

SECTION 1

1.1 Introduction to the Study

With this study, I explored teachers' opinions and views on classroom management, to try to understand whether they believe that classroom management enhances or impedes quality of education. According to Creemers (1994:1), society expects learning results from the school, whereas results in education are achieved in a specific place within schools, namely the classroom. I don't entirely agree with Creemer's opinion, since the classroom is probably not the only factor which influences results or outcomes. There were several factors which influence educational outcomes. Creemers' statement prompted me to think about classroom management. I wondered whether aspects such as the educational and aesthetic appeal of a classroom, the availability and accessibility of resources, classroom discipline, grouping procedures, planning, and preparation of lessons possibly enhanced or impeded the quality of education. I was intrigued by the notion that by managing my class in a certain way, the possibility existed that I could enhance or impede the quality of education in my classroom. To confirm or repudiate my assumption, I accessed and consulted research on classroom management and quality education. Secondly, I asked colleagues what their views and opinions were on classroom management and quality education.

1.2 Discussion of Key Concepts in the Title

Classroom management, according to Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1993:7), appears to be the sum total of activities needed to allow the main task of teaching and learning to take place effectively, so that aims can be achieved.

The concept "quality" is more difficult to understand, since it holds different meanings for different people.

According to Downey *et al.* (1994:8) a number of authors have attempted to define the concept "quality":

- Merriam-Websters Collegiate Dictionary (1993) defines quality as a degree of excellence, a term applicable to any characteristic.
- Deming (1991) defines quality as meeting and exceeding customers' needs and expectations, and then continuing to improve.
- Feigenbaum (1991) similarly defines quality as what the customer says it is.

Downey *et al.* (1994:8), offer their own conclusion regarding the nature of quality. They define quality as meeting, exceeding and delighting customers' needs and expectations with the recognition that these needs and desires will change over time.

In an educational context, Arcaro (1995:15) believes that quality is an elusive concept. She states that we all think we know quality when we see it. Webster's dictionary defines quality as "peculiar and essential character and degree of excellence". With such an ambiguous definition, how can teachers expect quality and know when it is achieved? Arcaro (1995:16) claims that quality means expecting the best from each and every student. It means continuous improvement. It also means doing things better, and achieving higher standards.

Quality requires moving from competition to co-operation, focusing on education as a process and on learning to learn, rather than just covering the curriculum.

Arcaro (1995:17) also interestingly refers to the philosophy of Stephen Covey (The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People) who claims that the foundation of quality is respect.

My own interpretation of educational quality is as follows: Role-players in education should strive for excellence at every level of the education process. Principals and teachers ought to be aware of excellence and should strive to achieve it by continually improving on everything they do in their schools and classrooms. Deming's definition of quality shows that the maintenance of quality is a continuous process, which should continually be improved. The value ascribed to quality education could to a large extent depend on the needs, expectations, values, and priorities of the community in which the particular school is situated. Educational quality may also change over time. The knowledge, skills and attitudes, which are currently valued by parents and learners, may not be seen as important in a few years time. Quality education appears to be a difficult concept to define and understand. Different people define it differently, and there may be as many definitions of quality as there are teachers and learners.

1.3 Background to the Research Problem

One of the recent policy documents which partly addressed my inquiry, and which, is currently central to the debate on quality improvement, is the Policy on Whole School Evaluation (2000).

In this policy document, the Minister of Education (Policy on Whole School Evaluation, 2000) states that attempts at improving quality of teaching and learning require strategies which focus specifically on the performance of both teachers and learners. The Minister also expresses concern for the apparent poor quality of teaching and learning at school and classroom level and urges for an overall improvement in levels of achievement and accompanying examination results.

He requests that role-players in education assist in this endeavour by ensuring that schools provide learners with the knowledge, skills, positive attitudes and values they need to compete competitively in the global economy, to live and function effectively in a civilised society and thereby restore public confidence in the South African education system.

In conducting this study, I focused not only on teachers' opinions and understanding of classroom management and quality education, but also on what teachers claim they do in their classrooms, which may possibly enhance quality of education. This enabled me to elicit ideas from experienced colleagues and helped me derive a meaningful understanding of the dynamics and advantages of classroom management. I also explored teachers' awareness and conceptual understanding of quality education, to discover whether, in their opinion, classroom management influences quality of education.

1.4 The Need to Conduct this Research

a. Personal reflections on this research.

In order to explain why I considered it necessary to conduct this research, I need to relate some of my personal past experiences while teaching at a school in Pretoria. I taught at this particular school for nine years. A colleague, who taught in the Foundation Phase, had been teaching with me for the same period of time. During this period I never once saw her teach. Each day she would sit at her table, which was positioned in the corner at the back of the classroom. The curtains were always drawn. The learners completed several worksheets during the course of the school day. They worked in complete silence with limited teacher-learner interaction or communication. In my opinion the learners were being seriously deprived of their right to education, and I considered this particular teacher as a childminder, not as a teacher.

A dissatisfied parent whose daughter attended a neighbouring school, once complained to me about the child's teacher who had started a home industry in her classroom. She had equipped it with a stove and baking equipment, and taught learners while she baked. I wondered how the principal could allow the teacher to do that.

These do not seem to be isolated incidents, as one only needs to read the daily newspapers to discover even more serious types of misconduct taking place in classrooms in schools throughout the country.

My concern is that there appears to be a number of teachers who, for some reason, are not concerned about quality education. Perhaps teachers do not want to improve, or do not know how to improve the quality of education in their classrooms. In conducting this study, I would like to aim to generate an awareness and understanding of classroom management and quality education among teachers.

b. Educational need to conduct this research

There are probably numerous reasons to which the apparent lack of awareness and understanding of educational quality among teachers can be attributed. In my own opinion, one possible explanation is that teachers have had limited exposure to the limited literature available on educational quality and improvement at the classroom level. Jansen (1995:196) critically discusses research, which has been published by the international research community regarding educational effectiveness and quality. He cites authors who are of the opinion that we know relatively little about the everyday realities of schools, particularly how key actors carry out their roles, despite widely published information on education. Jansen (1995:197) also suggests that a need exists for educational quality research to take as its starting point the complexities of what happens inside classrooms, rather than simple input-output analyses of schools.

1.5 Formulation of Research Question

What are teachers' views on whether classroom management influences quality of education either by enhancing or impeding it?

1.6 Formulation of Claim

My experience as a classroom teacher supported my claim that consistent and effective classroom management probably enhances, or at least contributes to quality of education. Among others, aspects such as good order and discipline, thorough macro planning to pace the tempo of teaching throughout the year, thorough daily preparation of lessons and activities and a pleasant classroom atmosphere, probably collectively create a classroom environment conducive to teaching and the achievement of learning outcomes. I supported my claim by providing theoretical evidence of my assumptions by means of a Literature Review and a Conceptual Framework, which is discussed in Section 2.

1.7 Research Method

I conducted a qualitative inquiry in which I explored teachers' views and opinions on classroom management and how these may influence quality of education. I needed to understand the meaning of classroom management and how the different aspects of classroom management interact and work together to either enhance or impede quality of education.

Merriam (1988:17) explains that, "in contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research assumes that there are multiple realities, that the world is not an objective thing out there but a function of personal interaction and perception. It is a highly subjective phenomenon in need of interpretation rather than measuring. Beliefs rather than facts form the basis of perception". In this study, teachers' views and opinions regarding classroom management and quality education form the basis of perception.

