduction, which highlights on the historical perspective of IE and its influence internationally. It is then divided into three main sections. The first part provides the rationale of IE, defines inclusive education, then it demystifies on the importance based upon the Human Rights and its impact on international laws or legislation/policies and the objectives of IE. The second section shares on the benefits of including SSN in the mainstream primary schools based on earlier studies and findings. The last section elucidates on the limitations encountered in order to include children with disabilities in regular classrooms with their non-disable peers.

2.2 Introduction

The active application of inclusive educational initiatives and practices has been reinforced by many governments polices around the globe. This has being framed within the concept of broader global discussion around the UN's agenda of 'Education for All', emerged from 1990 Jomtein Declaration. Apparently, Salamanca Statement and the Framework for Action is arguably the most significant document that has ever emerged in special education which demystifies the importance of human nobility, enjoyment and practicing of their rights (UNESCO 1994). Education for All (EFA) states that, every individual (whether child or adult) should receive basic quality education based both on human rights perspective and general belief, that education is core to an individual's well-being as well as in the development of every nation. However, with reference to the EFA's annual report, they failed to consider some marginalised group of children especially those having special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities (Miles & Singal, 2009). So then the focus was placed towards IE, as it demystify as one of the crucial strategy for grounding and promoting right to education including these marginalised groups (UNICEF, 2012). Secondly, EFA offers objectives for universal entitlement where inclusion are invaluable, ensures schools develop respect and value of diversity, focus to promote democratic principles and set of values and beliefs on the foundation of equality and social justice (UNICEF, 2012). While engaging in this process it brings education concept more closer, with a wider understanding about right to education. Adding on, the

Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action argues that schools with inclusive orientations are seen as ‘most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all’ (UNESCO, 1994: ix)

2.3 Rationale for Inclusive Education

Being inclusive allows every individual to meaningfully engage in the economic, social, political and cultural life of communities (UNESCO, 2005). However, this is considered as one of the greatest challenges thus such societies are neither efficient nor desirable (UNESCO, 2005). Therefore, the significance is not only for SSN, People with Disabilities (PWD) or other marginalised groups but to the societies they live in, ‘as it helps to combat discriminations and to promote diversity and participation’ which values the contribution and potential of SSN, and equips them with essential life, language and social skills (UN, 2016).

2.4 Definition of Inclusive Education

According to, UNSECO (2005) IE as a process of overcoming and answering to the diverse needs of all children by providing least restrictive situations which increases active involvement in learning, cultural activities and community functions thus, reducing exclusion from education. It also requires adaptations made in the content, approaches, structures and strategies with similar objectives that includes every child of appropriate age range and a conviction which ensures that the state is responsible and will provide education to all children (UNESCO, 2005).

Further, the Salamanca Statement calls upon all government and urge them to be ‘inclusive’ through; development of highest policy and budgetary priority, adapting as a law or policy the principle IE, develop pilot projects with exchanges with nations already experience IE, etc. (UNESCO, 1994). Adapting to this method is regarded as the most economical way of upgrading and increasing efficiency in the development of a nation’s entire education system and possible solution to marginalisation and exclusion of pupil with SEN. Furthermore, Miles and Signal (2009) highlights that Salamanca Statement has been very influential in motivating and changing attitudes within special needs and inclusion. This reformed many international legislations and laws and same to every country’s laws and policies who became inclusive. The Statement also proclaims that in doing so, it provides opportunity to every individual to exercise their right to education, allows all education system to develop and design educational programme to address the

wide range of diversity, and it provides effective education to majority of students which increases the competence and eventually the cost-effectiveness of the whole education system (UNSECO, 1994).

2.5 Inclusive Education as Human Rights

The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 2004 amendments provides precise instructions that education providers have a responsibility and duty to educate SSN in the mainstream classrooms. This includes that all children from 3 to 21 years of age become entitled to free education, support services, and relevant public education regardless of their different abilities or severity of disabilities (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2010). The Convention Rights for People with Disabilities (CRPD) which became effective in 2008 incorporated these instructions into international laws, enforcing clear obligations on states and other stakeholders to introduce IE (UNICEF, 2005). Furthermore, CRPD elucidate on the right not to be discriminated against according to Article 2 and Article 23. Children with disabilities have the right to effectively ‘access to and receive education, training, health care services [...] employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child’s achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development [...] spiritual development’ (Article 23). Similarly, the United Nation Universal Declaration of Human Right (UN) elucidates that,

Everyone has the right to education [...] Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(UN, 1948: 6)

Therefore, inclusion has become major aspect of several international organisations including United Nations (2006), UNESCO (1994), WHO (2011) and the European Commission (2010).

2.6 Objective of Inclusive Education

One of the core objectives of IE is to achieve great quality education for all novices, together with those with special and diverse needs, and for the advancement of inclusive,

peaceful and fair societies as stated by, UN human rights in authoritative of new guidelines on the CRPD (UN, 2016). According to, the CRPD chairperson she said ‘the right to inclusive education means transforming culture, policy and practice in all formal and informal educational environments to ensure education is for all learners’(UN, 2016). Hence, the 166 countries that have ratified it the Convention under their obligation under Article 24 are mandated to provide IE system at all levels and life- long learning (UN, 2016).

2.7 Opportunities of Inclusive Education

2.7.1 Teachers Perceptions

Inclusions mandates that SSN should not only being physically placed in the general classrooms schools but changes to the values, attitudes, policies and practices to be made to ensure that SSN fully and actively participate in the class (Monsen et. al, 2014).

According to, Sucuoğlu et al., (2013) demands on high standards in quality and diverse teaching have significantly increased the responsibilities of all educators such as; paper bureaucracy; adapting various enriched teaching methods, active and positive interaction with all students. Thus, teachers developed ambivalent perception towards IE whereby some having very positive attitudes, some having negative perspectives and views (Monsen et al., 2014), and while a few are unsure, of teaching SSN in regular class (Sucuoğlu et al., 2013).

Therefore, those teachers who support IE have positive perceptions and tend to share great achievements. Teachers who embraced the personal responsibility and are receptive of the concept of IE are most likely to accommodate and facilitate classroom learning environment via various rigorous strategies including quality and effective instruction, effective monitoring procedures of pupils progress and valuing the notion collaboration amongst key stakeholders inclusive of SSN (Ryan, 2009, cited in Monsen et al., 2104: 115).

2.7.2 Educational Outcomes

The research suggests that IE have positive implication on the academic achievement of SSN. Hence, teaching SSN with their non-disable peers together in the mainstream classrooms has produced better academic outcomes (Ruijs & Peetsma 2009). Apparently, research also shows that this positive effect occurs at different level/grades, in different subjects and within gender; whereby girls are have more impact than boys (Ruijs &

Peetsma 2009) This occurs at two levels, when the support received by support staff during lesson or class time and also by peers during class through collaborative work (Buli- Holmberg & Jeyaprabhan, 2016) and during leisure times. This enables children to attain higher level of academic achievements and development through group and cooperating learning thus, the more they are engaged increases the chance of progressing in the process of learning. Moreover, students who are effectively and actively involved in the planning and evaluating of their own learning experiences have greater possibilities to improve academic achievements (Buli- Holmberg & Jeyaprabhan, 2016). Adding on, Westwood (2013) states the importance of using various methods of assessment to provide equal, fair and accessible to all students giving opportunities for better achievements. In US and Australia, it's mandatory that during any form of test and examination SSN be afforded all accommodations together within any specific modification as stated in their IEP's (Westwood, 2013). He also mentioned that this enables SSN to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competence.

2.7.3 Social development

According to, Ruijs and Peetsma (2009) children with disabilities have better opportunities to social development and acceptance when being placed in the mainstream classroom. The development occurs through high number of friends resulting in quality and strong relationship amongst other peers, good self-concept, overcoming loneliness and depression and social skills (Ruijs & Peetsma 2009). Moreover, Fakolade et al., (2009) highlighted one of the obvious benefits of inclusive education is SSN are able to develop social skills in an environment that approximates to normal growth and development. This enables them to develop language skills more effectively and appropriately as they associate with their peers who speak normal and appropriately, during their formative years. Schools are seen as a mini society where students learn to live in together and IE supports SSN to stay in a more society based life at their school age (Buli-Holmberg & Jeyaprabhan, 2016). In the inclusive environment, focus are towards social inclusion in schools and classrooms rather than academic achievements, and cultural inclusion allow them to receive more exposure when being excluded thus creating opportunities that will mould them for the future life. Buli-Holmberg & Jeyaprabhan (2016: 3) states that this enables them to 'learn to live together rather than live together to learn' and employs Vygotsky's (1978) theory of interaction between the student and the environment. The importance is placed on the development which

depends on the interaction within individual surrounding such as home and the learning in school. He explains this as the distance between the actual learning and potential level that an individual achieves under a support of an adult guidance or in collaboration with more competent peers during the interaction is known as the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, while being educated and placed with their non-disabled peers in the same classroom provides better opportunities for them to; know why they have a particular disability; develop a sense of knowledge and understanding of their disabled friends and their needs; develop appropriate perception towards them from early stages and gain diverse characteristics, talents and temperaments (Fakolade et al., 2009).

2.7.4 Resources Utilized by Non-Disable Peers and Others

The opportunities gained from IE are also benefited by the children without disabilities. Cole et al., (2004) states that with the extra support present in inclusive environment including adaptive curriculum, resources both human and finance together with other extend aids are accessed by non-disabled peers. Furthermore, the modification of physical accessibility also enables other to benefit from it (Fakolade et al., 2009). For example, having a ramp will allow an individual with obesity to walk up and down with ease and carrying heavy stuff using trolleys.

2.7.5 Professional Development

Inclusive education drives teachers and teacher assistants in developing and upgrading their competency and confidence enabling them to have deeper knowledge and understanding of delivering quality education in a diverse classroom and becoming great teachers (Kluth, 2005). In addition, Kafolade et al., (2009) says, while IE is focused on child centred learning it requires teachers to be multi-skilled to facilitate students academically, socially and culturally. Hence, this encourages educators to professionally develop themselves in order to be able to facilitate teaching in a diverse classroom. The multi-skill refers to teachers being competent with acquired skills of ‘curriculum based assessment, teaming teaching, mastery learning, assessing learning style, cooperative learning strategies, facilitating peer tutoring and social skill training’ (Kafolade et al., 2009: 158)

2.7.6 Collaboration; Teacher to Teacher

Collaboration amongst teachers is one of the pivotal strategy that have being successful in many classrooms and is known to be ideal model in inclusive setting as it capitalizes best on the talents and potentials of the teachers engaged (Buli- Holmberg & Jeyaprathaban, 2016). Adding on, inclusive environment is based on a multidimensional model which warrants collaboration amongst stakeholders, resulting in shared work load, quality teaching, easier to handle activities, and enabling them to positively facilitate changes and adaptations (Buli- Holmberg & Jeyaprathaban, 2016 and MacArthur et al., 2005). Fakolade et al., (2009) suggest that when they plan activities and lesson instructions collectively it has the greater chances of capitalising on each individual's interest, needs and aptitudes. In addition, the success of inclusivity depends on collaboration between general classroom and special education teachers, which enhances their understanding resulting in well prepared services and support for SSN and better understanding perceived of each other (Buell et al., 1999).

2.7.6.1 Collaboration; Teacher to Parents

Parents are also valued as key players in their child's development, and in education. Their involvement is seen as vital by intervention specialist and early year's practitioners (Brink, 2002; McCollum, 2002; Whiteley et al., 2005). The richness of information shared by, parents to teachers and other specialised professional cannot be overstated. According to Mengoni and Oates (2014), information gathered from parents helps to validate the type of skills children demonstrate while away from school and in early years provides unique perception in identification and assessment process. This gives opportunity to obtain raw data from various sources and advice on assessment principles. Clinicians strongly advocate on this approach as it provides comprehensive report on identification and assessment of SSN (Bellman et al., 2013; Bolton, 2001, cited in Mengoni & Oates, 2014: 341). In support Mengoni and Oates (2014), highlights that assessment should be viewed as a dynamic process, giving a holistic perception of child's development rather than relying solely on a single point in time that may produce unreliable information on their abilities. Dynamic assessment is based on Vygotsky's view of learning, which highlights that one should not just measure what student can do now but focus or predict their potential for change (Gunning, 2010). This allows exploring what an individual doesn't know but you identify his/her level of knowledge, the amount of instruction required to teach the element and in few instance, the ways

these individual learns best (Gunning, 2010). Moreover, he states that this method provides answers for all important question such as; How does student learn? And what must be done for the individual to learn?, which are linked to assessments.

2.7.7 Cost effective

According to the latest World Bank Study and an increasing number of international studies, IE is not only cost-efficient but cost effective (UNESCO, 2005). Notably, this study also identifies increase in the achievements and performance of all learners, motivating many nations to understand and realize the concept of multiple systems of management, organisation structures, other services and the financially unrealistic option of special education (UNESCO, 2005). Furthermore, with the joint programme by WHO, UNICEF and World Bank on school health, reclaims to yield results as this increases the attendance of most disadvantaged students-girls, the rural poor, and SSN are having access to education for the first time. Therefore the importance of implementing effective school health, hygiene, and nutrition programmes allowing improvement on the health of these students resulting in better attendance and achievements (UNESCO, 2005). Several cost-effective approaches have been developed by countries with scare resources including; 1) training of trainer models for professional developments; 2) linking university in pre-service to schools for internship or practical; 3) converting of special schools into resources centre's to provide expertise and support to clusters of general schools (UNESCO, 2005).

2.8 Limitation of Inclusive Education

However, inclusion comes with a lot more argumentative aspects due to its multiple meaning, viewed differently by every nation and even stakeholders within a particular country. This brings more barriers than opportunities.

2.8.1 Funding

One of the most pervasive themes that come up when the topic of inclusion is raised in regards to meeting the basic resources. The inadequacy of funding leads to major constraints in availability of limited resources such as shortages of schools facilities, teachers and/or lack of specialised personnel, limited learning teaching aids and other support (Dakar Framework for Action, 2000). This crisis is far more argued in developing countries, but according to Lauchlan and Greig (2015) it is also a major challenge experienced by developed nations and a very great example which is highlighted by

Italian teachers, a nation who are one of the pioneers of inclusive education for more than four decades. Furthermore, the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) mentioned that in order to be inclusive and achieving goal for education for all, an estimated of US\$ eight billion of additional financial assistances are required per year by the countries and other donors.

2.8.2 Schools

The concept of IE is very much depended on the individual schools and their employees and despite the laws and policies of inclusion; they both have reservation on whether or not to accept the idea of IE (Hodkinson, 2010). Thus, the most common reasons explained by these schools are; not ready to facilitate as a result of inadequate human expertise, lack of knowledge on IE, will, vision and morality. Most responsibilities for decisions making are handled at the highest level hence allow management to execution on employees' shoulders at the same time imposing harsh obligation with complying with the rules rather than assuring for quality educational and other service delivery (UNESCO, 2005).