Qualitative research is exploratory, inductive, and emphasises processes rather than ends. In qualitative research, there are no predetermined hypotheses, no treatments, and no restrictions on the end product. This means that variables cannot be manipulated. The researcher has to observe, discover by intuition, and sense that which is occurring in a natural setting. According to Merriam (1988:19), two other important aspects of qualitative research that distinguish it from quantitative work are qualitative description and induction. The qualitative researcher is interested in process, meaning, and understanding. In this study, I am interested in the process, meaning, and understanding of classroom management and quality education.

1.7.1 Target Group

The target group comprised primary school teachers at one school, situated in Wellington, as well as two schools situated in Paarl. The participants were experienced teachers and were perceived to be competent teachers by their respective school principals.

1.7.2 Sampling Technique

I approached the principals of three different schools. I asked them to select their most experienced and competent teachers to write essays in which they describe their opinions and views on classroom management and quality education. The sampling technique entailed purposive sampling because this study required that participants be experienced teachers.

I assumed that teachers who have been classroom teachers for several years probably have more experience in classroom management than recently qualified teachers. I considered their views meaningful.

I employed purposive sampling, which according to Merriam (1988:48) is based on the assumption that I wanted to discover, understand, and gain insight. I needed to select a sample from which I could learn the most. In addition to written documents, the essays, I also conducted two semi-structured interviews as a means of comparison, which provided this study with additional rich data, which may have been omitted in the essays.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

Merriam (1988:19) points out that one of the characteristics of qualitative research is that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. I approached the school principals telephonically and made appointments to meet them. I explained the purpose and extent of this study and requested approval for teachers to participate in it. The principals granted their approval.

I delivered envelopes containing covering letters and writing paper for participating teachers to each school. The covering letter (Addendum A) specified that I required information on classroom management and quality education. I also arranged the date and time for the collection of completed essays.

1.7.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Merriam (1988:20) cites Goetz and Le Compte (1984:4), who claim that purely inductive research begins with collection of data, empirical observations or measurements of some kind, and builds theoretical categories and propositions from relationships discovered among the data. In this study the raw data comprised twenty-five essays and two semi-structured interviews. The content of essays was sorted, colour coded, then categorised into key themes. The key themes were analysed to discover relationships between them as well as regularities which were then transformed into categories into which subsequent items were sorted. Merriam (1988:133) points out that devising categories is largely an intuitive process, which involves looking for recurring regularities in the data. Merriam (1988:134) also mentions that devising categories involves both convergent and divergent thinking. Convergence is the task of fleshing out the categories once they have been developed.

1.8 Summary of Section 1

In section 1, I presented an overview of this study. I clarified the background and circumstances, which gave rise to the research problem and research question. This was done from both past and present perspectives, which hopefully have motivated and warranted the need for further investigation into the research problem. Section 1 concludes with an account of the research method I applied in terms of target group, sampling, data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

In section 2, the Literature Review, I discuss relevant theoretical arguments to demonstrate my understanding of the literature and some theories of classroom management, in order to solve the research problem and ultimately answer the research question.

SECTION 2

LITERATURE STUDY OF THE COMPONENTS OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

2.1 Introduction

In section 1.2 various definitions of the concept “quality” were provided. Perceptions of what constitutes quality education could, among others, depend on the needs and values of the school community. Downey, *et al.* (1994:10), contend that many definitions of quality appear to be customer centred. Since parents and learners could be regarded as customers, it probably could be said schools provide the type of quality education that satisfy the school community, especially the student, since the student is the primary and ultimate customer. The provision of education in all schools, however, is required to be consistent with the prescriptions of National Policy and democratically decided notions of what constitutes quality in education. According to the National Policy on Whole School Evaluation, which focuses on improvement in education, the following key areas need to be monitored and evaluated (2000: 6)

- Governance and basic functionality of the school,
- Leadership, management and communication,
- Quality of teaching and learning,
- Educator development,
- Resources,
- Standards of achievement, particularly learner achievement.

From my understanding of these key areas, I have noted that at least two of the five key areas could be addressed at classroom level, namely quality of teaching and learning and standards of learner achievement. Both these key areas embody the concept of quality education.

2.2 Process Used to Access and Select the Literature

To guide the literature search, I drew up a list of key words, which I used in an electronic search. The list of words included: classroom management, quality education, quality control, school improvement, and school effectiveness. The search yielded copious amounts of literature based on research conducted and published on Total Quality Management (TQM) programmes particularly in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The research in these two countries focused on quality improvement strategies and school effective programmes which were introduced in schools in certain states and districts, and which emphasised the roles of the principal and governing bodies in implementing Total Quality Management. While this literature search provided interesting background information and reading, it was problematic in the sense that it yielded limited content based on empirical research at classroom level.

2.3 Literature Review and Conceptual Framework of Study

I decided to conduct a literature review, and drew on the Comprehensive Model of School Effectiveness devised by Creemers in Reynolds et al. (1996:51), to formulate the conceptual framework, as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

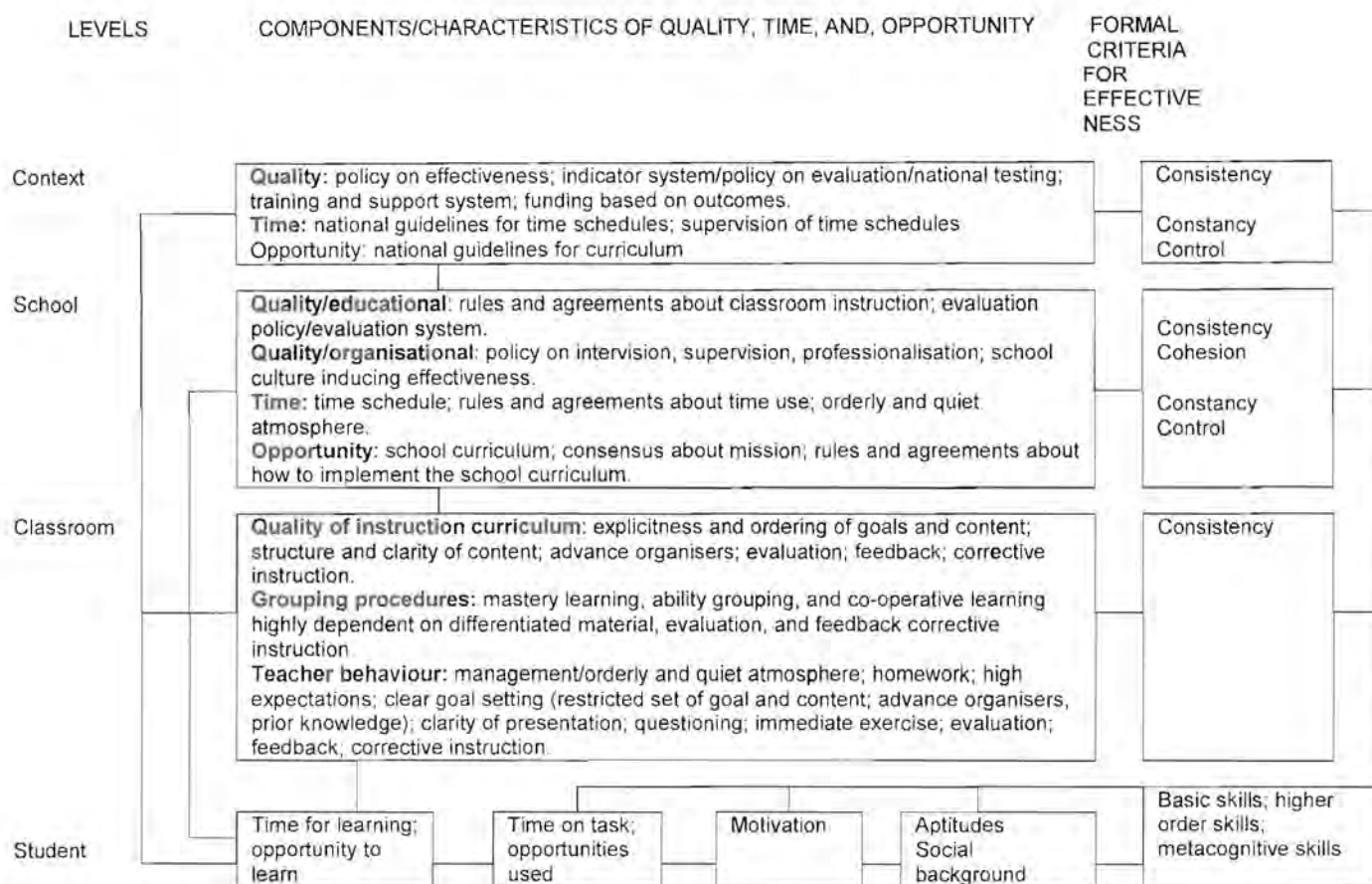


Figure 2.1 Creemers' comprehensive model of school effectiveness

Although a study of school effectiveness differs from a study of classroom management and quality education, I found that the concepts used in the third level of the model, the classroom level, could also be applied to classroom management. At the classroom level of the model, Creemers addresses three key issues: quality of instruction curriculum, grouping procedures and teacher behaviour. These three key issues could possibly play a role in classroom management, and for this reason I used them to guide and locate this inquiry.

2.3.1 Quality of instruction curriculum

According to the Educator's Manual of the W.C.E.D (Western Cape Education Department (2000:86), the intramural learning programme is decided by the curriculum, and whatever is needed to support it by way of staff, facilities and equipment. In order for the curriculum to be effectively implemented, effective classroom management is required. The school year-plan and timetable set the time parameters, and what happens inside the classroom depends on the individual educator. Creemers' model (1996:50), states that the curriculum refers to documents like textbooks and other material used by the teacher, which means that the effects of material are influenced by the way teachers use them.

2.3.1.1 Indicators of Quality of Instruction Curriculum

According to Creemers' model (1996:50), structure and clarity of content, explicitness and ordering of goals and content, the use of advance organisers and the use of materials for evaluation of student outcomes, feedback and corrective instruction, are indicators of the quality of the instruction curriculum. These four indicators constitute planning and preparation. According to the W.C.E.D Educator's Manual, (2000:85), smooth day-to-day management relies on effective advance planning.

a. Structure and clarity of learning area content

The W.C.E.D Educator's Manual (2000:43), states that the eight different learning areas, within the Outcomes Based curriculum, comprise specific content, which has to be taught by the teacher, as well as specific learning outcomes, which have to be achieved by the learners.

Learning area content must therefore be structured, planned, prepared, and taught with the specific learning outcomes in mind. Learners must be informed of the learning outcome objectives and must show evidence of progressing towards achieving all the outcomes, to ensure that the essential skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and values are being internalised. Specific learning outcomes for each of the learning areas in each of the three phases have been stipulated and must be achieved by means of the content.

b. Explicitness and ordering of goals and content

Each learning area prescribes its specific body of content, which must be covered to achieve the outcomes. Price and Nelson (1999:12) maintain that an effective activity or lesson plan begins with an appropriate, clearly written objective. An objective is a description of a learning outcome.

Well-written objectives, which form part of the planning and preparation of every lesson, help teachers clarify precisely what they want their learners to learn.

c. Lesson objectives as advance organisers

Lesson objectives provide focus and direction, and help guide the selection of appropriate activities. They provide teachers with a way of evaluating whether or not the learners have learned, and are therefore a way of measuring the effectiveness of their teaching. Well written, measurable objectives include four components: content, behaviour, condition and criterion.

- d. Use of materials for evaluation of student outcomes, feedback, and corrective instruction

The way in which work is assessed and rewarded will influence the learner's attitude towards the learning area content and activities. Marks must be related to standards, which provide the learner with a realistic perception of his own ability. Wherever possible, correction must be viewed as an opportunity to improve, rather than a punishment. One of the demands of effective classroom management is the return of tests and assignments to learners without delay.

In my opinion, I believe that learners will not benefit from teaching unless they receive knowledge and feedback of their results. Learners want to know how they are doing. Assessing learners' work and returning it to them without delay emphasises the importance of the lesson content and motivates the learner to improve and make the necessary corrections.

2.3.2 Grouping procedures

According to the W.C.E.D, Educator's Manual (2000:94), group learning encourages learners to discuss what they are doing with one another. In doing so, they must verbalise their thinking, and this clarifies their understanding of new concepts, re-enforcing what they have learned. Group learning also enables peer teaching. There are several different ways of grouping learners, although for group work to be effective, teachers' instructions need to be clear and understandable. Learners can be grouped in pairs, mixed ability groups, ability and remediation groups.

Creemers (1996:52) states that research into grouping procedures is mostly comparative, and tries to prove that a specific procedure is better than others. The results show that the success of grouping is highly determined by the availability of proper instructional material and by teacher behaviour. According to Marland (1993:39), the physical layout, particularly the arrangement of classroom furniture, is the greatest single management device. The manner in which the learners are positioned influences not only their behaviour, but their academic achievement as well. For example, a study of below-average ability nine-year-old learners seated in groups of four with pairs of two-seater tables facing, found an average of 52% of the time on task. When the seating was re-arranged in rows, the on-task proportion rose to 84% and then to 91%.

The ideal appears to be the arrangement of groups in such a way that each learner can have the degree of privacy necessary for the majority of work, and the possibility of co-operative groupings at other times.

Circulation space, which facilitates disciplinary control and control of work for the teacher, ought to be adequate. This is, however, difficult in overcrowded classrooms, prevalent in South African schools at present.

The position of the teacher's table too, is a factor in classroom management that could contribute significantly to control and discipline in the classroom. Marland (1993:40) believes that the focal presence of the teacher is important. For this reason the teacher's table must be positioned so that all the learners can see the teacher when he is at his table.

The teacher's table must also be clearly visible to the learners as they enter the classroom. The stable figure of the teacher in a well-known position in the classroom is a comforting sight for learners.

2.3.3 Teacher behaviour

Creemers (1996: 52) states that teacher behaviour is not only a determinant of the success or failure of the curriculum and grouping procedures, but also has an independent contribution to effectiveness. Teachers set the time framework for lessons as well as for homework, organise the instructional environment and provide, initiate and continue the instructional process. Creemers' indicators of teacher behaviour, at the classroom level, which I wish to apply to this study, include:

- a. Classroom management and organisation
- b. An orderly atmosphere
- c. A clean and tidy classroom
- d. Discipline
- e. Easily accessible resources
- f. Time management
- g. Use of homework

a. Classroom management and organisation

It is obvious in Creemers' model that teachers are the central components of instruction at the classroom level. They make use of curricula materials and actually set out the grouping procedures in the classrooms. The W.C.E.D Educator's Manual (2000:93) points out that at the beginning of the year, the educator might discuss the organisation of the classroom with the learners.

The arrangement of the furniture, where resources will be stored, classroom duties and other features of daily classroom life can be decided. As learners work with the educator in organising the classroom, they are introduced to many important life-skills, like responsibility and self-discipline.