2.8.3 Specialized Personnel

There are concerns that in trying to facilitate learning needs for SSN and meeting their demands by general classroom teachers in mainstream class are very challenging for them. This on other hand implies that lack of specialised training remains debateable. According to Corbett (2001) it is woefully inadequate. Buell et al. (1999), states that these limited resource personnel's results in not only providing quality inclusive education and services to SSN but to their families thus, remains primary limitations while considering serving them in least restrictive and more inclusive environment.

2.8.4 Attitudes

One of the greatest challenges which are argued by many towards inclusion is the pessimistic understanding of educators and societies. Spedding (2005) says these dismissive views shape teachers action and teaching towards SSN including their severity of disabilities, resulting in either students are being neglected, ignored or exclude. According to Tiwari et al., (2015) teachers says inclusion of SSN in bigger class size not only creates over-crowding but also produces basic or low academic results hence, precipitate teachers protecting their images of being underperforming thus, limits them teaching these students (Sobol, 2001). Moreover, many SSN encounter disapproving comments or statements from their teachers. Mayor (2001) states that this occurs at the

ratio of 15:1 and in support Acker and Talbott (1999) highlighted those teachers are seven times more likely to behave and interact negatively with those children identified with disabilities. Secondly, society's negative perceptions cause barriers to inclusiveness which can form differences, as a consequence creating critical limitations to learning and not particularly the medical impairments (UNESCO, 2005). These negative opinions can develop in form of social discriminations, limited awareness and traditional prejudices towards SSN. In support, Walker (2013) highlights that negative attitudes by society towards SSN's abilities and potential can profoundly develop opportunities of not going to schools.

2.8.5 Policies

According to Lauchlan and Greig (2005) instructions which are embedded in legislation and policy documents are not precise thus shapes the negative attitudes and practices prevailing goals, values and understanding provide impetus for a significant shift towards inclusion. Another reason could be the policy makes are not in favour of IE and can be noted as barriers towards implementation of these policies (UNESCO, 2016). Adding on, Walker (2013) in his report for Global Campaign for Education (GCE) states that in many countries there is always lack of national legislation, policy, objectives and plan for PWD, and information on how to transform international standards of inclusion into practice such as Article 24 of CRPD. It is also significantly notable that some nations with references to student with severe impairments may still have policies that are not in favour and managed possibly by authorities that declare that SSN are 'uneducatable'. According to UNESCO (2016) some countries still educate SSN especially with severe disabilities that are facilitated by others than MoE and possibly could be one the of reasons of exclusion of them from mainstream classroom hence, are deprived to equal opportunities and right to education. According to Liasidou (2014) social justice is seen as a highly opposed and vague word, such that it could be hardly understood from a meritocratic and generous perception hence certain group of individual are excluded.

2.8.6 Physical Limitation

In many circumstances SSN are to face with challenges attributed by the physical environment which limits their mobility and become contributing factors that cause hindrance for active participation and being included. These environmental limitations includes: building structure without appropriate doors, passage ways, ramps lifts, curbs, reaction areas, and roads (UNESCO, 2016). Subsequently, the geographical location of

the schools and other services are another variable which decreases the opportunities to overcome daily obstacles. This places extra burdens on parents of traveling for longer distance and carrying their children to respective centres such as high transport cost, not accessible public transports and making choice whether priorities education or employment (Katz et al., 2007). The physical inaccessibility also contributes indirectly towards lack of parental involvement both in child education and opportunities available hence, restricting them become the right recipients support and service (Katz et al., 2007)

2.8.7 Early Identification

Early identification of disabilities in Kenya is a big challenge. This is as a result of a few personnel and technological challenges (Njoka, et al., 2012). Currently, there exists an Education Assessment Resource Centre (EARC) initiative which was a good step towards providing proper assessment and placement opportunities for children with disabilities however, owing to lack of financial allocations EARC officers face work challenges (Williams, 2014). This coupled with lack of adequate skills among the EARC officers makes early identification of disabilities difficulty (Williams, 2014). Although, there exists a district assessment team composed of teachers, health and social workers in legal drafts it is not yet legally formalised and only exists in paper. This attributed to few numbers of qualified staff in the field of disability and the differences that exist within the professions (Njoka, et al., 2012).

2.8.8 Cultural Beliefs and Attitudes

The greatest obstacles to inclusive education are caused by society in the form of cultural prejudices leading to negative attitudes and discrimination thus affecting learning (Mwangi & Orodho, 2014). Negative attitudes attribute to social discrimination, traditional prejudices, lacking awareness. Some regions still uphold traditional belief that educating a disabled person is of no importance. This is caused by the individual physical appearance rather than shortcomings in the education system (UNICEF, 2000). Additionally, in many Kenyan communities children born with disabilities are associated with bad luck, punishment from gods and thus 'normal' persons would prefer staying away from them for fear of being harmed. These beliefs even run deep down to some teachers who have had no experience handling children with disabilities.

2.9 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter provided the review of the literature on the background and developments of inclusive education. It provided the rationale, definition and objectives of inclusive education. The emerging developments and its implication of international laws and policies were also discussed.

The chapter also focused on the advantages and limitations of IE. Addressing on the significance of IE, the literature provided vital features on the benefits including better educational outcome, social development, resources utilized by others, professional developments, teacher to teacher collaboration, teacher parent collaboration and cost-effective. It also focused on the challenges faced to become inclusive.

The following chapter presents the methodology and process involved in order to collect data of this research on teachers' perception of inclusion of SSN in mainstream primary schools in Fiji.

3 Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Chapter Outline

This section of the paper presents the methodology that was used by the researcher in order to collect the data for this study. In conducting this study, the inquirer elaborates on the research approach, paradigm, and design that were used for this research. It also presents the process involved including; sampling, research instrument, data collection and analysis, and ethical consideration as the framework the researcher has used.

The main focus of this study was to investigate teachers' perception of inclusion of SSN in mainstream primary schools in Fiji. Hence, eight teachers from the four different primary schools were interviewed to explore their knowledge and understanding of inclusion of SSN in their schools and classrooms.

3.2 Research Problem

This research proposes to examine teachers' perception of inclusion of students with special needs (SSN) in mainstream primary schools in Fiji. The ideology of inclusion is brilliant, but it is also very sensitive component which includes clear and effective direction in its implementation process. Therefore, this study will anchor on the following with three guiding questions:

What are the teachers' perceptions on inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream primary schools in Fiji?

- 1) What is general teachers' knowledge of inclusion?
- 2) What are teachers' perceptions on the advantages of including students with special needs?
- 3) What challenges do teachers encounter in facilitating students in mainstream primary schools?

3.3 Research Paradigm

3.3.1 Interpretive Paradigm

This research was conducted within the frame of interpretive paradigm. Adapting to this paradigm sees that the human behaviour needs to be defined and elucidated by individual in the manner it is observed by them (Basil, 2010). According to, Burton, Brundrell and Jones (2008) the inquirer purposes is to discover view and common meaning to grow

enhanced understanding of the phenomena taking place in the social world through collection of predominately qualitative data.

If one subsumed to this paradigm, the aim is on the smaller figures and comprehensive analyses of human behaviour and opinions, recognizing variances as well as likenesses and also understand the subjective world of human experience (Basit, 2010 and Cohen et.al 2011). The interpretive paradigm interprets the social truthiness in the manner it is perceived by the research informants, ‘a phenomenon termed by Habermas (1984: 109) as double hermeneutic indicating the interpretation of an already interpreted world’ (Basit, 2010: 15). Further, it provides to maintain the truthfulness of the problem being discovered whereby hard work are made to get inside the individual and to comprehend from within (Cohen et. al, 2011)

The interpretive paradigms is opted to be the relevant and best for this research as it tries to examine and explore teachers opinion, understanding and knowledge of inclusion of SSN in mainstream primary schools. With this the researcher begins with the person and set out to understand their interpretation of the world around them and the findings becomes more valuable when it is interpreted (Cohen et. al, 2011). Therefore, with reference to the interpretive paradigm the enquirer subsumed to qualitative methodology for collecting data for this study.

3.4 Research Approach

3.4.1 Qualitative Methodology

The proposed study, inclusion of SSN in rural mainstream schools: Teachers perception will be examined by the researcher adopting qualitative methodology to answer the research phenomena. Qualitative approach allows the researcher to actively participate with the respondents in their natural environment to gain better understanding, in-depth knowledge, and the truth within each individual in regards to the study phenomena. According to Creswell (1994), due to limited information available on the topic the study phenomena and the variables are largely unknown it needs to be explored and to allow the enquirer to focus on the authenticity which may shape the understanding of the research question. This will allow the inquirer to clearly understand and elaborate the social world from participants’ views, as they are actively engaged in the social process (Burrell & Morgan 1979; Punch & Oancea 2014). Developing understanding the

investigator tries to capture information on insight of human-beings through the course of deep attentiveness, their inner minds, and feelings and how they visualize and express their outward actions and achievements of about the topic under discussion (Punch & Oancea 2014). Adapting this paradigm 'human behaviour demands to be narrated and illustrated in manner that is 'seen by them' (Basit 2010: 14). As this entails investigation in natural setting to collect data from respondents, Gall et.al (2007), suggests that qualitative approach is considered to be relevant and appropriate. Therefore, four rural mainstream schools from Nausori District in Fiji as (natural setting) and eight teachers (2 each) from these schools were used for this study. Qualitative method is most appropriate as it permits the studying of meanings of individuals' lives with minimal distraction caused to their daily routine or activities. This increases the probability on social interaction; hence, giving opportunities for respondents to speak freely in their natural surroundings unlike the restricted pre-established questionnaires of the enquirer in quantitative method (Yin 2016). Qualitative studies explicitly embrace contextual conditions in which the respondent lives and allows 'the enquirer to gain a holistic overview of the context under study; its logic, its arrangement, its implicit and explicit rules' (Punch & Oancea, 2014: 147). Yin (2016) says that this type of study mitigates participants' nervousness, helps to administer interview properly, and explicate rich and relevant information. Adding on, conducting qualitative interview in multiple setting can be useful in identifying the significance of context, how it influences behaviours and thinking of the participants (Bryman, 2008). Yin (2016) also highlights on the importance whereby adapting this approach give insight into current or emerging ideas which possibly assist in sharing or understanding human social behaviours. Through the analysis of data, the researcher will be able to explore and discuss the rationale behind the rural mainstream teachers' perceptions. Moreover, in this approach the information gathered are in form of words rather than figures or amount. Hence, as the data are developed into text or narrated, it gives massive amount of rich information and meanings to the audience related to the research which could not be overstated and compared with numbers or amount (Burton, Brundell & Jones, 2008).

3.5 Limitations of Adapting this Approach

However, the researcher used semi-structured interviews for gathering data thus limits the richness and strength of data that would have been produced by adapting other method such as observations. Secondly, another drawback was lack of time and fund availability that reduced the number of participants for the data collection. The focus of this study was on detailed exploration of a small number of informants for data collection and elucidates specific aspect of social reality thus the findings produced cannot be generalizable (Basit, 2010). It is also argued that interviews in social surveys that are carefully planned shows inaccurate then the risk is much higher in less controlled interviews inaccuracy (Cohen et al., 2013). Moreover, adapting to this approach is more approachable to the informants but it is more arduous, stressful and time consuming for the enquirer (Basit, 2010).

3.6 Sample

Sampling requires careful planning and is seen as one of the important aspects that enable the researcher to achieve the desired data and analyse it to answer the research phenomena (Punch 2009). In order to achieve this, purposeful sampling was applied to reach for the targeted participants and schools from Nausori District in Fiji. This approach provides the researcher to gain access and confidence within the context, allowing them to adapt well in their targeted research context (Punch & Oancea, 2014). Purposeful sampling gives a wider option that involves certain features or criteria in identifying or selecting targeted respondents (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Hence, this is a most common style of population sampling especially in interviews, and qualitative studies in general, as it provides participants with rich and relevant information for the study (Gall et al., 2007 and Gay et al., 2009).

Therefore, the enquirer used the following selection criteria: select four schools out of 116 schools from Nausori District in Fiji which have SSN, practicing some form of inclusion, teachers who have knowledge and experience in educating SSN. The selection of these four schools was easy for me because it was those schools that referred SSN to special school where I was the head teacher in the same district. This provided me an edge in selection of schools which could have been difficult otherwise. Head teachers of these schools were approached with all the relevant documents including MoE's approval, request letter for head teachers, information sheet for informants and agreement

form to seek permission. Since, these head teachers were my former colleagues, explaining the main purpose of the research was easy, hence their selected potential informants who were teaching SSN for my interview. Since, more participants were given the head teachers in each school, I collectively took introductory session with all the participants from every school and provided them with information sheets (see appendix 1) and consent form for the research. Selection was of eight potential was hard but considering every aspect, I picked those who were very positive towards this research and were free with their school and other works for the next few weeks. As planned total of eight teachers, two from each school were selected for the interviewed.

According to, Gay et al., (2009) qualitative sampling involves limited or few participants who have sufficient information which enables to answer the research phenomena. Keeping in mind the time and other resources, I have to be mindful and be firm on the number of participants as I was provided with many. Decision on keeping to eight participants and as Patton (2002) argues that time and resources determine the selection of sample size for a particular research, thus, as stated initially only eight informants were considered.

3.7 Research Instrument

3.7.1 Interviews

In this study to gather detailed information from the respondents, the researcher used interviews to collect data. Interviews are best options which enable the researcher to effectively explore and study individuals understanding, clarifying and elaborating their own perspective of the world they live (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). As a result, qualitative interviewing was used to support in examining rural teachers' perceptions of inclusion of SSN in mainstream schools for data collection. Interviewing is also suitable as it supports to stimulate data towards inclusion of SSN and some of their behaviours that were displayed earlier and which are difficult to reproduce (Merriam, 2009). This allows the investigator to rectify and possible to make follow up answers, as informants are present to response immediately of concerns and ambiguous statements (Ary et al., 2010, Gall et al., 2007 and Gay at el., 2009). Furthermore, in designing interviews, it is significant to make informed and reflective decision about the interview approach that is applied at different stages of the study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Hence, keeping in mind the type of information to be collected from the interviews (Merriam, 2009), semi-structured interview was used to gather information. Semi structures interview consist of both closed ended and probing open ended types of questions which ensures that detail information is obtained with richness from research participants (Gall et al., 2007). Thus, strategy such as questions to obtain small responses like “yes” or “no” and detailed explanation respectively was applied. Semi-structured interview creates openings to have superior chance of teachers providing of in-depth information by freely expressing themselves.

For the purpose of consistency or continuity of the interview voice recorder ‘Dictaphone’ was used to record the conversation to maintain the originality of data, finishing on time the interview session, avoiding interruption and saving time (Cohen et al., 2007, Gall at el., 2007 and Gay et al., 2009). In addition, an interview guide was also designed to keep the discussion and interview on track. The interview consists of exploratory remarks, list of main question of the research topic, sub questions, few prompts and closing remark which supports prior, during and after the interviews (Punch & Oancea, 2014). The detail sample of interview guide can be found in appendix 2 Furthermore, the guide serves as a checklist of the themes to be questioned with default wording of the question being asked, however, depending on the flow of the interview these question are often modified based on the response received from interviewee (Robson 2011).

3.8 Research Process

3.8.1 Letter from Charles University (See Appendix 3)

In order to conduct this research many process was involved. Firstly, a letter from Mrs. Sarka Kanova, MA Programme Convenor Erasmus Mundus Special and Inclusive Education Faculty of Education from Department of Special Education Charles University Prague, was obtained. This letter was necessary because in order to get approval from MoE Fiji, it was one prerequisite and must produce confirming my status and ensuring the validity of this research.

3.8.2 Approval from Ministry of Education Fiji (See Appendix 4)

The MoE’s ethical section was approached informing them about the intended research. I was asked to submit an application together with my proposal, letter from the university, participants’ information sheet, interview guide, summary of my research, filled human ethic form and filled research agreement form. This was delayed as the letter from Charles University was given very late. Nevertheless, after two weeks I was given

approval from the ethics department and was asked to fifty Fijian dollars to conduct the research. The approval was very significant as even though the head teachers were my colleagues they required this approval for formality, safety and security purpose.

3.8.3 Letters to All Head Teachers (See Appendix 5)

The head teachers of the targeted schools were also requested for approval to conduct research in their schools which will involve their staff. Information about the research, participants' information sheet and consent letter was given to follow the ethic protocol. All the head teachers acknowledging on the proper procedure, very warmly and openly selected potential participants for the research. Notably, all selected more than two participants and ensured to use their office to conduct interviews.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

Ethical consideration is essential proportion of any research study, and definitely cannot be overlooked (Bryman, 2004). This ensures and gives assurances to the participants of their rights, build a sense of trust with them, and promote the integrity of the research (Israel & Hay, 2006). Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Section from MoE Fiji to conduct the research in Nausori District in mainstream primary schools. Adding on, formal letters were given explaining in details of the proposed study, their roles and responsibilities for as participants in line with British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011) Ethical guidelines to seek their consent. In addition Creswell (2009) and Kombo & Tromp (2006), assert that it is mandatory that research participants get informed before they are approached for data collection. Furthermore, the ethical process will be maintained throughout the study by keeping anonymity and using unique identification numbers (example, participant 001 and so forth).

3.9.1 Confidentiality and Potential Risk of Participants

Confidentiality was maintained by keeping both the recorded and transcribed data safely in a hard drive for backup, while one copy in the personal laptop for using during data analysis. On the contrary, provisions on withdrawal of information and participants from the research at any time will be allowed (Creswell; 2009, BERA, 2011 Kombo & Tromp, 2006). As Creswell (2009) and Kombo & Tromp (2006) assert on anonymity and confidentiality, in this research the names of the schools and participants was kept anonymous. Teachers' names were represented by letters and numbers for example T1,

T2, T3, so forth. This decreases the probability of the participants and schools being recognized.

3.9.2 Consent from Participants

The potential teachers were provided information sheet and consent form upon highlighting on the significance of this research to the eight teachers from two each four mainstream primary school respectively. As stated earlier that these teachers selected on the principle of their willingness and availability, they signed and returned the consent form immediately after our discussion. As few of them were ready to give their interview on the spot but I told them we need to prepare and plan a suitable day and time as it requires few important components and procedure.

All the participants were very clearly informed about the confidentiality, right to withdraw, pseudonym, they reverse the right not to answer any question which may be sensitive to them and even to completely withdraw from this research. All informants were well addressed with the nature of the study and any further usage of the data apart from thesis writing they will be informed and if necessary consent will be requested.

All the interviews were conducted accordingly to the time and date set by the participants and in their head teachers' offices to avoid distraction and disturbance. This was after hours meaning when teachers were free in the afternoons after their school work.

3.10 Research Tools

A Dictaphone was used to record all the interviews. This essential because it helps the researcher to focus on the interview process rather than writing notes thus avoiding lengthy interview, repetition, and disruption and continuity (Basit, 2010). Recording of interview was carried out only on participants' prior approval; hence it was great throughout all interviews.

3.11 Pilot Study

Using this method of data collection there are risks of biasness which possibly could be high because the interviewer selects questions to probe which may inhibit comparability of responses (Cohen et al., 2007). To minimise this limitation, pilot study was carried out before the actual interviews. Pilot study is a small scale, preliminary study conducted to test methods and other procedures for data collection (Gall et al., 2007). A pilot study was carried out a few three days before the actual interview. The sample of pilot study was one of the representative of eight informants identified for this study and Basit (2010)

shares that this ought to be reflected in the actual study later on. The pilot study was properly conducted considering all the ethical issues as well as recording of the discussion. This enabled the researcher before other interviews to edit interview guide, building confidence in conducting interviews and having good control of the interviews during the actual sessions. As enquirers are encouraged to carry out pilot study before the actual interview to justify research instrument and design to rectify potential problems in the procedure and make necessary amendments respectively beforehand (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Furthermore, there was very less changes made to the interview guide afterwards including, removing of few questions and reorganising of rest of them to have a smooth transition from one question to the next. Notably, the pilot interview yielded so much and very rich information hence I used it as one of the interviews for analysis instead of repeating the interview with the same participant.

In addition, conducting pilot study enhance the credibility and reliability which is prelude to the main study prior to embarking on the actual study project (Basit, 2010). According to Basit (2010), these are some of the benefits of pilot study; 1) show their capability to conduct and manage a research and gives credibility to their claims; 2) confirm the reliability of the research in general; 3) experience the mechanics of study; 4) determine the validity and reliability of the information by focusing on a few informants; and 5) alter the tools to eradicate any ambiguous, leading, insensitive and offensive questions or statements.

3.12 Data Collection

In this study data was gathered from the eight participants via semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted using an interview guide, assisting me to maintain the richness of data, on track and consistency during the process. The guide had specific question which were not applied in any order, but all question were asked based upon the responses received with few new question.

All participants were introduced about the aim of this study with the whole programme and myself before starting the interview. Explain on the confidentiality aspect of keeping all the data secured and anonymous. All participants were requested to the fill the demographic information sheet stating personal details of each informant (see appendix 8). Everyone of them were acknowledged and sincerely appreciated for the precious time and contribution towards this research after the interview. Later, I personally took all the transcribed transcription to each of the participants elaborating that whatever was

recorded has been texted. Also requesting them to verify and confirm to me that it was true record of our discussion from the interview. A due date was given to all informants to provide feedback, amendments, withdrawal of any statement together with confirmation of the transcribed data. All participants contacted me via mobile calls to confirm that they were pleased with everything transcribed, no changes to be made and acknowledged for being part of this study.

3.13 Data Analysis

Through the period of data gathering for this study, I immediately transcribed the raw data soon after finishing every interview. While it is still fresh, allowing clear and deeper understanding information collected and as Bell (2005) highlights that describing and interpreting these raw data will provide researcher to construct meaning and patterns. In addition Johnson and Christensen (2012) say that transcription is the process of transforming the recorded interviews into texts. This helped to further develop my questioning skill for the next interview. While transcribing I maintained every single aspect including actual wordings, phrases, statements and sounds to allow the originality and validity of the data. Once this is achieved, thematic analysis approach was used to analyses the transcribed data. Thematic analysis is the process that identifies, analyse and report the occurrence of themes in the data collected from the field (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The transcribed data was stored in my laptop and a backup copy in my external hard drive which was under password security. The data (softcopy) was then read several times at the same it was coded. Coding is procedure that supports and assists the researchers formulate themes and refine ideas to connect them to create a clear picture of the research topic (Rubin & Rubin 1995). This allows the inquirer to group the responses from the participants into the respective themes. The responses, either phrases or sentences were then highlighted using the font colour from the word document together with codes PT1, PT2, PT3... and PT8 for each participant and were pasted under themes respectively. This consisted of participant's views on both aspects either 'for or against', a particular theme. Also the data can be recoded as many times as the researcher requires (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). For example all the responses on 'teachers understanding on inclusive education' were placed under the 'teachers' understanding of IE'. This process continued until it was left with those that did not fit under the existing themes thus I placed them in under general and emerging issues and was later sorted into specific themes during data discussion.

3.14 Validity and Dependability

3.14.1 Validity

In qualitative research validity is confirmed or verified when the inquirer has addressed it through presenting the honesty, depth, richness and the scope of data achieved are accurately interpreted representing the social it has been studied (Basit, 2010; Cohen et. al, 2011; Yin, 2011). Therefore, verbatim statements from the participants were presented under respective themes to add truthfulness and honesty and increase the validity.

Moreover, to enhance the validity and dependability pilot study was conduct and as Basit (2010) emphasised on it significance.

3.14.2 Credibility

The term dependability or trustworthiness is widely accepted rather than reliability in qualitative research (Bryman, 2004). In quantitative reliability refers to the consistency of the findings if the research is replicated whereas in qualitative research, consist of the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of the situation, such that the research cannot be replicated and considered as their strength rather than their weakness (Basit, 2010; Cohen et. al, 2011). Hence, dependability includes, 'trustworthiness, honesty, distinctiveness of the context, authenticity, comprehensiveness, detail and depth of response, and significance of the research to the participants' (Basit, 2010: 70). Thus, this was addressed in this study by conducting the research in Nausori District in Fiji, having strong bonding and trust with all informants, straightforward quotation from the data from participants and sending the interview transcript to interviewee for checking. According to Basit (2010) this asserts whether the transcription matches with their recollection of interview by the interviewees thus ensure that the data is reliable.

3.15 Chapter Summary

In summary, the chapter has provided the information on the following for the proposed study: the research title; with three sub-question guiding this study, a rationale explaining the reasons and issues emerging relating to my context and the methodology that will be used to do carryout this research. Furthermore, due to unavailability of any literature from my country to support the discussion on the advantages and limitations of inclusive education, literature from international sources were mostly applied. The following chapter provides findings of this research together with the discussion.

4 Chapter 4

4.1 Chapter Outline

This chapter will present the result of data collected from the research. It consists of two sections whereby first section will present the findings of this study and, while the second section will present discussion with reference to literature in chapter 2. Section 1 will begin with discussion on the significance of demographic information. Then the results are presented in-line with the three sub questions that governed this study. Firstly, the data are presented on the sub question one: what is general teachers' knowledge of inclusion together with respective themes. Second, it will present findings on the advantages of inclusion followed by. The third part presents' findings on limitations encountered of being inclusive together with this section's conclusion. Finally, the second section will present discussion with respective literature as well as the chapter summary.

This data was collected from eight teachers of mainstream primary schools on teachers' perceptions of inclusion of students with special needs in four mainstream primary schools in Nausori District Fiji. These teachers were asked about their knowledge of IE and how they perceived of including SSN in mainstream classroom. Adding on, they were asked what are the benefits if SSN are included as well as the challenges encountered. Furthermore, the eight mainstream primary school teachers are referred as Primary Teacher 1, 2, ...8, (PT1, PT2, ...and PT8).

4.2 Importance of Demographic Information

The demographic particulars provide a detailed statistics of the informants including; age gender, teaching experiences, education level, any teaching background of SSN or currently teaching, and have any relatives with special needs (see fig. 2). Addressing this aspect allude any significant relationship on the information collected from the participants. The demographic information is relatively well represented including; 1) the age ranged between early twenties to early fifties; 2) five participants are females and three males; 3) three respondents had previous teaching experience of SSN while the rest 5 none; 4) all participants have SSN in their class with learning disabilities as the highest followed by behavioural and speech disorder, and intellectual, visual and health conditions respectively; 5) notably three participants had teaching certificates, four Bachelor's Degree and one with master's degree but none with specialised qualification.

Hence, this provided me with a wider and richer ground and opportunity in data collection.

Figure 2 Demographic Information

Participant	Age category	Gender	Qualification	Years of teaching	SSN in class	Teaching experience of SSN
PT1	31-40	Female	Certificate in primary teaching (Fiji)	6-10	Yes	Yes
PT2	41-50	Female	Certificate in primary teaching (Fiji)	21-25	Yes	No
PT3	41-50	Female	Masters' in Education (Fiji)	16-20	Yes	Yes
PT4	51-60	Female	Bachelor in Education (Fiji)	Over 25 years	Yes	Yes
PT5	31-40	Male	Bachelor in education (Fiji)	16-20	Yes	No
PT6	31-40	Female	Bachelor in Early Childhood Education (Fiji)	11-15	Yes	No
PT7	31-40	Male	Bachelor in Education (Fiji)	6-10	Yes	No
PT8	31-40	Male	Certificate in primary teaching (Fiji)	6-10	Yes	No

Figure 2 Demographic Information

4.3 Section 1: Results

4.3.1 Teachers Knowledge of Inclusion

According to, the finding in this research shows a wide range of explanation of inclusion was shared by all participants. Four participants (PT2, PT4, PT5 and PT7) had very similar views and defined inclusion as including the students with disabilities and special needs, including those with 'physical looks' into mainstream classrooms. One of them said;

(PT7). Including everyone those that are with disabilities they with physical looks they have some disabilities as we have some gifted some so basically its including everyone in the education systems.

Two participants shared of recognizing of their needs and inclusion of all abilities in the same class and said;

(PT1).Aa recognising the needs of the children all the children in our class

(PT6). Aaa...including of of all abilities ehh all abilities to the in education

One of the participants shared that teaching according to their age appropriateness;

(PT8). Getting children according to their age group and teaching them and giving them all the necessary education need they need

4.3.2 Teachers Understanding of Inclusive Education

The result from the study reveals that all participants have deeper understanding of IE and they provided various explanations with very close or similar meaning.

These two respondents perceived IE; where SSN should be provided with appropriate curriculum:

(PT1). Inclusive education is that children who are facing disabilities they they are being taught in mainstream... has designed the curriculum in such a way that the child feels included.

(PT5). Having a curricular that caters all the needs of all students... meaning the physical environmental and teacher knowledge on that.

Two participants specifically raised views of students with physically challenged to be included together with other disabilities:

(PT6). To me is...aaa is not about segregation but including... whether they are physically or they have some physical problems even mental problems in schools including them to be just like those children who are able ehh in the main stream classroom.