When the educator and learners have decided together what duties need to be carried out in the classroom each day, a duty roster may be put up, which will specify classroom duties, such as cleaning and sweeping, opening and closing of windows, handing out books, etc. Sharing classroom responsibilities lightens the educator's workload and contributes to a pleasant classroom atmosphere. The teacher needs to be reminded that the bigger the class is, the more carefully it has to be organised. The way a class is organised for learning should vary according to the lesson situation. Some outcomes are achieved easier through whole-class teaching, while others are better achieved through group-work.

b. An orderly atmosphere

Creemers (1994:110) believes that one of the main concerns of an effective teacher is to build a quality teaching and learning environment. With all the hours spent in a classroom by both the teacher and learners, it is important that the atmosphere of the classroom be pleasant and homely, but at the same time conducive to effective teaching and learning.

Reynolds *et al.* (1996:41) cite Mortimore *et al.* (1988) who conducted research in the United Kingdom based upon fifty randomly selected London primary schools over a period of four years.

They found that among others, an effective school had a positive ethos, a pleasant environment, and friendly ambience. Similarly, Jensen (1988:54) proposes that a well-designed learning environment can do many things. At its best, it can create a favourable relationship between the learner and the subject matter, stimulating thought processes, creativity, and curiosity. A pleasant and relaxed classroom atmosphere appears to build self-esteem and confidence, inform, influence, and excite learners. It could probably add to a learner's sense of responsibility, sense of justice and positive feelings about school. Stones (1992:248) also proposes that teachers are the main determiners of the learning environment that evoke emotional states in learners.

The W.C.E.D Educator's Manual (2000:92), suggests that each classroom must be a nurturing, comfortable and interesting place, as the atmosphere in a classroom helps learners to learn and develop. Teachers need to ensure that learners experience overall learning conditions positively.

Marland (1993:34) similarly maintains that a classroom of one's own means that you can create an atmosphere that reflects your character. It helps you to use wall displays as teaching aids: it means that you can manage the practical supply of learning materials better, have the learners' work easily at hand, and never have to search for anything. It means, above all, that you can use the physical environment of the classroom as an ally in influencing your learners.

c. A clean and tidy classroom

A well-kept, clean and tidy classroom is not only aesthetically pleasing, it is also the first impression the learner is presented with upon entering the teaching and learning environment. Marland (1993:34) furthermore believes that learners behave better in a room which is well organised and has individual character, and that the environment actually teaches. A clean and tidy classroom contains a tidy but practical layout of desks, a clean blackboard with no smudges of previous lessons, neatly packed and stored books, empty dustbins, and no litter strewn on the floor. He adds, "In a busy teaching day one cannot afford to be confused by clutter".

An attractive, aesthetically pleasing classroom could also possibly positively influence teaching and learning. Wall displays, which are relevant to the current themes and lessons being dealt with, could be attractively arranged. Displays consisting of pictures, charts and the learners' own work can make a classroom a happy and pleasant place to spend most of one's day in. A pin-board on the wall of the classroom could also be used to pin up important administrative documents such as the timetable. Graphs or thermometers depicting the progress of the learners can contribute to positive behaviour and motivate learners to improve their performance.

Factors, which may impede the creation of a favourable classroom atmosphere, may arise from the neighbourhood in which the school is situated. A school located in an unsafe neighbourhood may generate teacher and learner fear and incidents of vandalism may exacerbate feelings of fear and insecurity.

Graffiti scribbled on any wall within the school must be removed immediately because signs of abuse, which are left in view of learners, are invitations to further damage. The effect of vandalised classrooms on teachers and learners is depressing. Teachers should encourage learners to feel that even though they may visit a classroom only a few times in the week, they should share in the care of it.

From a teacher's perspective, the maintenance and cleanliness of the school are indicators of the school system's attitude toward teachers. Mitchell in Bacharach and Mundell (1995:220) point out that in a good workplace, there are few repair problems, an emphasis on cleanliness, enough custodial staff, adequate cleaning supplies, timely repairs, and proven pride in the building.

In a poor workplace, there may be broken windows, burned-out lights, major repair problems, and shortages of cleaning supplies, custodial staff cutbacks, and a lengthy process for repairs.

d. Discipline

The W.C.E.D Educator's Manual (2000:92), states that the most productive classrooms are those in which learners are so interested in their work that they are constantly busy. The atmosphere is relaxed and learners do not feel threatened. There is no doubt that for the learners to work and achieve good results, there must be order in a classroom. It follows that it remains the responsibility of the teacher to enforce rules and routines, which will promote fair and consistent discipline.

Many teachers ascribe to a reward system as a means of acknowledging good, positive behaviour.

A teacher's acknowledgement of good, positive behaviour by means of a reward often reinforces such behaviour and motivates learners to repeat positive conduct. Smith and Laslett (1993:102) however, advise to the contrary. They state that teachers may provide what they consider to be a variety of pleasant consequences for good work, but the quantity and quality of work will not improve unless the learners share the teacher's view of the desirability of the reward offered.

The question may arise then as to how a teacher could go about improving classroom discipline. B. Rogers (1990) in Ayers and Gray (1998:16) advocates the development and use of a classroom discipline plan, because what happens in the classroom has a significant impact on the school as a whole. Discipline is seen as being determined by such factors as the teacher's approach to discipline, the planning the teacher undertakes, and the consistency with which the plan is applied. Learners seem to prefer teachers who are assertive without being aggressive, who provide direction without coercion, and who give choices rather than warnings.

In developing their plans, teachers could:

- Include rules that are perceived as fair, clear, and enforceable.
- Clarify the consequences of misbehaviour.
- Place an emphasis on building positive relationships.

- Distinguish between a short-term issue where they can use an immediate response to misbehaviour, e.g. a reprimand, and a long term issue where they need to address the problem more fully e.g. discussion after class with the learner or with the parents.

Smith and Laslett (1993:17) state that classroom rules define the boundaries for behaviour within a classroom. They are in effect the formal statement of the teacher's expectations about what learners may and may not do. It is important to state clearly and precisely what the boundaries are for permissible and non-permissible conduct.

Some teachers have found, that food is undoubtedly a powerful reinforcer. Research conducted by Smith and Laslett (1993:102) reveals that sweets and chocolates usually yield the best disciplinary results.

Class privileges of a more academic nature can sometimes be successfully used as positive discipline motivators, such as being allowed to read a book in the reading corner or playing an educational game. Smith and Laslett (1993:106) also point out that learners should earn a reward for doing something worthwhile, rather than receive a bribe for not doing something. In this way, they maintain, the teacher is not trying to train obedience, but is aiming to move the learner from dependent to independent effort.

Praise and encouragement too are also acceptable means of encouraging positive behaviour.

Favourable comments made publicly, communicate to the class not only the good results they have achieved individually, but also the value the teacher places on the effort involved and attainment thereof.

A teacher's acknowledgement of good, positive behaviour by means of a verbal reward or praise often reinforces such behaviour and motivates learners to repeat positive conduct.

Tauber (1995:225) advises teachers, however, to be friendly, but not to be the learners' friend, because part of the job of teaching is establishing and maintaining classroom management and discipline. Maintaining classroom management and discipline can become difficult if learners perceive the teacher as their friend, for, in most instances, friends do not have to manage others, nor do friends normally evaluate each others' work.

A professional distance between the teacher and the learners as well as the teacher and parents must always be maintained. Familiarity undermines respect and instead, often gives rise to contempt and conflict. Professionalism, therefore, involves maintaining a warm and caring attitude towards all members of the school community without compromising respect.

Punishment, contrary to positive incentives, involves making something unpleasant happen or removing a reward or privilege. Smith and Laslett (1993:108) state that there is a good deal of evidence to show that immediacy is an important element in making punishment effective.

B.F. Skinner, in Ayers and Gray (1998:33) advocates that punishment must be delivered immediately after the misdemeanour, and should be delivered devoid of emotion and applied fairly and consistently. Group or whole-class punishment should be avoided. Detention, a form of punishment often used by teachers, is usually received so long after the misdemeanour, that appreciation for cause and effect is lost.