(PT7). Providing education for this disable children those that are unfortunate may be those with disabilities and learning and physical providing them educational needs... in the mainstream classroom together with the other children.

Two informants shared their understanding of IE by highlighting on equality and same opportunity when compared to their peers. Their understanding of IE is:

(PT3). Where we adhere discriminative and include everybody where everyone should be given a fair opportunity to be on that standard of education level when it comes in terms of education within within the classroom yeah.

(PT8). Aa aa... children who are who are having any any aa learning disability or aa child is having any any other aa problems where that child can be catered into the mainstream education like they having... learning disability, have disorder problems, aaa behaviour management problems,...we are we including them into the mainstream so that they are also given equal opportunity aa for learning.

The other two participants understanding of IE were based on the teaching strategies that should be adjusted hence, elaborating their opinions these two mentioned:

(PT2). aaa hmm teaching all the lessons so that it can aa cater for the students with different needs and teaching all the children with different needs in same classroom.

(PT4). including the ahh the work that needed to be done to both those who have a disability together with the main stream we have to integrate the lessons that will be able to cater for both to teach together children with disabilities with those without and without.

4.3.3 Methods of Including During Teaching

The results divulge from this research that various strategies has been adopted by the informants during teaching such as; peer tutoring and learning, teacher students collaboration, group teaching and co-operative learning.

Four participants shared the significance of either peer teaching/ tutoring, group or cooperative learning and said:

(PT1). Sometime I have to request other students to help her especially with writing up all the notes and also in looking after her especially during recess and lunch time other students also help her sort of peer tutoring and peer assisting.

(PT3). we we we look at the potential level and based on their potential and standing and then we decide to help them out one one method is that peer to peer learning concept and a group work.

(PT5). we can include them with co-operative learning group learning peer learning tutoring

PT7. sometimes I use peer teaching sometimes ... I put them as monitor group group leaders so they are the once who delegate roles in their groups some can be very vocalpeer teaching and make them group leaders.

Three of them mentioned about the teacher students' collaboration whereby teachers provide extra support individually;

(PT1). I actually she I make her sit very close to me if I am explaining I will go individually I will explain to her separately... after teaching the whole class I will go to her and explain the concept to her and if she needs help during the activity I usually guide her.

(PT4). I always find out time given them special attention and ahhh what I am doing.

(PT5). the role of teachers has also changed the teacher has become needs to be more of a facilitator... give them individual guidance and assistance.

One informant said that, first he needs to have knowledge of what and how to plan work for SSN and then;

(PT6). ok but for me if I am going to take strategies first of all... try to gather information about how can deal this children and try to revise a plan or something like that.

Adding on, these two participants (T2 and T8) described as building upon the strengths of SSN

(PT2). *aamm reset time aside for them can be in the morning or in the afternoon that will depend ...ok aa probably we can see some of some of the other areas where they are good at good at ... ok capitalising on their strengths.*

(PT4). *I always look at their strength that they have instead of focusing on their weak areas that's during the class capitalizing on the strength.*

Likewise, respondent T8 views focused on child centred learning as he highlighted;

(PT8). *Its better we start with the lesson what that particular child...we start with the concept what the child knows from there than we can build up on our lessonsChild centred learningYes yes....*

4.3.4 Reasons for Referring Back to Special Schools

The results divulges from this research that various strategies has been adopted by the informants during teaching such as; peer tutoring and learning, teacher students collaboration, group teaching and co-operative learning.

Four participants shared the significance of either peer teaching/ tutoring, group or cooperative learning and said:

(PT1). *Sometime I have to request other students to help her especially with writing up all the notes and also in looking after her especially during recess and lunch time other students also help her sort of peer tutoring and peer assisting.*

(PT3). *we we we look at the potential level and based on their potential and standing and then we decide to help them out one one method is that peer to peer learning concept and a group work.*

(PT5). *we can include them with co-operative learning group learning peer learning tutoring*

(PT7). *sometimes I use peer teaching sometimes ... I put them as monitor group group leaders so they are the once who delegate roles in their groups some can be very vocalpeer teaching and make them group leaders.*

Three of them mentioned about the teacher students' collaboration whereby teachers provide extra support individually;

(PT1). *I actually she I make her sit very close to me if I am explaining I will go individually I will explain to her separately... after teaching the whole class I will go to her and explain the concept to her and if she needs help during the activity I usually guide her.*

(PT4). I always find out time given them special attention and ahhh what I am doing.

(PT5). the role of teachers has also changed the teacher has become needs to be more of a facilitator... give them individual guidance and assistance.

One informant said that, first he needs to have knowledge of what and how to plan work for SSN and then;

(PT6). ok but for me if I am going to take strategies first of all... try to gather information about how can deal this children and try to revise a plan or something like that.

Adding on, these two participants (T2 and T8) described as building upon the strengths of SSN

(PT2). aamm reset time aside for them can be in the morning or in the afternoon that will depend ...ok aa probably we can see some of some of the other areas where they are good at good at ... ok capitalising on their strengths.

(PT4). I always look at their strength that they have instead of focusing on their weak areas that's during the class capitalizing on the strength.

Likewise, respondent T8 views focused on child centred learning as he highlighted;

(PT8). Its better we start with the lesson what that particular child...we start with the concept what the child knows from there than we can build up on our lessonsChild centred learningYes yes....

4.3.5 Right Time for Inclusion and Whether Teachers are in Favour or Not

The data gathered discloses that participants had similar views of when SSN should be included and together with their assuring statement. Six participants stated SSN should be included as soon as possible and all of them are in favour of it. They also said that the timing is right as we have just started IE and if we wait for the right time it will never come;

On the other hand, three participants also were in favour however, they had reservation and stated;

(PT2)... aaa 3 years yeah three year plan...its depending on the teachers perception... yes in favour of that...hmm.

(PT6). If the ratio is balanced or if the ratio at the moment is balanced than I suggest you start as soon as the ratio of children the teacher to be informed.

4.4 Advantages of Including SSN in Mainstream Schools

This part presents finding on the participants' perception on the advantages of including SSN in the mainstream primary classroom.

4.4.1 Educational Outcome

In this study it was found that the academic achievements of SSN improved when they are taught with their non-disable peers. All participants suggested range of underlying reasons which contribute to their success including. Out of eight five participants had common views suggesting that it is due the extra assistance and support provided either by teachers, peers or through peer groups.

One participant said to use other methods of assessment;

(PT1). Regarding exams like if we carry out a verbal assessment and other means of assessment she is going to she will be able to do much better.

Another participant said the it depends on the SSN and his/her will power;

(PT3). so it all depends on the child's ability I would say it will increase it will increase it will take time but it will.

In contrary, one of them shared that it is possible only;

(PT5). yes unless we have a major reformed within the education system or more trained teachers and the curriculum to be revised as well.

4.4.2 Peer Sharing and Collaboration

According to the research findings, inclusion of SSN in general classrooms tends to provide more collaboration and sharing amongst their other peers. Five participants shared they help each other, assist and share SSN. While two of the participants' shared deeper views on the empowerment and equality;

(PT4). that they can learn from each other and it will build up kind of ahh confidents and healthy self-esteem on the disability child.

PT5. empowers the child with special needs that makes the child feel equal yeah equality comes in

The other participants expressed that through collaboration it expands our knowledge and shared;

(PT8). we will come to know what talent they have...capitalizing on their talents we can broaden that knowledge and for our class aa schools.

4.4.3 Social Development

Apparently, all eight participants provided supportive and positive statements that including in the mainstream classroom will socially develop SSN and their peers. They all shared opinions including; living together and peacefully, accepting each other, better friendship and bonding; respecting each other, develop socializing skills and sharing. Two of them expressed about self-esteem and said;

(PT2). yeah I think that will improve the social environment they will be showing the positive side of us...hmmm more courage aaa encouragement from us the peers,....probably she is well motivated and building self-confident.

(PT7). so including them it brings great understanding between them between the children too build confidence to me like this children with disabilities they are care free...self-confidence to the other children.

Another participant highlighted on the aspect of becoming a contributing member of the community and expressed;

(PT8). special need child will know that ooh I am not being neglected and I am part and partial I am playing a very important role in for our society like that my contribution is recognized by this people by this group of people in the mainstream that this this particular children are giving a due respect to me they think that I I am cable of of providing everything the society needs.. yes yes not only a contributing member but a vital contributing member aa can bee it aa.

On the other hand, one of the participants shared negative social development outside the classroom by other either schools students of peers. He said;

(PT4). ahh ok like what I experience not in the classroom but like in the village yes outside the classroom... so... they have what you trying to role model some...bad behaviour, and this good ones they will tell them.... Like encouraging them to stand up in front of everybody telling them to dance, or dancing or trying to talk to crowd.

4.4.4 Benefits to Teachers

4.4.4.1 Qualification (Knowledge and Skills)

Inclusion of SSN in mainstream classrooms has also provided opportunities to the educators to rip its nectar. All participants acknowledged and said they have learnt new and various teaching strategies and skills. Three participants mentioned that we have to upgrade our qualification;

(PT2). Yes upgrading himself and skills teachers skills.

(PT5). Ahh probably the teacher would like to do further studies on that further studies upgrading yeah upgrade qualification.

(PT8). Teachers to go out and upgrade themselves and to come and facilitate the learning.

Five of them mentioned that they gain lot of understanding and become better teachers of which three specifically highlighted on experiences;

(PT1). Increases our knowledge ... experience and I think it helps us to become better teachers.

(PT5). Umm those teachers who have already had an experience with special need children they would be able to share their experience.

(PT6). Experience aa the more you a with the child the more you experience it.

Another participant expressed that teaching SSN allows me to become creative;

(PT7). For me like teachers it'll although it's a challenge for me I get more creative ...so that I can meet his need and do other activities to meet their needs and at the same time I am getting lot of creative ideas.

4.4.4.2 Collaboration amongst Teachers

The finding reveals that it increases the opportunities of collaboration amongst teachers. All the participants shared common thoughts and mentioned; share and assist each other with lot of ideas, strategies, information and knowledge with regards to teaching SSN. Adding on, one participant shared that it allows sharing experiences and developing deeper understanding;

(PT5). yes that will increase as well... probably they will be ahh willing to help each other with keeping the child in focus and in-experience teachers would come to the experience teachers for advise so there'll be more collaboration and understanding.

Another participant mentioned its influence on relationship amongst teachers;

(PT7). so whatever experience I know I always share with my teachers who take for hindi lesson so I'll go and inform her how she he is so emmm ..it increases our relationship with the other teacherscollaboration increases between the staff

One participant highlighted that it professionally develops us through;

(PT8). Like like we teachers aa aa teachers aa like in our PD session professional development session ...sessions able to exchange our views and ideas and and it will help the teachers a lot... teacher collaboration will be more and like more...More easier because we will be exchanging our ideas.

4.4.5 Cost effective

According to the majority of participants IE is economical. They all highlighted various ideas of how it is cheaper. Three participants expressed if mainstreams schools are provided with resources will be cheaper rather on special schools. Adding on, two participants shared this save a lot of money and said;

(PT7). hmm ok because I think so it's the area they had to travel they had to go and attend special schools in town...because we got many schools around....so that will save travelling cost of the parents and children.

(PT8).That is true that is true from my point of view... sending a particular child from a very rural or remote area to a urb a special school in urban centre will be a very costly for parents... but if that child will be catered in his or her area if there is a school available the cost will be very minimal.

One of the participants mentioned it will not be totally cheap and said;

(PT3). aaa I would say in regards to this I won't say its totally cost effective...but it all depends on the circumstances ehh it also depends on the physical environment of the school the locality and the ability some extend I would say yes.

However, two participants said opposite:

(PT1). mm it no I don't think it will be cheap. because if we are including them then we need to invest in training mainstream teachers... aa more with providing the mainstream schools with necessary resources to accommodate such children...it comes with more cost.

(PT2). yeah could be true to the provider aa... oo we still need more finances especially to get the teaching materials suitable teaching materials.

4.5 Limitations of Being Inclusive

4.5.1 Lack of Qualification

Teachers without specialised qualification to teach SSN in mainstream schools were found in this study. All eight participants mentioned common views such as insufficient knowledge, non-qualified teachers, teachers less competent and qualification is a limitation. One of the participants shared about ongoing upgrading by sharing;

(PT1). Yes I think that once we are not continuously upgrading our qualification our perspective changes and it while and if we are still learning we are trying to improve our self-better.

Another participant said even we have the experience but still;

(PT4). yeah I think like some of us being teaching for more than ten years or fifteen years it will be better if we have some refreshing course rather than leaving it for too long... it's a challenge for non-qualified teachers.

One of them expressed that with appropriate training handling become easy;

(PT7). yes it's a really because we have to go through the training we need to get qualified and then being with this children... qualification too is a challenge.

4.5.2 Teachers Perceptions

4.5.2.1 Where SSN Should be Educated Based as their Rights to Education

Finding from the research reveals that despite having so much of information and knowledge of and about IE, majority of the participants had hesitancy of including SSN in general classrooms. Six participants had their views of only bringing these students in to mainstream if they have special teachers, resources and only those who are capable otherwise special schools are better for them. Out of six, two specifically recommended they should be placed in a special school as it has all the resources and expertise such as specialised teachers and if they have to be included then;

(PT2).aaa they need a special place to educated because if we include them with normal students and the number that is not really healthy for the teachers and the student as well so they will need a special teachers and also special place to educate them.

(PT6). I think it's better if we allow them to the school just like the kindy one the early childhood they have a special classroom with special teacher...so bring them to the primary level....with special room the special teachers.

Apprehensively, two respondents provided positive comments of including SSN;

(PT3). I think since we talking about inclusive education here time is right for them to be including them in a main stream of education ehh in United Nations Convention Geneva all child has every child have a right to education despite of their ability and capability ehh everybody has a equal right to education.

(PT8). Special need education like they should not be deprived from the mainstream students because they ... should not be deprived from their core education and learning right and they have the right and it is our duty to involve to include them into the mainstream.

4.5.2.2 Extra Work Load

The research also found other variables which had negative influence on teachers' perceptions towards IE. All the participants expressed various concerns that were related to their views including, large class size, lot of paper work and large teaching content. Highlighting their apprehensions, three participants said;

(PT1). normally in general classrooms teachers have lot of paper work and with the class roll of about in forties so including the special child one teacher to include the special child and then cope up with all the requirements of the written documents and other things documentation it is quite challenging... these children are ignored because we are busy with our other other students.

(PT6). ok aaa ok outline that we have to follow paper work yeah they doing paper work, files to do submit and due dates to be met ehh that is one barrier. secondly aaa the number of children in the classroom with different abilities that they have I think if we going to include now these children with those kind of problems then that will be another load for the teachers

(PT4). yes there is a great challenge ahh like for example now we have that bigger roll in each classroom second thing ahh there are other things that also include not only teaching there are like other like completion things like that yeah workload is a lot, yes...of including them

One of the participants arguably blames the government and mentioned

(PT7). Interviewee (2): because for my view because when we came from college we never had any experiences since the government is pushing idea why don't the ministry provide training in-service training for us because they get the specialist

to one school then teachers can learn the skills for me it's not a challenge though like the autism child autism child for my class it wasn't challenge for me.

4.5.2.3 Schools

The school facilities was also identified and seen as one of the barriers to inclusive education by all participants. This basically included the accessibility with reference to the school environment such as, building structure, ramps to enter and exist, and other resources.

Four participants also mentioned that by including SSN it will lower the academic results and affect the school's image. Two of them said;

(PT1). Of the school I think that academic performance of such children they are not good academically then the schools do the results might drop

(PT5). Some schools would only like to have cream students to have high achievement with students with special needs there is a tendency that the pass rate to come down or the achievement to come down so probably that is why schools are reluctant.

Two participants also shared on the safety of other non-disable peers and mentioned;

(PT6). safety wise ehh know rules now is you have to be very careful everywhere with the children ehh I think that kind is barrier to the school if then we need to be up to the standard still not up to that standard

(PT7)... even our head know safety of the child so they will be will be looking at the safety of other student you think that's where the school says no... just to avoid those thing schools are yeah reluctant to get those children yeah that will be a problem

4.5.2.4 Cultural Beliefs

All the eight participants interviewed provided similar opinions that since we are living in a multicultural society, definitely it will create difference when children with diverse cultural background are in one classroom including SSN making IE more challenging. Two participants extend their views that not only the in classrooms but the community as well and mentioned;

(PT1). if if in their community is do not have people with disabilities and they look down upon them then this becomes a barrier however,

(PT5). may be because of the stigma in society when yeah that's what I am saying that stigma ahh if if the children with special needs have to go to mainstream than parents would prefer to keep them home because sending them to main stream will expose the fact that the child from that family is a special need child

One of the participants expressed the concerns of students attending schools of their own ethnicity and said;

(PT6). well we live together for long now ehh but if we look into cultural wise they can still be a barrier aaa know for beliefs ehh even nowadays we have seen you have seen that aaa I am not pointing fingers at I have seen this ehh in indian based schools lot of Fijian students going there but if you see the other side that's why I am saying it can fit better there the Indian students not many of them are there in Fijians schools.

4.6 Section 1 Summary

The first section presented the findings of this research, exploring teachers' perception of inclusion of SSN in mainstream primary schools. The findings revealed that teachers have ambivalent perceptions, and highlighted that if SSN are included their will benefit as well as teachers including better; academic achievement, social development, peer sharing and collaboration and cost effective. While for teachers it will broaden their qualification and knowledge and collaboration amongst them. However, teachers also highlighted on the importance of challenges encountered which revealed; lack of qualification, extra work load, teachers' perceptions, and schools. The second section will focus on the discussion of the results with references to literature.

4.7 Section 2 Discussion

4.7.1 Discussion

This portion of the chapter discusses the results with reference to the research phenomena and the three main questions that guided this study. Hence, these three main questions which represent the main themes will be analysed with their respective sub themes that emerged from the data collected.

4.7.2 Importance of Demographic Data

The demographic information (DI) is important because it shows whether there are any relationships between the participants and their perceptions. According to, the participants DI it shows that it has some correlation which influenced their opinions.

When linking qualification, those respondents with under graduate and master's qualification as well as one with teachers' certificate were more positive towards including SSN in their classes or in mainstream schools. Therefore, it could be said that qualification has implication on how respondents perceived inclusion. Notably, all respondents had experienced teaching SSN in their classes while three also had relatives giving a fair idea about respondents' background knowledge and information. Hence, prior knowledge also to some extent shapes these respondents perception, willingness and acceptance towards inclusion of SSN. Apparently, the engagement and involvement of respondents with SSN also showed that they were much appreciating and accepting inclusion of SSN.

However, two participants with more than twenty five years and one just over 10 years of teaching experience, had indecisive perception, more likely showed negative opinions. While the rest showed very positive responses including three participants with less than 10 years of teaching experiences. Hence, this indicates that experience together with gender has very weak correlation on participants' perception towards inclusion of SSN in mainstream classrooms.

4.7.3 Teachers Knowledge and Understanding of IE

Teacher's knowledge and understanding of inclusion and IE were explored in this research. The results showed that all eight teachers are very knowledgeable together with deeper and wider understanding of IE. According to, literature review, Article 1 of the CRPD (2007) provides clear instructions that PWD should be have full effective and meaningful participation in every aspect of their life including equal opportunities, no

discrimination, respecting their diverse abilities and accepting as part of humanity and diversity. This is evident in results where all participants expressed their views on the importance with reasons which are reflected in the literature.

Similarly, all the eight participants shared strong understanding of IE. IE basically refers to inclusion of SSN in all areas of education system, free education up to age of 23 years and support services and demands all school to accommodate them regardless of their diversity (CRPD, 2007; IDEA, 2004; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2010; UNICEF, 2005). It is evident from the study that all participants provided range of views in favour of what the literature provided in-terms of their knowledge and understanding of IE. Another reason could be the qualification of the participants leading to this wide scope of explanation.

Further, the study also examined the optimal time for inclusion of SSN and whether participants are in favour or not. It is apparent from the study that majority of the participants strongly suggested for inclusion by confirming that the time is right and the sooner the better. Apprehensively, three participants supported inclusion on the condition; that teacher student ratio should be balanced, more time should be given and classroom to be fully equipped with all resources. Evidently, the literature shows that inclusion is pivotal and SSN should effectively access and receive education, all other services regardless of their diverse needs and the severity of the disabilities to achieve fullest social integration and individual developments (CRPD, 2007; IDEA, 2004; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2010; UN, 2016; & UNICEF, 2005).

In addition, literature shows that the universal entitlement ensures that schools have to create respect and values for diversity, develop democratic principles and set of values and beliefs on the foundation of equality and social justice (UNICEF, 2012). Other research also reveals that inclusion is workable for individuals with very severe disabilities if the schools adhere to the universal entitlement (Loreman et al., 2005).

4.7.4 Methods of Including During Teaching

There are many various teaching methods teachers can apply to bring effecting learning, as there is no generally accepted method of delivery or one type that can be suitable for every individual (Westwood, 2013). It is apparent in this study that all the participants adapted various teaching strategies to provide quality teaching and learning. Majority of the participants used peer tutoring and learning, teacher student collaboration, group teaching or co-operative learning. Adapting various strategies Westwood (2013) states

that, it's an interactive whole-class teaching that increases primary schools pupils' declarative knowledge and automatic skills in basic numeracy, phonics, spelling and reading. It also minimises, most importantly the differences between pupils as they all are actively and effectively engaged in activities, answering and pausing questions, collaborating and assisting each other (Westwood, 2013). Further, the results of this study revealed that four participants stated that they provided one to one teaching method and one of them highlighted that she made the SSN to sit closer to her in the classroom for easily reached during assistance. These approaches concur well with Vygotsky (1979) and Buli-Holmberg (2008) review of literature which shows it increases the interaction in inclusive classroom to mastery learning as well as when educators interact with SSN and support them to reveal their inner strength and weakness.

4.7.5 Potential Benefits of Inclusion

Teachers' perception on the advantages of inclusion was also explored in this study. Therefore, the results from the study revealed that SSN will gain in a range of aspects from IE. The following areas are evident from the study as the potential benefits; improved educational outcome, peer sharing and collaboration, social development, benefits to teachers and cost effective.

4.7.5.1 Educational Outcomes

The study showed that in an inclusive classroom both the typical students and SSN has better educational outcomes. It is evident that all eight participants stated that SSN are more likely to have more favourable academic results when taught together. According to Ruijs and Peetsma (2009), educating SSN and their non-disable peers in same classroom has produced much better academic results. This is because five participants highlighted on the extra supported available during teaching and learning process including teaching styles, peer tutoring, teacher's students assistance and group activities. This corresponds well with Buli- Holmberg and Jeyaprabhan (2016) review of the literature, as it occurs at two levels, when assistance given by teachers (one to one) during the teaching and as well as through peers during peer tutoring and collaboration as well as during leisure time. This enables them to have better opportunities to increase and attain higher level of achievements through the process of learning.

One of the participants had very interesting perception and said; *(PT1) 'regarding exams like if we carry out a verbal assessment and other means of assessment she is going to*

she will be able to do much better'. This shows that other methods of assessment are required to increase the chance of better results. This corresponds with Westwood (2013) review of literature that, adapting several types of assessment gives equal, fair and accessible to SSN to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competence which leads to better academic achievement.

Adding on, it also concurs with Vygotsky's theory of Dynamic Assessment (DA). DA highlights that one should not just measure what student can do now but focus or predict their potential for change (Gunning, 2010). In adapting this method, one just not find out what the individual doesn't know but you explore individual's level of knowledge, the amount of instruction required to teach the element and in few instance, the ways these individual learns best (Gunning, 2010). Moreover, he states that this method provides answers for all- important question; how does student learn?, what must be done for the individual to learn?, are linked to the assessment.

4.7.5.2 Peer Sharing and Collaboration

The effect of inclusion on SSN was also examined in the current research. The findings revealed that all eight participants provided very interesting and positive opinions of how IE has influenced all students. Majority of the participants stated that there are more peer sharing and collaboration. These included, helping each other, share and assist both inside during lesson or activities like peer tutoring as well as in during leisure times and outdoor activities including social interaction and communication. According to Buli-Holmberg and Jeyaprabhabhan (2016) they claim that working together and helping each develops communication abilities, self-confidence and higher academic achievements.

This research also found that interaction of SSN with their non-disable peers is very significant as it ensures and encourages them to develop knowledge of the disabilities of SSN have, increases deeper understanding of each other as well as increases self-confidence of SSN. Moreover, two participants mentioned that these interaction and socialization develops deeper knowledge of respecting ever SSN and providing them equal opportunities within the school environment and their communities.

Other research finding also provides evidence that any form of peer sharing and collaboration has greater impact in development of better friendship, greater sense of belongingness, mutual assistance, independence, self-confidence, optimise students' performance (Jolliffe, 2007 and Bauer & Shea, 1999)

4.7.5.3 Social Development

The effects of IE not only transform social development of SSN but also to their peers, as the results showed that all students socially develop in various ways. All the eight participants expressed of how it develops all students including; living together and peacefully, accepting each other, better friendship and bonding; respecting each other, develop socializing skills and sharing. The result from all the participants corresponds with the review of literature in chapter two. Ruijs and Peetsma (2009) expresses that through IE, there are high number of friends resulting in quality and strong relationship amongst other peers, good self-concept, overcoming loneliness and depression and social skills. Literature also highlights that, it provides opportunities to develop social skills in the environment that encourages typical growth and development allowing SSN to have better language development skills enabling them to have better communication abilities with their peers during their formative years (Fakolade et al., 2009 and Ruijs & Peetsma, 2009).

Holmberg & Jeyaprabhan (2016: 3) shares this type of interaction between SSN and their peers allows all students to ‘learn to live together rather than live together to learn’. This corresponds well with the Vygotsky’s (1978) theory of ‘Zone of Proximal Development’; is the distance between the actual learning and potential level that an individual achieves under a support of an adult guidance or in collaboration with more competent peers during the interaction is known as the Zone of Proximal Development.

The study also revealed that it allows SSN to be motivated leading to the development of self-confidence and self-esteem as well as developing as sense of belongingness and become a vital contributing member of the community, society and to their nation. This is very similar to what Fakolade et al., (2009) has expressed that, this provides opportunities to develop; why they have a particular disability, a sense of knowledge and understanding of their disable friends and their needs, develop appropriate perception towards them from early stages and gain diverse characteristics, talents and temperaments.

The literature also highlights on the significance of belongingness which is fostered by the non-disable peers and teachers hence, allows SSN to feel at home, valued, and are part of that mini society (Buli-Holmberg & Jeyaprabhan, 2016; Peterson & Hittie, 2003; Smith et al., 2015).

4.7.6 Benefits to Teachers

Evidences from this research are very impressive which shows that IE has also benefited teachers in many ways. All eight participants provided interesting opinions in two ways; 1) teachers qualification and 2) teacher to teacher collaboration.

All eight when interviewed were very optimistic and shared that IE have challenged them in their teaching styles, skills and knowledge. This has forced them to upgrade their qualification as mentioned by three participants (PT1, PT5 and PT8) while the rest focused on gaining different teaching strategies, skills and knowledge. One of them expressed that it ‘Increases our knowledge ... experience and I think it helps us to become better teachers’ (PT1).

Another participant expressed that teaching in an inclusive classroom not only challenges us but it provides opportunities ‘For me like teachers it’ll although it’s a challenge for me I get more creative ...so that I can meet his need and do other activities to meet their needs and at the same time I am getting lot of creative ideas’ (PT7).

Secondly, all participants expressed that inclusion of SSN in mainstream classroom has developed and increased team work and collaboration amongst other staff of their school. Sharing of experiences, knowledge, skills and new teaching strategies were expressed in their opinions. As one of the participants shared; ‘so whatever experience I know I always share with my teachers who take for hindi lesson so I’ll go and inform her how she he is so emmm ... it increases our relationship with the other’ (PT7).

According to, Buli- Holmberg and Jeyaprathaban, (2016) sharing of knowledge, skills and ideas is one of the best tool for inclusive classrooms and also known as ideal model of IE. In line with the review of literature in chapter 2, collaborations is paved on a multidimensional model which warrants collaboration amongst stakeholders thus it produces; shared work load, quality teaching, easier to handle activities, and enabling them to positively facilitate changes and adaptations (Buli- Holmberg & Jeyaprathaban, 2016 and MacArthur et al., 2005).

The results from the findings coincides with Fakolade et al., (2009) with review of literature collective planning and implementation suggest activities and lesson has greater chances of capitalising on each individual’s interest, needs and aptitudes. Therefore, Buell et al., (1999) express that IE depends on collaboration between general classroom

and special education teachers as it enriches their understanding knowledge and collaboration resulting in well prepared services and support for SSN.

Guzman (1997) affirms that through continuous collaboration, educators will be able to determine their own ideologies and perceptions of inclusion and concurrently be able to restructure their belief towards embracing diversity.

Furthermore, one of the participants voiced her views on the involvement of parents, which is regarded as one of the pivotal factor of IE. She said;

(PT7). to me personally it's a good idea... I had a child he was autistic... I was sharing with the parents like even the parents like aa I have first three weeks I talked to them whether if they agree whether or not take the child to the special school and from the parents view they said they have put the child from Kindee (kindergarten) and they the has been learning a lot of habits bad habits like spitting doing some zzzzzz irritating others and then the parents feel putting him that in the special education from kindee it will worsen his behaviour.