Smith and Laslett (1993: 108) maintain that for the classroom teacher, lines, and detention are the most unpleasant consequences he is likely to be able to impose on his learners. There may also be some merit in the advice Tauber gives. Tauber (1995:228) advises that by learning the learners' names as quickly as possible, the teacher could enhance classroom management. Knowledge of learners' names not only expedites the formation of a professional teacher-learner relationship, it also promotes classroom discipline.

e. Easily accessible resources

A resource is something, which enriches learning and helps learners to achieve learning outcomes. While a resource for learning could be anything from a chip packet to a rock painting, the resources that teachers refer to and use most often in a classroom are those, which display organised information and which are constantly retrievable. Information for learning is available in different formats such as print, audio-visual, and electronic sources, as well as sources in the community. The teacher needs to select resources carefully. Resources need to be chosen in such a way that they fit the ages of learners, the learning area, and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values being taught.

Resources may not be incorporated into a lesson merely as an enjoyable distraction. All resources can play a valuable role in the classroom, and learners ought to have access to as many of them as possible.

According to Creemers' model (1996:51), the curriculum refers to documents like textbooks and other materials, which are used by the teacher. To be meaningful, the teaching of content must be supported by appropriate instructional aids.

Mitchell, in Bacharach and Mundell (1995:221) states that a primary part of any job design is providing incumbents with the resources necessary to carry out assigned tasks. Inadequate basic resources drain teachers' energy away from teaching their learners and instead, their efforts go into locating necessary teaching materials. Resource problems are made worse by increased workloads, usually in the form of increased class sizes, additional administrative tasks or excessive non-instructional duties. The resources, which have an immediate impact on a teacher's ability to perform effectively, are time, equipment, materials, and supplies. Teachers, who are fortunate enough to be employed by financially affluent schools, have greater access to teaching aids, equipment, and resources.

At present, due to an increase in new knowledge and technological advances, most school communities expect all learners to be computer literate. Computer skills are important for the future education and employment opportunities of every learner, yet few schools can afford computers.

In my own opinion, relevant reading and reference material ought to be available to learners at all times, without the need to request it. Learners ought to have regular access to a school library and must be taught how to locate books on the shelves. Learners need to be taught research skills to facilitate searches for relevant information in books. The classroom and school library ought to be equipped with a selection of books, articles, magazines, and reference books such as encyclopaedia and dictionaries. There should to be an adequate supply of all the writing and drawing materials and equipment that the learners are likely to require. Unfortunately, the limited financial resources with which many teachers have to be satisfied, makes it difficult to equip a classroom adequately. The shortfall in financial resources has left many schools without essential stationery, textbooks, apparatus, and equipment. Consequently, teachers in schools, particularly in disadvantaged areas and poverty-stricken communities, will have to be creative and improvise with the limited resources available to them.

Adequate equipment and supplies of writing and drawing materials are usually only readily available in schools where parents have purchased these items themselves. The resources required for effective teaching and learning, when available, should be neatly stored in the classroom, to permit quick retrieval.

Teachers, who are fortunate enough to have resources for teaching and learning, should store them in secure places, where they can be controlled, and not stolen or vandalised.

Unfortunately, this would involve locking the resources in a lockable cupboard, which then impedes retrieval by the teacher and accessibility for the learners.

f. Time management

Sykes (1990), cited by Bacharach and Mundell (1995:221), states that one of the primary characteristics of an effectively designed job is that the incumbent is given enough time to complete the responsibilities associated with the position.

Time is especially important in teaching where day-to-day activities vary and in which problem solving plays a major part. Ayers and Gray (1998:5) emphasise the importance of scheduling classroom activities. Teachers' plans for activities, should consider factors such as length of tasks, timing of tasks, variety of tasks, difficulty of tasks, preferred and non-preferred tasks, and whether tasks can be completed within lesson time.

Classroom discipline often depends on the lesson and activity timing skills of the teacher. Lessons that do not begin on time and activities that end before the official lesson time expires tend to afford learners ample opportunity to engage in non-educational behaviour.

Research by Conley, *et al.* (1989), Corcoran *et al.*, 1988, in Bacharach and Mundell (1995:223), shows that work conditions affect teacher attendance, level of effort, classroom efficacy, and teacher morale and job satisfaction.

These researchers found that staff collegiality, participation in decision-making and strong administrative leadership resulted in teachers who were enthusiastic, co-operative, and willing to take responsibility.

Such conditions also appear to foster a high level of staff morale, with teachers being seldom absent from school. In contrast, a lack of resources, low staff collegiality, poor professional development, little influence in decision-making, few rewards and poor administrative leadership all resulted in increased teacher absenteeism, which impacts negatively on time management since valuable teaching time is often compromised by teacher absenteeism.

Punctuality of teachers and learners is another factor, which appears to influence classroom management profoundly. While most quality conscious teachers expect their learners to be punctual for school and each lesson, it appears there are teachers who are ignorant of the benefits of being punctual.

Teachers who leave learners unsupervised for any length of time invite discipline problems and fail to provide learners with sufficient time for maximal instruction. It is thus expected of a teacher to work the required number of hours as prescribed in policy, and to work toward achieving maximal instruction time. Smith and Laslett (1993:3) suggest three related ways to achieve maximal instruction time:

- Get them in. A lesson, which makes a brisk start, will avoid difficulties, which could arise if learners are not promptly engaged in useful activity.

- Get them out. Though many discipline problems arise from a poor start to a lesson, the next most vulnerable time providing opportunity for misbehaviour is the end of a lesson.
- Carefully planning the end of each lesson is a crucial part of the way in which experienced teachers successfully handle the transition from one activity to another. The lasting effect of an interesting learning experience can be wasted and pleasantly developing relationships between teacher and class can be spoiled if a productive lesson dissolves into a noisy, chaotic, and stressful finale.
- Get on with it. Learners' feelings of self-esteem and sense of competence in a particular learning area will depend on the teacher's ability to "get on with it".

g. Use of homework

The allocation of homework should also be in accordance with learners' needs and interests.

Homework must not be given simply to keep the learner busy at home, but must form part of the lesson objectives and be used for consolidation purposes. Schools' homework policies must regulate the type and amount of homework given to learners per learning area each day, because there are teachers who expect learners to complete unreasonable amounts of homework. If properly organised, homework could probably contribute to instructional effectiveness.

2.4 Conclusion

Cohn and Rossmiller (1987:382), provide substantial evidence, which confirms that, although a commitment to learning must permeate the entire school, it is within individual classrooms, and through the efforts of individual teachers, that this commitment is given meaning. Cohn and Rossmiller (1987: 382) claim that there is abundant evidence to show that student achievement is influenced strongly by the way teachers manage their classrooms. Effective teachers gain and hold the attention of students and maintain a classroom environment conducive to learning. They select effective modes and techniques of instruction appropriate to the learning objectives that have been established and to the learning style of students. The atmosphere is orderly and discipline is maintained.

Clear and reasonable rules of conduct are enforced consistently and fairly, lessons begin and end on time, and students know what is expected of them, receive timely feedback on their performance, and are praised for good performance.

Similarly, Marland (1993:7) claims that a good teacher is a good classroom manager. Whatever subject matter or skill is being explored, a teacher's first task is managing the classroom. This includes the planning of the environment, the planning of time, and the relating of the curriculum content to specific learning activities, the organisation of study materials, and the control of the group.

Reynolds *et al* (1996: 11) advocate that it is clear that school effectiveness is mainly determined by classroom effectiveness, which brings the teaching and learning process into the centre of the improvement process.