The significance of teacher parent collaboration cannot be overstated hence; they play vital role in decision making and also seen crucial factor in the child education. Her perception concurs with review of literature in chapter two; as the richness of information shared by parents to teachers, supports to validate the nature of skills children exhibit while away from school and in early years it provides unique perception in identification and assessment process (Brink, 2002; McCollum, 2002; Whiteley et al., 2005; Mengoni & Oates, 2014).

Other research claims that successful inclusive practice requires collaboration between all stakeholders including; classroom teachers, school communities: such as support and other specialist staff as well as parents/carers (Broderick et al., 2005; Janney & Snell 2006; Vakil et al. 2009).

4.7.7 Cost-Effective

The notion of cost effectiveness was also shared by the all eight participants in this research. According to the findings it is evident that majority of the informants mentioned how IE will be or is cheaper. Five participants shared that the investment that is carried out on special schools which are only in towns and cities and is used by fewer SSN, should be diverted to other primary schools allowing sharing of resources by those SSN in rural schools who are not able to reach to these urban special schools. Adding on, two participants also said that this will save lot of money for many parents of SSN especially

traveling cost as well as to the government. One of them said; (PT8) *That is true that is true from my point of view... sending a particular child from a very rural or remote area to a urb a special school in urban centre will be a very costly for parents... but if that child will be catered in his or her area if there is a school available the cost will be very minimal*'.

The results coined well with the review of literature in chapter two. According to the latest World Bank Study, and an increasing number of international studies, IE is not only cost-efficient but cost effective (UNESCO, 2005). The literature also shares that many cost-effective tactics have been established by countries with limited resources including; 1) training of trainer models for professional developments; 2) linking university in pre-service to schools for internship or practical; 3) converting of special schools into resources centres' to provide expertise and support to clusters of general schools (UNESCO, 2005).

However, one of the participants said it can be partially true as there are other contributing factors which might be otherwise. She said 'aaa I would say in regards to this I won't say it's totally cost effective...but it all depends on the circumstances ehh it also depends on the physical environment of the school the locality and the ability some extend I would say yes' (PT3). According to PT3's, view there may be cost available while becoming inclusive thus it means more funds are required.

Moreover, two participants had opposing opinions as they mentioned that when we are talking or thinking of inclusion that we require more resources, specialised teachers and also investing in training mainstream teachers. Therefore, IE comes with lot of demands with dollar value.

According, to UNESCO (2005) the tactics applied by developing countries especially 'training of trainer models for professional developments' this will ease the issue of investing in teacher training of general schools. Secondly, if the schools utilize their funds properly then other resources can be provided as demanded by teachers. This is evident from the research as one participants highlighted he's belief on how the utilization is done that is important. He said 'proper planning... aa funding is not a problem only planning is to be done which where that classroom has to be setup' (PT8).

4.8 Limitations

Having presented the analysis on the benefits of IE, the following section will discuss on the limitation encountered by teachers in the process of inclusion. The findings from this research reveal the following barriers faced by educators including; 1) lack of qualification; 2) teachers perception; 3) schools; and 4) cultural beliefs.

4.8.1 Lack of Qualification

This research found that inadequate qualification in the field of special and inclusive education. All the eight participants provided their opinions including teachers do not have relevant teaching qualification to teach SSN therefore teaching in an inclusive classroom becomes difficult. One of the participants also shared ‘teachers are to be trained how to handle ... how to go about teaching how to accommodate them, I think that there are teachers will be able to handle students with special needs’ (PT8).

According to, Corbett (2001) the argument of lack of specialised training from teaching SSN remains highly debateable and also it is woefully inadequate. Therefore, it reduces not only providing quality inclusive education and services to SSN but also to their families.

Grieve (2009) and Goodman and Burton (2010) also emphasises on the significance lack of training and practical support to enable them to feel confident in implementing inclusive practices.

Furthermore, study also shows that lack of courses and programmes are offered by the tertiary institutions including teacher training colleges in the country. Therefore, half of the total participants shared their views on this aspect attributed their disappointment to the teacher training institutions.

One of them said; ‘ok in terms of qualification ... looking at that training... go back to universities I think level of training provided there on main stream school education ehh to some extent not enough training not enough program yes yeah’ (PT3). While the other participants blames the university; ‘yeah they providing but not to that extend ehh ok so you think problem lyse not to the teachers part but with the intuitions’ (PT6).

1. Reason for Referral to Special Schools

Linking the significances of inadequate specialised personnel and other resources this study also found the underlying reasons for SSN being referred to special schools. All

eight participants emphasised that teachers in primary schools do not have special qualification and training, and resources to teach special students hence are sent to special schools.

The study also divulges that inability to cope with other typical students in academic achievements has been mentioned. One of the participants shared ‘student not making progress... difficult for teachers as they are not trained’ (PT5). This provides a mismatch between what was found earlier in this study where all the participants have deeper understanding and knowledge of IE.

4.8.2 Teachers Perceptions

Teacher perceptions play a significant role towards IE and are seen as the front line people to implement inclusion. Evidently, the study found that majority of the participants had opposing and ambivalent perception towards IE. Negativity within one’s perception is good enough to become obstacles in inclusion. This is also apparent in the research findings thus results in SSN are being referred back to special schools.

On the other hand, indecisive perception is something of great concern as the evidence of the study shows that participants are very knowledgeable and have deeper understanding of inclusion yet they have reservations for inclusion.

This study also found that two participants specifically stated that these students are best suited and accommodated in special schools; (PT2) *they need a special place to educated because if we include them with normal students and the number that is not really healthy for the teachers and the student as well so they will need a special teachers and also special place to educate them.*

The results of this study is in line with the review of literature in chapter 2 which highlighted that these ambivalent and negative perception determines educators behaviours as well as teaching of SSN thus students are either being neglected or excluded from mainstream (Spedding, 2005).

Furthermore, this undesirable opinion becomes sort of a social discrimination leading to traditional prejudices towards SSN and reduces their opportunities for not attending schools (Walker, 2013).

Another contributing aspect that was also found in this study which determined the opposing views of the participants is extra work load. Majority of the participant mentioned on the amount of teaching content together with the large class size hence they are not able to focus on the special child. Participants views on extra work load when further questioned, it was lot of paper work and files to prepare with due dates to be met or submitted to MoE. The demand is placed on teachers shoulders for better academic results thus SSN are disadvantaged.

Large class size not only develops over-crowding but also produces basic or low academic leading to teachers protecting their images of being underperforming and limits their teaching to these students (Tiwari et al., 2015; Sobol, 2001). Therefore, these students even though are including in the general classrooms yet they are excluded from teaching and learning.

4.8.3 Schools

The study reveals that schools also become one of the biggest obstacles when it comes to implementation or practicing IE. Before, teachers are being pointed as the barriers; the schools are also regards as one of the major barriers to inclusion by the participants. Firstly, the physical structures of many typical mainstream schools are designed in such a way that its appearance will speak louder rather than the spoken words for any individual with physical disabilities before they can be enrolled. The study found that majority of the participants highlighted the schools are not user friendly and makes including difficult for any SSN. Two participants from same school shared about their computer lab, as one of them said, *(PT7)if this child is coming to attend a computer class we can't be getting the computers down because it's has the stairs to climb so he will be left out so he won't be to go in for the library or computer class.*

The employment of inclusive practices mandates school leaders to be visionary as they play a critical role in leading others together with administrative authority to be able to challenge the norm of traditional approach to teaching, inspire and empower other staff and stakeholders towards sustainable inclusion (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Sergiovanni, 2009; Day & Leithwood, 2007). However, considering the evidence from the study, the school leaders don't have the ability to accommodate therefore it becomes a barrier.

According to, Lindqvist & Nilholm (2011) they express and affirms on the significance of school leaders' belief about inclusion as it will influence the way they organize their school in accommodating diverse needs otherwise inclusion will not be possible.

The study also revealed that schools are trying to maintain their image from low academic achievement hence they are not enrolling SSN. One of the participants said;

(PT5) some schools would only like to have cream students to have high achievement with students with special needs there is a tendency that the pass rate to come down or the achievement to come down so probably that is why schools are reluctant.

4.8.4 Cultural Beliefs

Fiji is referred as a multiracial country, consisting of many ethnicity groups of people. The study found that cultural beliefs affect inclusion. Teaching students with different cultural background in an inclusive classroom makes even more challenging and if the teachers are not aware of student's history then difference will emerge. Diverse classroom means different perception of disabilities by different cultures, therefore if not addressed properly can become offensive thus leading to discrimination. Therefore, the study also reveals that many students are attending schools of their own ethnicity, as one participant says;

(PT6)well we live together for long now ehh but if we look into cultural wise they can still be a barrier aaa know for beliefs ehh even nowadays we have seen you have seen that aaa I am not pointing fingers at I have seen this ehh in Indian based schools lot of Fijian students going there but if you see the other side that's why I am saying it can fit better there the Indian students not many of them are there in Fijians schools.

Therefore, cultural beliefs are another crucial aspect that becomes part of limitation towards IE. The result of this study coincides well with Mwangi and Orodho, (2014) review of literature as they express cultural prejudices from society are seen as one the biggest obstacle resulting in negative attitudes and discrimination.

There are few regions that still upholding traditional belief that educating a disabled person is of no importance as this may be view by the individual's physical appearance rather than shortcomings in the education system (UNICEF, 2000).

4.9 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter provided the data analysis of the research with reference to the research phenomena *Teachers' Perception of Inclusion of SSN in Four Mainstream Primary Schools in Nausori District, Fiji*. This discussion was presented from the data collected of eight participants interviewed from four mainstream primary schools respectively. Addressing the phenomena, it was found that teachers are knowledgeable and had deeper understanding of IE and all eight participants were supporting IE. However, showing their supports on IE was very promising but majority of the participants had indecisive perceptions on its implementation and practices.

Therefore, the research findings revealed that those teachers who were in support and favour, shared many positive effects of IE including; 1) better academic achievement for all students in inclusive classrooms; 2) increased peer sharing and collaboration; 3) enhanced social development; 4) benefited teachers both in their qualification and collaboration with other staffs/stakeholders; and 5) cost-effective.

Conversely, the study also disclosed that teachers who had indecisive opinions and also had reservations on IE highlighted on the barriers including; i) lack of qualified teacher and other resources resulting SSN being sent back to special schools; ii) unfavourable teachers' perceptions; iii) schools as they are result oriented, and inaccessible due to physical appearance: both buildings and environment; and iv) cultural beliefs.

Together with these results few other factors were reported which were also significant. In terms of the positive effect teacher-parent collaboration, while in contrary larger class size, extra workload and not enough teachers' training courses being provided by the respective universities that also emerged. Adding on, the demographic information also had significant effect on the results of this study. The demographic data had correlation on teachers' perceptions hence the qualification, prior knowledge, and previous teaching experience of SSN shapes their opinions. Notably, the age, sex, and years of teaching experiences had no effects on how teachers perceive inclusion.

The next chapter will be looking at the evaluation and conclusion of this dissertation. It will also present the success of the research, implication of the findings and summing up with future recommendation.

5 Chapter 5

5.1 Chapter Outline

The chapter presents evaluation and implication of this research together with the suggestion that may be considered as vital in upgrading, transforming and improving inclusive practices for SSN in Fiji. The chapter concludes with further recommendations for future research in this particular area.

The main aim of this research was to explore ‘teachers’ perception of inclusion of SSN in to mainstream primary schools in Fiji’. In order to answer the research phenomena this study subsumed to qualitative methodology to understand the insights of teachers understanding and knowledge. Using this approach is been regarded as the most appropriate method to explore the social world of participants from their point of view (Burrell & Morgan 1979; Punch & Oancea 2014). Therefore, to answer the research phenomena this study was guide by three sub-questions;

- 1) What is general teachers’ knowledge of inclusion?
- 2) What are teachers’ perceptions on the advantages of including students with special needs?
- 3) What challenges do teachers encounter in facilitating students in mainstream primary schools?

5.2 Limitations

This research was conducted within the qualitative paradigm therefore, the results itself cannot be used for generalization (Basit, 2010), due to the small number of participants. Hence, this study had only eight participants from the four mainstream primary schools in Nausori District in Fiji. Another drawback was that schools selected were practicing some form of inclusion therefore it’s difficult to link the findings to other mainstream schools that are not inclusive. Thirdly, with limited time and money for this study I had no options but to have less number of participants. Since the data was conducted in my home country Fiji, other factors such as family and friends were also seen as distractors to some extent.

5.3 Strengths

In doing this research study it has given me broader and deeper understanding and knowledge of using qualitative approach. All the eight participants were very supportive and were approachable anytime. This contributed having a healthy bonding and trustworthiness between every participant. Transcribing of recorded interviews did increase my listening abilities as well as typing. Most importantly, I had the opportunity to conduct this research in my home country which will contribute to the literature both locally and hopefully internationally. Notably, the findings cannot be generalized however it can contribute to some extent in some decision making within the Nausori District where this research was conducted. Finally, the approval granted by MoE and head teachers to conduct this research.

5.4 Implications

The research findings revealed several implications. The positive ones could be in-cooperated and piloted by other schools while the negative implication should be the attended with great concern. The results showed that lack of specialised resources personnel's in this field is of great concern. Hence, there should be more provisions made in the content of teacher training programmes for special and inclusive education as well as in pre-service as mandatory. Thus, will increase teachers qualification together with knowledge and competence.

Teachers had undecided perceptions and reservation on the unavailability of resources, inaccessible of school facilities including building, teaching content (extra), surroundings and large class size. Therefore, MoE should work very closely with all schools to focus on proper management of funds, reallocation resources, and adjustment of teaching content from exam oriented together with trade skills.

Schools should be aware of children's right to education thus, should not have any restriction, criteria or any policy that limits their opportunity of being enrolled. They must adhere to, and follow the new laws and policies of the government of day together with international principles of IE. Allowing, all schools to become inclusive and accommodative regardless of their diverse needs and ethnicity.

5.5 Suggestions for Improvement

Equal opportunities for SSN to be educated with their non-disable peers in mainstream primary schools remains controversial. According to, Walker (2013) refusal of the right to education robs children for the future benefits of education and the opportunity to access their other rights which limits; employment opportunities, participation in civic affairs, and full involvement in society.

Therefore, IE is considered as the fundamental aspect in achieving better quality in education and realising human rights not only for SSN but for all children. This can create provisions to raise the quality bar across education system by adapting to approaches that ensures and tailor for naturally diverse learning style for all pupils, whilst accommodating some specific learning needs of few pupils (Walker, 2013). The results of the study concur well with literature review in chapter two which shows that many nations are becoming inclusive as it helps to combat discriminations, promote diversity and participation, values the contribution and potential of SSN, equips them with essential life, language and social skills (UN, 2016). Researches have proven and shown that IE improves educational outcomes, social development, resources utilise by non-disable, professional development and increases collaboration.

The findings of this study also revealed challenges which can be brought down by the current international policies and law with the support from family, local community, national government and also through international community. The following actions are suggestions for the change and areas of improvements.

5.5.1 More Qualified Teachers

Teachers are most significant factors in determining the quality of education a student receives hence effective inclusion entails appropriate and relevant qualified teachers who are supporting inclusiveness and willing to work collaboratively with other specialist. This study revealed that there are inadequate qualified teachers to meet the demands in the inclusive classroom. The importance and recruitments of other specialised personnel's including, sign language, braille, speech therapist, occupational therapist and physio therapist are also crucial. Therefore, concern authorities including MoE, Government, other stakeholders including FNCDP and MoH to work effectively and collaboratively to include SIE programmes or course in all teacher training colleges/universities which are owned by government which must be mandatory to all individual to who wants to

become teachers. Also if the government can liaise with international universities to have exchange program to allow more teachers to be specialized in the field of special and inclusive education.

5.5.2 Changing Teachers Perceptions

The findings of this showed that negative perceptions of teachers are due to lack of teaching resources, extra work load and less of knowledge on IE. These factors contribute and shape their perceptions towards inclusion of SSN in mainstream classrooms. Therefore, schools, Professional Development Unit (PDU) of MoE and other concerned authorities need to provide continuous PDs, awareness workshops, short refresher courses and community based programmes to ensure that all teachers together with the community are highlighted new principles, legislation, laws and policies regarding IE internationally and nationally..

Teaching resources and extra workload also needs to be reviewed. Inclusive classrooms require many types to resources and material therefore the schools are requested to invest appropriately and wisely with funding provided by the MoE and also encourage teachers to become creative and improvise the learning resource.

Another aspect which the MoE are informed with is the work load together with the large class size. They should review the number of student's teacher ratio in an inclusive classroom and the amount of paper work and other requirements reduces the effectiveness of quality teaching and learning. The other option would be to provide teacher assistant or a Special Education Coordinator (SENCO) to become additional aid for the full time classroom teachers.

5.5.3 Schools

The schools have significant roles and responsibilities that they must consider so that all students are welcomed to receive quality education. The study found that many schools structure and facilities are inaccessible as well as not user friendly. The school management have to work closely with the school heads to make necessary adaptation within their schools infrastructure and facility to become user friendly and accessible to all types of learners. However, MoE has to increase funds for structural modification with the proper planning showing the details and specification of these developments by schools.

Together with these changes schools should be equipped with necessary and relevant resources. Teaching SSN requires lot of equipment's both High-Tec electronic and non-electronic therefore schools should have provision to provide them as and when required.

5.6 Recommendations for Future Studies

The study was conducted in Nausori District, one of the nine education district in Fiji hence the findings cannot be generalised therefore the following are few recommendations;

1. Similar research needs to be conduct in other Districts to reveal insights of teachers' perceptions.
2. Also there is need to produce quantitative data on same or similar topics so that generalization can be made and used effectively in improving the practices of inclusive education.

5.7 Conclusion

This research explored 'teachers' perceptions of inclusion of SSN in four mainstream primary schools in Nausori District Fiji. The significant of this research was to understand teachers' perceptions of IE and the underlying reasons which shaped their opinions. Teachers are regarded as crucial and vital players in successful implantation and practices of IE therefore it is also pivotal that their views are shaped towards supporting inclusion. This will entail and ensure that SSN will have equal opportunity of being educated with their non-disable peers.

The literature also suggests many significances of IE together with international laws and policies. IE shares many benefits and thus these policies demands and calls upon all nations and countries to become inclusive. Fiji has just piloted IE in five primary schools and has a long way to go, hence in-cooperating the guiding principles of IE and adapting and amending in to own context will not only raise the quality bar for education and learning but provide equality to the individual with special needs and other marginalised groups.

In this research finding several benefits of IE were found together with barriers to IE. Both factors are essential and vital in decision making. Notably, the limitations need to be addressed seriously as it will determine the future of IE. IE is a process and cannot be achieved in years but it will take decades therefore the concern authorities including

MoE, national Government, FNCDP, school management, MoH and Social Welfare have pivotal roles and responsibilities to disseminate. Considering, IE developments in practices, and laws and policies internationally, Fiji has a lot of guidelines and models to replicate and make inclusion more successful.

Therefore, I hope that this research finding is just to inform the relevant concern authorities to take note of what are the emerging issues and act upon the relevant areas to provide equal opportunities to SSN and other marginalised children to education with respect and dignity as their peers.

6 Reference

- Ainscow, M. & Sandill, A. (2010) Developing inclusive education systems: the role of organisational cultures and leadership. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14(4), pp.401-416.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. & Sorensen, C. (2010) *Introduction to Research in Education*. U.S.A: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Assembly, U.G. (1948) Universal declaration of human rights. *UN General Assembly*.
- Barnes, C. (2010) Disability Studies: what's the point?. *Intersticios. Revista sociológica de pensamiento crítico*, 1(1).
- Barnes, C. & Mercer, G. (2001) *Disability, politics & the struggle for change*. London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Basit, R.K. (2010) *Research Methodology: a step by step guide for beginners*. London: Sage.
- Barton, L. (1998b) Sociology, disability studies and education. In *The disability reader: Social science perspectives*, ed. T. Shakespeare, 53–65. London: Cassell.
- Bauer, A.M. & Shea, T. M. (1999) *Inclusion 101: How To Teach All Learners*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., PO Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-0624.
- Bell, J. (2005) *Doing Your Research Project: A guide for First Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Sciences* (4th ed.) U.K: Maidenhead.
- BERA (2011) *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. British Educational Research Association www.bera.ac.uk/files/2011/ethical.pdf (Accessed: 24/04/2016)
- Bolton, P. (2001) Developmental assessment. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 7 pp.32–42.
- Braun, V & Clarke, V. (2006) *Qualitative Research in Psychology: Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology*. London: Routledge.
- Brink, M.B. (2002) Involving parents in early childhood assessment: Perspectives from an early intervention instructor. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 29(4), pp.251-257.
- Broderick, A., Mehta-Parekh, H. & Reid, D. K. (2005) Differentiating instruction for disabled students in inclusive classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 44(3), pp.194-202.
- Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Research Methods*. (3rd ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Buell, M.J., Hallam, R., Gamel-McCormick, M. & Scheer, S. (1999) A survey of general and special education teachers' perceptions and inservice needs concerning inclusion. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 46(2), pp.143-156.
- Buli- Holmberg, J. (2008) *Teachers role in Inclusive Education*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademiske.
- Buli- Holmberg J. & Jeyaprabahan, S. (2016). Effective Practice in Inclusive and Special Needs Education. *international journal of special education*, 31(1), 1-16.
- Burrell, G. & Morgan, G. (1979) *Sociological paradigms and organisational analysis*. London: Heinemann Educational Books
- Burton, N., Brundrell, M. & Jones, M. (2008) *Doing your education research project*. London: Sage.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2013) *Research methods in education*. Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2011) *Research Methods in Education*. (7th ed.) London: Routledge: Taylor & Francis group
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007) *Research Methods in Education*. (6th ed.) London: Routledge: Taylor & Francis group
- Cole, C.M., Waldron, N. & Majd, M. (2004) Academic progress of students across inclusive and traditional settings. *Mental retardation*, 42(2), pp.136-144.
- Corbett, J. (2001) *Supporting Inclusive Education: a connective pedagogy*. London: Routledge Falmer
- Creswell, J. (2009) *Research Design. Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (3rd ed.) U.K: SAGE Publications.
- Day, C., & Leithwood, K. (2007) *Successful Principal leadership in times of change*. Netherlands: Springer.
- Fakolade, O.A., Adeniyi, S.O. & Tella, A. (2009) Attitude of teachers towards the inclusion of special needs children in general education classroom: the case of teachers in some selected schools in Nigeria. *International Electronic Journal Environmental Education*, 1(3).
- Fijian Government. *Constitution of the Republic of Fiji*. (Online). Available: <http://www.fiji.gov.fj/Govt--Publications/Constitution.aspx> (Accessed 27 April 2015)
- Gall, M., Gall, J. & Borg, W. (2007) *Educational Research: An introduction* (8th ed.) New York: Pearsons Education

Gay, L.R., Mills, G.E. & Airasian, P. (2009) *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application* (9th ed.) London: Pearson Education Limited.

Goodman, R. L. & Burton, D. M. (2010) The inclusion of students with BESD in mainstream schools: Teachers' experiences of and recommendations for creating a successful inclusive environment. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 15(3), pp.223-237.

Government of Fiji (2008) A National Policy on Persons Living with Disabilities, Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons with the Ministry of Health, Women and Social Welfare.

Grieve, A. M. (2009) Teachers' beliefs about inappropriate behaviour: challenging attitudes? *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 9(3), pp.173-179.

Gunning, T. G. (2010) *Assessing and Correcting: Reading and Writing Difficulties* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Guzmán, N. (1997) Leadership for successful inclusive schools: A study of principal behaviours. *Journal of educational administration*, 35(5), pp.439-450.

Hodkinson, A. (2010) Inclusive and special education in the English educational system: Historical perspectives, recent developments and future challenges. *British Journal of Special Education*, 37(2), pp.61-67.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of (IDEA) (2004) P.L. 108-446, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

Israel, M. & Hay, I. (2006) *Research Ethics for Social Scientists: Between Ethical Conduct and Regulatory Compliance*. London: Sage.

Janney, R. E. & Snell, M. E. (2006) Modifying schoolwork in inclusive classrooms. *Theory into practice*, 45(3), pp.215-223.

Johnson, B. & Christiansen, L. (2012) *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative & Mixed Approaches*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

Jolliffe, W., (2007) *Cooperative learning in the classroom: Putting it into practice*. Sage.

Katz, I., La Placa, V. & Hunter, S. (2007) *Barriers to inclusion and successful engagement of parents in mainstream services*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Kluth, P. (2005) Curriculum design for all in the inclusive curriculum. *Educational Leadership*, 59, 24-47.

Kombo, D. & Tromp, D. (2006) *Proposal and Thesis Writing: An Introduction*. Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa.

- Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2009) *Interviews: learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (2nd ed.) Los Angeles: Sage.
- Lauchlan, F. & Greig, S. (2015) Educational inclusion in England: origins, perspectives and current directions. *Support for Learning*, 30(1), pp.69-82.
- Loreman, T., Deppeler, J. & Harvey, D. (2005) *Inclusive education: A practical guide to supporting diversity in the classroom*. Psychology Press.
- Liasidou, A. (2014) Critical disability studies and socially just change in higher education. *British Journal of Special Education*, 41(2), pp.120-135.
- Lindqvist, G. & Nilholm, C. (2013) Making schools inclusive? Educational leaders' views on how to work with children in need of special support. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 17(1), pp.95-110.
- MacArthur, J., Kelly, B. & Higgins, N. (2005) Supporting the learning and social experiences of students with disabilities: What does the research say. *Learners with special needs in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 3.
- Mastropieri A., M & Scruggs, T., E. (2010) *The Inclusive Classroom: Strategies for Effective Differentiated Instruction* (4 ed.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education Inc.
- Mayer, G.R. (2001) Antisocial behavior: Its causes and prevention within our schools. *Education and Treatment of Children*, pp.414-429.
- McCollum, J. A. (2002) Influencing the development of young children with disabilities: Current themes in early intervention. *Child and adolescent mental health*, 7(1), pp.4-9.
- Mengoni S. & Oates J. (2014) *A Tool to Record and Support the Early Development of Children Including those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities*. Support for Learning. 29 (4) pp. 340-358.
- Merriam, S. (2009) *Qualitative Research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: Josey-Bass.
- Miles, S. & Singal, N. (2009). The Education for All and inclusive education debate: conflict, contradiction or opportunity?. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14(1), pp.1-15.
- Ministry of Education, (2013) *Special Education 2000 policy*. Suva, Fiji: Ministry of Education.
- Monsen, J. J., Ewing, D. L. & Kwoka, M. (2014) Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, perceived adequacy of support and classroom learning environment. *Learning Environments Research*, 17(1) pp.113-126.

- Mwangi, E. & Orodho, J. A. (2014) Challenges facing implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Nyeri County, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 5(16), pp. 118-126
- Patton, M. (2002) *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods (3rd ed)*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Peterson, J., M. & Hittie, M. M. (2003) *Inclusive teaching: Creating effective schools for all learners*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Punch, K.F. (2009) *Introduction to Research Methods in Education*. London: Sage Publications.
- Punch, K. F. & Oanea, (2014) *Introduction to Research Methods in Education*. (2nd ed.) London: Sage Publications.
- Ruijs, N. M. & Peetsma, T.T. (2009) Effects of inclusion on students with and without special educational needs reviewed. *Educational Research Review*, 4(2), pp.67-79.
- Robson, C. (2011). *Real World Research (3rd ed.)*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Rubin, J, & Rubin, I. (1995) *Qualitative Interviewing the Art of Hearing Data*. London: Sage.
- Sabatello, M. & Schulze, M. (2013) *Pennsylvania Studies in Human Rights : Human Rights and Disability Advocacy*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, US. Available from: ProQuest ebrary: 9 /05/16.
- Sergiovanni, T. (2009) *The principalship: A reflective practice perspective*(6th ed). New York: Pearson.
- Smith, T.E., Polloway, E.A., Patton, J.R., Dowdy, C.A. & Doughty, T.T. (2015) *Teaching students with special needs in inclusive settings*. Pearson.
- Sobol, E. S. (2001) *An attitude and approach for teaching music to special learners*. North Carolina: Pentland Press.
- Spedding, S. (2005) The role of teachers in successful inclusion. In P. Foreman, (Ed.), *Inclusion in action*. Victoria: Thomson Nelson Australia Pty Limited.
- Sucuoğlu, B., Bakkaloğlu, H., Karasu, F.İ., Demir, T. & Akalın, S. (2013) Inclusive Preschool Teachers: Their Attitudes and Knowledge about Inclusion. *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education*, 5 (2).
- Teijlingen, E., R. & Hundley, V. (2001). *The importance of pilot studies*. Retrieved from <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU35.html>.

Tiwari, A., Das, A. & Sharma, M. (2015) Inclusive education a “rhetoric” or “reality”? Teachers' perspectives and beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 52, pp.128-136.

United Nation (UN), (2006) Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Available at: http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convention_accessible_pdf.pdf (Accessed: 03/06/16).