According to Cohn and Rossmiller (1987:382), a number of researchers have focussed on students in classrooms in developed nations in an attempt to identify the most powerful determinants of student academic achievement. The results of these studies reveal that some variables, which have often been thought to be closely associated with school quality, such as level of spending per pupil, quality of the school building and average class size, account for little or none of the variance in student achievement. On the other hand, variables such as composition of the student body, academic emphasis of school, classroom management and discipline, use of school time and the home-school relationship are more consistently related to student achievement.

SECTION 3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In section 3 I relate the story of the data. I give an account of how I conducted this study. I begin by describing the contextual setting and place of inquiry to inform the reader of the location, resources, staff composition, teacher learner ratio, etc. of each of the three schools that participated in this study. In the research plan I explained the reason for my choice of the sampling procedure and data collection techniques. I also explained the limitations and difficulties I encountered with the data collection, which is important for understanding the research design. From the raw data, I selected a variety of themes from which I devised categories. Section 3 concludes with a description of the themes.

3.2 Contextual Setting and Place of Inquiry

Three schools participated in this inquiry. In 3.2.1 I describe the three schools in greater detail to provide the reader with information regarding the place and the contextual setting of this inquiry. In this discussion, I have neither disclosed the names of the schools, nor the names of the participants so as to keep within the confines of research ethics.

3.2.1 Type of school

School A, is a primary school for boys, which offers English and Afrikaans as languages of instruction. School B, is a primary school for girls, which offers English and Afrikaans as languages of instruction. School C, is a primary school for boys and girls, which offers English and Afrikaans as languages of instruction.

3.2.2 Location of schools

All three schools are situated in the Boland area of the Western Cape in a predominantly farming area. School A and School B are situated in the town of Paarl, within in the central business district and are within walking distance from each other. School C is situated in the town of Wellington, which is approximately fifteen kilometres from Paarl.

3.2.3 Resources

All three schools appear to be equally well equipped with regard to resources. The classrooms are equipped with modern teaching aids. Copies of recently published Outcomes-Based Education textbooks are available to teachers, but have not been purchased for the learners. The three schools each have a well-equipped library as well as technologically advanced computer rooms, where learners are able to consult the Internet and M-web for information. Trained computer teachers teach computer mastery skills. The schools have adequate buildings and facilities to accommodate learners. All three schools appear to be on the same level with regard to the availability of financial resources.

3.2.4 Staff Composition

Schools A and C are similar in their staff composition with the majority of teachers being female, and approximately only four teachers being male, which includes the principal and deputy principal. School B only employs female teachers. Most of the teachers at the three schools are permanently employed by the Western Cape Education Department, while the School Governing Body employs approximately six to eight teachers on an annual contract basis.

3.2.5 Teacher Learner ratio

School A and B have an enrolment number of approximately three hundred learners while school C has an enrolment number of approximately six hundred learners. The teacher learner ratio in all three schools is 1:40.

3.3 Research Plan of Study

The research plan developed as follows: I decided on how I could explore teachers' views and opinions on classroom management and quality education. After reading about observation as a qualitative data collection technique in Merriam (1988:87-103), I thought that observation could probably provide me with more valid data, because I would be able to observe the teacher managing the classroom firsthand. As an outsider, I would be able to notice things which may have become routine to the participants, but which may lead to an understanding of the context. I would have been able to experience classroom management firsthand, rather than have to rely upon an essay or an interview. Unfortunately, however, participant observation was not an option and proved to be impossible for this inquiry. The first reason was that according to Merriam (1988:88), critics of participant observation as a data gathering technique point to the highly subjective and therefore unreliable nature of human perception.

The second reason was that, as with any other data collection technique, one needs to be trained in its usage, and I had no training. The third reason was due to the fact that being a contract teacher myself, I was not entitled to any study leave as stipulated in my contract.

I therefore could not be absent from my own school. Consequently, I decided on essays, which are written documents, as a suitable data collection technique for this inquiry.

The reason for choosing this method of data collection, is that according to Merriam (1988:104), documents are usually produced for reasons other than research and are therefore not subject to the same limitations as participant observation. In addition, documents are ready made sources of data that are usually easily accessible to a researcher. A further advantage in using written documents as a data collection technique was that the essays would probably contain information and insights relevant to the research question, and the data could be acquired in a reasonably practical yet systematic manner. The use of documents as sources of data does, however, have disadvantages and limitations. Merriam (1988:105) cautions that in judging the value of a data source, one can ask whether it contains information or insights relevant to the research question, and whether it fits present definitions of the concepts under scrutiny. If the document does not contain data, which is relevant and meaningful to the research question, it becomes incomplete and uninformative from a research perspective.

Once I had considered the advantages and disadvantages of the use of documents as a data collection technique, I decided to use essays as a data collection technique for this study. I could proceed by focusing my attention on the second part of the research plan, which involved the sampling procedure.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The first reason for my choice of participant schools was that I had previously conducted a research assignment on the topic of Financial Management in Schools, at these three schools. The principals and teachers had co-operated with me and provided me with valuable information, which I could use in my assignment. The second reason was that, as a result of the previous research assignment, I had already established rapport with the principals, who told me that their staff were willing to assist me with further research I may be involved in.

As far as the sampling procedure was concerned, I decided that purposive sampling was the most appropriate sampling procedure for this inquiry. According to Merriam (1988:8), purposive sampling is based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, and gain insight; therefore, one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most. For this reason, I decided to ask each principal to select the participant teachers for me.

I trusted that each principal knew his or her teachers' strengths and abilities and would choose experienced and competent teachers who would probably be known as "good" teachers. Purposive sampling therefore meant that teachers were included in the sample because of their special experience and competence.

3.5 Approaching Participants

The first step in approaching participants involved obtaining approval from the school principals.

I made telephonic appointments to meet with each principal personally, so that I could explain the purpose of the study and obtain their consent to conduct the study at their schools. I also needed to explain to each principal, his or her role in purposive sampling. I briefly met with each principal. They all granted their approval and understood the need for purposive sampling. The second step involved the writing of the covering letter (Addendum A). I wrote the original covering letter in English and translated into Afrikaans. This was necessary as all three schools are dual medium in respect of language of instruction. In the covering letter I introduced myself and provided information regarding the purpose of this study. I requested the participants to write the essay in which they expressed their views and opinions on classroom management, and whether they thought classroom management influenced quality education or not.

I delivered the covering letters at the schools and arranged to collect the essays after two weeks. I returned a fortnight later.

The principal of school A handed me an envelope containing six essays, the principal of school B also handed me an envelope containing six essays, and the principal of school C handed me an envelope containing thirteen essays, therefore, a total of twenty-five essays.

3.6 Data collection

3.6.1 Essays

According to Merriam (1988:67), data conveyed through words have been labelled qualitative.

Qualitative data, among others, consist of detailed descriptions of situations, in this inquiry, the classroom situation. Qualitative data also consist of direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs and thoughts, which in qualitative research are termed raw data. The twenty-five essays were, therefore, the raw data because they contained teachers' opinions and views on classroom management and quality education.

3.6.2 Interviews

The most common form of interview, according to Merriam (1988:71), is the person-to-person encounter in which one person elicits information from another.

It is a conversation with a purpose intended to find out things, which are not directly observable such as opinions, views, thoughts, and feelings. I decided to use a semi-structured, open-ended interview as a means of collecting data in order to access the participants' perspective on classroom management and quality education. A framework of questions to be explored guided the two interviews. I intended to audiotape and transcribe the two interviews, however, both teachers expressed their concern about the interviews being audio taped, and stated that they would feel hesitant to answer questions openly and honestly. Since I felt it my duty as a researcher to keep within the confines of research ethics, I did not audiotape the interviews, but recorded the participants' responses in writing, which they agreed to.

3.6.3 Reasons for multiple method of data collection

Multiple methods of collecting data are called triangulation. According to Merriam (1988:69), methodological triangulation combines dissimilar methods to study the same unit. The rationale is that the flaws of one method are often the strengths of the other. By combining written essays with interviews, I could use the strengths of both methods of data collection and possibly minimise the weaknesses. I also hoped to collect data from the interviews, which may not have been collected in the essays.

3.7 Description of Data Analysis

I need to describe how I processed and analysed the data in order to answer the question raised in this study. Data analysis is essentially the process of making sense out of the raw data. I analysed the textual content of the twenty- five essays and the memoranda of the two semi-structured interviews inductively, by means of textual analysis. The data was sifted through, combined, reduced, and interpreted.

According to Merriam (1988:116), in qualitative research, content analysis is a systematic procedure for describing the content of communications. Although some categories initially guided the study, others emerged throughout the study. Content analysis is a process, which involves the simultaneous coding of raw data and contracting categories that capture relevant characteristics of a document's content.

In this study, content analysis actually began with the reading of the first essay. Next, I read through the data several times from beginning to end.

I numbered the essays P1 to P25. I photocopied the twenty-five essays and the two interview memoranda, so that I could keep the originals neat, use the copies to code, and make notes on. I colour coded the main ideas and key words in each paragraph of every essay, as well as the two interview memoranda. I found that certain words and concepts recurred regularly in the data; therefore, I transformed them into conceptual categories into which subsequent items could be sorted.

Merriam (1988:133), states that devising categories is largely an intuitive process, which is informed by, among others, the purpose of the study. The categories which formed seemed plausible and seemed to make sense given the data from which they emerged. The categories are now ready to be, as Merriam (1988:135) puts it, fleshed out and made more robust by searching through the data for more units of relevant information.

3.8 Summary of data elicited

The raw data yielded extremely limited references to the notion of quality, although the covering letter specifically requested that participants write about their views and opinions as to what exactly constitutes good classroom management and whether it influences the quality of education (Addendum A). I wonder why participants chose to focus on aspects of classroom management, and not on aspects of quality education. The reason for the focus on classroom management can possibly be explained in a follow-up inquiry.

The following categories regarding aspects of classroom management emerged from the raw data.

They are listed in the table according to the number of essays, out of a total of twenty-five essays, in which they were referred to:

| Themes | Occurring in Number of Essays |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Discipline | 21 |
| • Preparation | 13 |
| • Classroom atmosphere | 12 |
| • Classroom organisation | 10 |
| • Planning | 6 |
| • Homework | 4 |
| • Easily accessible resources | 4 |
| • Time management | 4 |
| • Cleanliness and neatness | 3 |
| • Decoration | 3 |
| • Routine (for) | 3 |
| • Class size | 2 |
| • Audio visual aids | 2 |
| • Group composition | 1 |

Table 3.1 Themes Occurring in Essays

I arranged the conceptual categories in the above table according to Creemers' Comprehensive Model of School Effectiveness, which I used to guide the conceptual framework of the study.

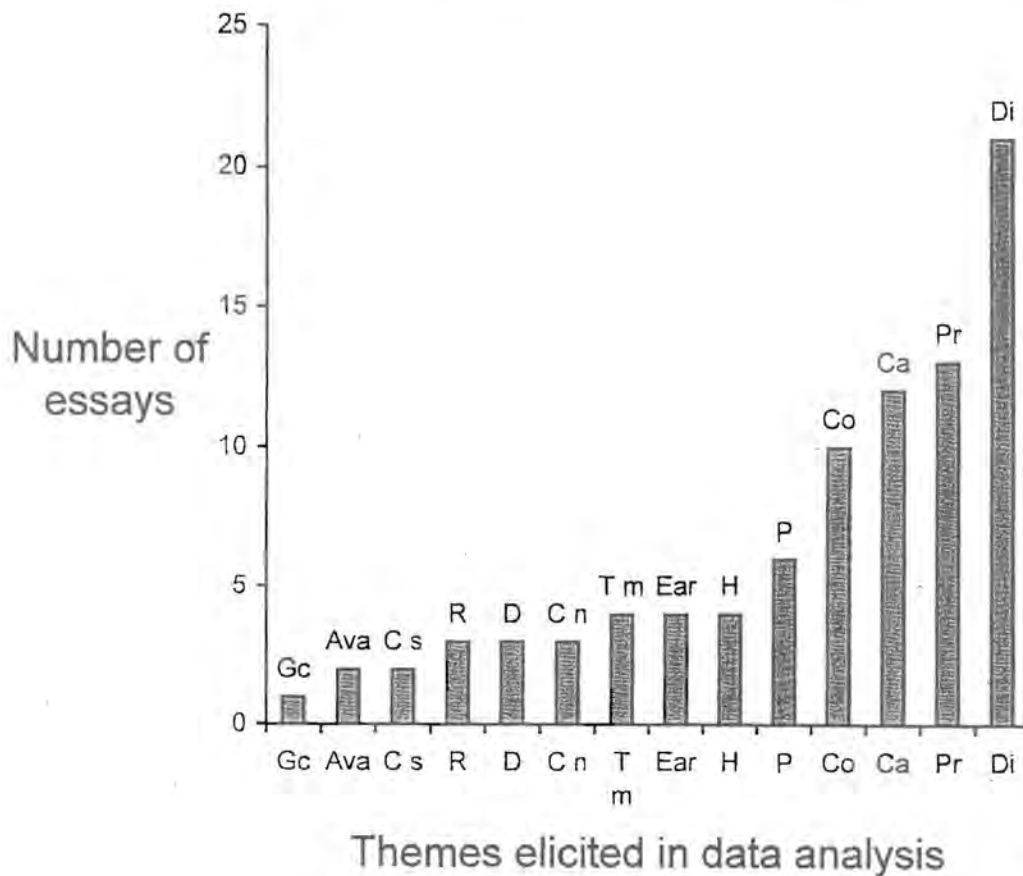


Figure 3.1 Graphic Representation of Themes Elicited in Data Analysis

Keys:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Group composition (Gc) | Audio visual aids (Ava) | Class size (Cs) |
| Routine (R) | Decoration (D) | Homework (H) |
| Planning (P) | Preparation (Pr) | |
| Discipline (Di) | Cleanliness & neatness (C&n) | |
| Classroom organisation (Co) | Classroom atmosphere (Ca) | |
| Easily accessible resources (E a r) | Time management (Tm) | |

3.9 Conclusion

In section three, I provided an overview of the methodological approach I took with regard to the qualitative research design. The contextual setting and place of inquiry was established, followed by a description of the research plan.

I also described how I approached participants and provided reasons for my choice of sampling procedure. Section 3.8 entailed the analysis of the raw data. The data analysis findings were presented in Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1.

SECTION 4

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Introduction

In section 4, the data are interpreted and substantiated in terms of the literature. The data findings allowed me to deduce that the conceptual categories probably influence, interact, and depend on each other. Merriam (1988:140) contends that the categories describe the data, but to some extent they also interpret the data. I used a descriptive narrative approach to interpret the data. Once the data had been interpreted, I made recommendations and drew the conclusions of the study.

4.2 Preliminary Comparative Description of Data

In this section of the study, I provided a preliminary description of the data, and presented them from a comparative perspective. I organised the data according to the components of classroom management described in the literature study and conceptual framework in Section 2. The abbreviation P represents the participant and the numeral refers to the number given to each participant's essay.