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) office in Bangkok (2016) *Barriers to Inclusive Education*. Available at: <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/inclusive-education/what-is-inclusive-education/barriers-to-inclusive-education/> (Accessed: 25/05/16).

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1994) *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2000) *The Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments: Including Six Regional Frameworks for Action*. Paris.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1994) *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for action on special needs education: adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education; Access and Quality*. Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994.

United Nations Human Rights (UNHR) (2016) *Inclusive education vital for all, including persons with disabilities – UN experts*. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20437&LangID=E>. (Accessed: 08/09/16)

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2005) *Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All*. Paris.

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (2012) The right of children with disabilities to education: A rights-based approach to inclusive education. *Geneva: UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS)*.

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (2005) Children and Disability in Transition in CEE/CIS and Baltic States (UNICEF Innocenti Research Center, Florence): 67 pp.

Vakil, S., Welton, E., O’Connor, B. & Kline, L. S. (2009) Inclusion means everyone! The role of the early childhood educator when including young children with autism in the classroom. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 36(4), pp.321-326.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978) *Mind in Society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Walker, J. (2013) Equal Right, Equal Opportunity: Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities Global Campaign for Education and Handicap International.

and health. Geneva.

Westwood, P. (2013) *Inclusive and Adaptive Teaching: Meeting the challenge of diversity in the classroom*. Routledge.

Whiteley, H. E., Smith, C. D. & Hutchinson, J. (2005) Empowering early years workers to identify and target areas of difficulty in pre-school children. *Early years*, 25(2) pp.155-166.

Williams, K. (2014) Educational Perspectives: Is Kenya achieving inclusive education? [Online] Available at: <http://www.educationinnovations.org/blog/education-perspectives-kenya-achieving-inclusive-education> [Accessed 26 05 2016].

Yin, R. (2016) *Qualitative Research from start to finish*. New York: The Guidford Press.

7 Appendix

7.1 Appendix 1

PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

RESEARCHER DETAILS

Name: Salesch Sachin Deo
Status: Married
Occupation: Student at Charles University: Prague
Programme: Erasmus Mundus Masters in Special and Inclusive Education
2015-2016 cohort: joint programme between Roehampton
University, London, University of Oslo, Norway and Charles
University, Prague.
Qualifications: Bachelor in Special and Inclusive Education –FJ (2012)
Certificate in Special and Inclusive Education Teaching (Primary)
– Fiji (2002)

Masters Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Marie Komorna
--

RESEARCH DETAILS

Title: Teachers' Perception of Inclusion of Students with Special Needs in
Mainstream Primary Schools in Fiji.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to explore teachers' perception of inclusion of students with special needs (SSN) in mainstream primary schools in Fiji. The recent shift in Fiji's education system towards inclusion has raised several significant debated on whether or where these children should be educated. As Educators their perceptions are crucial as they can provide insights and assist in development of the educational services and to the economic.

IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH

The significances of this research are to:

- Understand how teachers perceive special education, and inclusive education.
- Whether they have positive or negative opinions.
- Where SSN should be educated
- How these views can assist in the improvement for inclusive education in Fiji.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

One-to-one interview will be conducted with participants, lasting between 45 to 60 minutes. The interview will be audio-recorded to avoid distraction and the originality of data, for the purpose of later transcribing and data analysis. After the completion of the dissertation, these recordings will be eliminated. If necessary, I may contact you for clarification of ideas after the interview.

BENEFITS TO THE PARTICIPANTS

As participants of this research it will:

- Give opportunity develop a better understanding of special education and inclusive education
- The importance of inclusive education and in the lives of these students
- Ways to create opportunities for SSN
- Contribute in the development and improvement education for all.
- Inform MoE of the current philosophy of Inclusive Education
- Challenges faced which needs to be addressed properly.

POTENTIAL HARM TO THE PARTICIPANTS

No potential harm is anticipated in this research. However there is a possibility of participants being identified by their head teachers and other colleagues in the research. As a precaution, interview questions will focus on issues and topic researched. Naming of individuals will be discouraged.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RIGHTS

In order to ensure the confidentiality and rights, the following aspects will be strictly and highly adopted:

- All the participants will be anonymous.
- Data collected will be safely locked in my hard drive with a separated folder with security code.
- The information collected will only be used for this research writing and only be read by my supervisors.
- If any information is to be used outside the this dissertation, conformation and permission will be re-obtained from you.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

1. All the participants may wish to withdraw from this research study; however, it is advisable that this will be allowed no later than two weeks, after you have checked your transcribed data.
2. You can contact me by the following means:

- I. Phone: +447448417161
 - II. Email: ssachindeo@yahoo.com
 - III. Or: deos@roehampton.ac.uk
3. You will be also granted time to read the transcripts of your interview and to make any amendments if required and also to withdraw at this point in time.

INFORMED CONSENT

If you agree to accept to participate willing and voluntarily than will be asked to sign a separate consent form which will explain:

- A. Clearly highlight on the nature of the research
- B. Fully elaborate the requirements and procedure
- C. The commitment is through their own willingness and without any incentives.

COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS

If there are any questions and issues relating to the research you can contact me using the above contact details. However, if you wish, you may also contact my supervisor via email or phone:

Phone:

Email: marie.komorna@gmail.com

Thank you very much for your assistance! ☺

Yours sincerely,

.....

SALESH DEO

7.2 Appendix 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following questions are my guide to carry out the semi- structured interviews in order to collect in-depth responses from the participants.

Main Question 1

What is general teachers' knowledge of inclusion?

Main Question 2

Inclusion of SSN in to mainstream primary schools is seen to have many positive impacts. What are your views on the advantages if we include them?

Main Question 3

On the other hand since inclusion is a new concept therefore teachers do encounter some challenges in facilitating SSN in mainstream primary schools?

Sub Questions

1. Tell me how you understand about inclusion
2. Tell me your understanding of inclusive education.
3. Describe how you perceive about including SSN in the general classrooms.
4. We are having major shift towards inclusive education in the country currently, what is your view of when is the best time to include SSN in general classroom.
5. Tell me more about some of the ways you include SSN in the classroom during teaching and also in outdoor activities.
6. Since inclusive education has been introduced in the country recently and many students with special needs were enrolled in primary schools because of the persuasive promises such as extra funding, additional resources and more teachers. However, in less than two years many students were referred back to special schools and some either left schooling or engaged in some sort of work.
 - 6.1. Can you tell or explain what could be the possible reasons for referring students with special needs back to special schools?
7. Tell me how this benefits the SSN and their peers
8. Describe how this benefits the teachers?

9. Can share your understanding on social development of SSN and their peers?
10. Can you share your experiences on the academic outcomes of SSN?
11. The inclusion of SSN in general classrooms is seen as economically cost effective. What do you think about this statement?
12. Can you share and explain what challenges these challenges?
13. What is your view of where students with special need (SSN) to be educated? Explain your reasons based on their 'Rights to Education'.
14. Can you express your views on funding, whether it is sufficient or not to become inclusive Fiji?
15. Can you share your views about the competence of teachers and on their training?
16. Schools are also seen as barriers to inclusion, what you think are the underlying reasons.
 - A. Environmental barriers in schools
 - B. Accessibility and user friendly.
17. Tell me your views on the cultural aspects:
 - I. Beliefs and values

7.3 Appendix 3

LETTER FROM CHARLES UNIVERSITY



CHARLES
UNIVERSITY
IN PRAGUE
Faculty of Education

The Director Primary
Ministry of Education
Quality House
Suva,
Fiji

June 24th, 2016

RE: CONFIRMATION STUDENT AND CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Dear Madame, Sir,

This is to confirm that Saleshe S. Deo is a student at Faculty of Education, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic currently undertaking joint Master's degree in Special and Inclusive Education from University of Roehampton, University of Oslo and Charles University.

Mr. Deo is placed in Charles University from July to December, 2016 for his dissertation. He has submitted his proposal and of which the data collection will be conducted in Fiji.

The department of Special and Inclusive Education wishes him best of luck for data collection and his research study.

If you require more information please contact the following personnel below:

Mrs. Sarka Kanova, MA

Programme Convenor

Erasmus Mundus Special and Inclusive Education

Faculty of Education

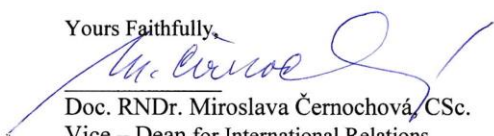
Charles University, Prague

Email: sarka.kanova@pedf.cuni.cz

Magdalény Rettigová 4, 116 39 Praha 1, Czech Republic
tel.: +420 221 900 111
www.pedf.cuni.cz
IČ 00216208 DIČ CZ00216208

Mrs. Marie Komorná, MA
Thesis Supervisor, Department of Special Education
Faculty of Education
Charles University, Prague
Email: marie.komorna@gmail.com

Yours Faithfully,





Doc. RNDr. Miroslava Černochová, CSc.
Vice – Dean for International Relations
Faculty of Education
Charles University, Prague



7.4 Appendix 4

APPROVAL FROM MINISTRY OF EDUCATION FIJI

	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, HERITAGE & ARTS <i>Quality Education for Change, Peace and Progress</i>	
<u>Resident Address:</u> Marela House, 19 Thurston Street, Suva, Fiji.		Ph: (679) 3314477
<u>Postal Address:</u> Private Mail Bag, Government Buildings, Suva, Fiji.		Fax: (679) 3303511
<u>Our Reference:</u> RA 18/16		<u>Date:</u> 8 th July 2016

Mr Satesh Sachin Deo
Lot 37 Vatudina Rd
Muanikoso Housing
Nasinu, Fiji

Re: **Official Approval to Conduct Research in Fiji**

Dear Mr Deo

We are pleased to inform you that the approval for the request to conduct research in Fiji has been granted on the topic: "Teachers' perception of inclusion of students with special needs in four mainstream schools in Nausori district in Fiji"

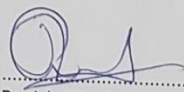
The approval is granted for the period of 6 months from July 2016 – December 2016 as specified in your request.

It is also noted that in this research, you will be working closely with the Ministry of Education who would be assisting you with facilitating your research. Please liaise with the relevant personnel and organizations with regards to the logistics and the conduct of your research and be further advised that the Government of Fiji's legislations, procedures, policies and protocols must be unreservedly adhered to.

As a condition for the research approval, you are not to disclose the findings of the research to the public and to use the research only for Masters Study. A copy of the final research report must be submitted to the Ministry of Education, Heritage & Arts (MOEHA) through this office upon completion, before the commencement of any publication. Only after the MOEHA Research & Ethics Council has endorsed the report, shall you be allowed to do any publication of the report. The report will be reserved in the MOEHA Research Library and will be availed for reference by Senior Ministry and Government officials.

Moreover, it is important to note that the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts reserves a right to publish the final report or an edited summary of it.

We further wish you success in your research study.


.....
Ranish Nitesh Chand (Mr)
for **Permanent Secretary for Education, Heritage & Arts.**

cc. MoE Research File

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION,
NATIONAL HERITAGE, CULTURE & ARTS

7.5 Appendix 5

LETTER TO HEAD TEACHERS

7th July, 2016
Salesh Sachin Deo

The Head Teacher
Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, Salesh S. Deo TPF 69105, currently, pursuing my education in Erasmus Mundus Masters in Special and inclusive Education in Prague, Czech Republic. It is a joint programme between University of Roehampton- London, University of Oslo- Norway and Charles University- Prague. The programme started in September 2015 and will be finishing by 31 December, 2016 and after being studied (average of 3 months in each from September 2015 to June 2016) in all three universities, I have been placed in Prague for complete my dissertation from July to December, 2016.

In order to conduct my dissertation study, I have chosen Fiji as the destination for data collection for my proposed study. The title for research is: '*Teachers' Perception of Inclusion of Students with Special Needs in Mainstream Primary Schools in Fiji*'. The proposed study is focused to be conducted in Central Division in Nausori District especially in rural schools.

The main aim of this research is to explore teachers understanding of special education, and inclusive education. This will enable to me to reveal some of the in-depth knowledge of rural school teachers and their opinion towards inclusion of students with special needs. As teachers are at the front line to implement inclusion their views are crucial hence, it could be used to improve and develop on the areas of concern from this research for quality education. Further, contribution towards the literature which is pivotal, however, in regards to our context there is few but not specifically in this field. Hence, the nature of the qualitative study cannot be generalized but possibly it could be used for future studies and improve the educational service for students with special needs.

Therefore, I hereby request approval from you to interview two of your staff who have some experience with students with special needs to conduct this research to complete my studies.

Anticipating for your approval and blessing.

Yours Faithfully



Salesh S. Deo
TPF 69105

7.6 Appendix 6

PARTICIPANTS CONSENT



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read and fully understood both in written and orally the information provided by the researcher in regards to this research project.

I hereby agree to accept the following terms and conditions:

- I have volunteered to take part in this research study to assist the researcher with my own will.
- I have been explained in written and also orally the aim and objective of this research.
- I do not have to answer any question that I may be unsure or uncomfortable with.
- The interview will be recorded using a dicta phone and will be transcribed, which will be given back to me for conformation and any amendments, if required.
- The entire information collect will be only used for the purpose of writing the research dissertation for the Masters Project.
- The researcher will maintain confidentiality of the data and using pseudonyms to protect my identity.
- Information collected will also be shared by Ministry of Education Fiji upon request for future improvements and development.
- The data can also be used for publication and presented in seminars or workshops for improvement and awareness of special and inclusive education.

I hereby authorise and give my consent to voluntarily participate in this research.

Name :.....
Signature :.....
Date :.....
Contact :

Researcher

I commit to respect all the ethical guidelines and obligations contained in the present consent form.

Signature of the Researcher : _____

Date : _____

7.7 Appendix 7

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMANTION SHEET

Name: _____ Pseudonym: _____

GENDER: Male: ☐ Female: ☐

AGE:

☐ 20 – 30 years

☐ 31 – 40 years

☐ 41 – 50 years

☐ 51 – 60 years

QUALIFICATION

Certificate: ☐

Undergraduate: ☐

Postgraduate: ☐

Masters: ☐

TEACHING EXPERIENCES

☐ 0 – 5 years

☐ 6 – 10 years

☐ 11 – 15 years

☐ 16 – 20 years

☐ 21 - 25 years

☐ Over 25 years

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN YOUR CLASS (2016).

☐ Learning disabilities

☐ Physical disabilities

☐ Behavioural & Emotional Disorder

☐ Hearing Impairment

☐ Intellectual Impairment

☐ Speech Disorder

☐ Visual Impairment

☐ Attention Deficit Disorder

☐ Health Conditions

☐ Others

Any previous teaching experience's with students with special needs?

If _____ Yes- _____ explain _____

Do you have any family member with special needs?
Explain _____