4.2.1 Quality of Instruction curriculum

4.2.1.1 Planning and preparation

P3 believes that thorough preparation enhances classroom discipline, because a well-prepared teacher is calm and in control of learning activities. Learners display confidence in a well-managed class because they know exactly what is expected of them, which results in a high standard of learning.

P16 and P25, similarly state that thorough preparation leads to good discipline and that macro planning on an annual basis weekly as well as daily planning, are indispensable components of classroom management.

P4 advises teachers to not only prepare thoroughly, but to think the lesson through and include attractive and interesting material. New content should be unfolded and taught logically and systematically and questioning must occur at different levels, taking the intellectual level of the learners into account.

Learners should be intellectually challenged. P15, P17, P8, P22, and P24 mention the importance of preparation, while P6 states that when a teacher has not planned thoroughly for a lesson, the remaining aspects, or components of classroom management fail. Learners are immediately able to detect a teacher who has not prepared notes and activities and who is not familiar with the learning area content. P7 states that a lesson can also end chaotically when a teacher has not taken the quicker and slower learners into account in his preparation. Learners who complete tasks ahead of the class ought to be catered for. Additional interesting tasks, work cards or games must be prepared for them, not simply to keep them busy, but to extend them academically and enrich their learning experiences. P20, and P11 similarly claim that a teacher must know what has to be done each minute of a lesson, because once learners realise that the teacher is disorganised, they become agitated and talkative, which could lead to discipline problems. P23 expresses concern for the loss of learning time, which is incurred when a teacher is not well prepared. P10 and P12 are of the opinion that thorough preparation is complemented by the use of audio-visual aids and plenty of enthusiasm in lesson presentation,

so that learners become fully involved in the lesson. P14 concludes by stating that thorough planning, organising, and preparing go hand in hand with a high quality education.

Both teachers A and B believe that the entire classroom management process begins with and depends on preparation and planning.

4.2.1.2 Teaching Aids

Teaching aids such as textbooks are an important component of teaching and learning. Mitchell, in Bacharach and Mundell (1995:221), claims that teachers should have access to basic resources such as textbooks. Teachers who are ill-equipped, who do not have access to appropriate teaching aids such as text books, waste time and energy trying to locate resources, and in some instances, have to make do without any resources. If this is so, it follows that lessons will be uninspiring.

Both teachers A and B, agree that audio-visual aids and a variety of teaching aids definitely influence the quality of education, because children enjoy learning by means of sensual stimuli. Both teachers agree that textbooks and exercise books are absolutely necessary for quality education. Every learner must know how to reference work and consult sources to obtain the information needed. Good research skills contribute to effective time management, by reducing the amount of time spent on searching for information.

4.2.2 Group Composition

Group composition can also contribute positively or negatively to the atmosphere of a classroom.

P6 believes that it is a fact that certain personality types complement each other, while others tend to clash with each other. For this reason, the teacher must group learners with the utmost circumspection.

P7, like P6, believes that learners should be grouped in such a way that they will have a positive influence on each other, since negative influences are detrimental to the learning process.

An academically strong learner should be seated next to an academically weaker learner, or a learner with a neat handwriting should sit next to one who has an untidy handwriting. P16 reminds teachers to rotate groups, and to rotate learners' roles, duties and responsibilities, as prescribed in Outcomes Based Education manuals.

Teacher A experiences big groups as problematic. It would be more academically and educationally viable to group learners according to ability so that the teacher can pay more attention to them. A "bottom heavy" class of under-achieving learners demands a large percentage of the teacher's attention and energy, which is detrimental to the development of the above average learners, who are often neglected in class. Disciplinary problems may arise when the needs of academically strong learners are not met. In complete contrast to the opinion of Teacher A, Teacher B believes that class composition plays no role in determining educational quality.

4.2.3 Teacher behaviour

a. Classroom management

Classroom organisation, like the preceding categories, also seems to play a significant role in influencing quality of education. P1 believes that eye contact with learners is important, as is participation, which is not always possible with large groups and large classes. P15 states that the number of learners in a class in relation to the size of the classroom could influence the effectiveness of classroom management negatively.

It is a fact that many classrooms in public schools, although not very spacious, have to accommodate between forty to fifty learners at any one time. To make learning meaningful under cramped circumstances, the teacher must be innovative and organise the teaching aids and furniture in such a way, that sufficient space is available for movement around the class with the minimum of disruption and discomfort for herself and the learners.

In this regard, P4, P17, P6, P8, P21, P10 and P25 all refer to the importance of classroom organisation and the need for the teacher to organise the learning area or space effectively. P6 claims that even the way, in which the desks are arranged in a classroom, forms an integral part of classroom management. P9 concurs by advising that desks be organised in such a way that learners and teachers are able to move around easily. If things are not organised under and around desks, disasters occur.

P25 also confirms this idea by stating that the furniture in the classroom must be arranged so that the teacher is within easy reach of every learner.

(b) An orderly atmosphere

It appears that the particular atmosphere of a classroom could be determined by factors such as cleanliness and neatness of the classroom, the way in which it is decorated and also by the composition of the groups of learners comprising the class. P1 suggests that a relaxed learning environment enhances learning.

P4 and P21 are also in favour of a relaxed learning atmosphere, which can be created and enhanced by cultivating social skills, a spirit of co-operation among learners, taking turns and showing respect for others.

P5 claims that good planning and management leads to a good working atmosphere, and as a result, disciplinary problems are significantly reduced. P17 and P18 are of the opinion that effective classroom management creates a favourable climate in which learners are able to develop and actualise their full potential. P7 also emphasises the importance of a positive and favourable classroom climate, which is echoed by P8 who states that the classroom is the teacher's domain. The teacher's competence in managing the classroom will determine whether a good educational atmosphere will prevail in it. The establishment of a favourable classroom atmosphere demands that certain things be in place. Firstly, the classroom must be orderly and well organised. The visual impact must be interesting for the learner's age and the learning areas taught. P20 believes that an orderly atmosphere makes learners feel secure.

(c) A clean and tidy classroom

P9 believes that the neatness of a classroom is important as it can lead to a calm or chaotic atmosphere.

P10, like P9 believes that a classroom should be learner-friendly. It must be kept neat and the work that is dealt with in class must be displayed on the walls.

P25 also stresses the need to keep a classroom neat and to decorate a class with the learners' work in order to create a pleasant learning atmosphere.

Attractive walls and notice boards, according to Teacher A, allow the learners to visually experience their work, while Teacher B, on the contrary, feels that walls and notice boards do not really influence quality of education.

Teacher A and B both believe that decorating the classroom with pictures and plants, will add to a more welcoming classroom atmosphere, but will not necessary improve the quality of teaching and learning.

(d) Discipline

It appears that effective discipline forms the foundation of classroom management, since 84% of the participants referred to the need for effective discipline. P1 and P9 believe that effective order and discipline must be maintained from the first minute of the school day, as this sets the disciplinary tone for the rest of the school day. P1 maintains that good discipline is an essential precondition for learning. P3 echoes this view by stating that effective classroom management is closely related to good discipline, and that no learning can occur in a class where the teacher is unable to maintain discipline. P16, P4, and P7 prefer to discipline learners positively, by rewarding good behaviour and work. P15, P17, P18, and P24 state that effective classroom management depends largely on good discipline.

P18, P19, and P25 emphasise the importance of classroom rules, which have to be adhered to by learners. P8 believes that discipline, especially self-discipline, is important as it fosters respect for others.

P23 states that ineffective discipline results in a loss of teaching and learning time, particularly for learners who experience attention deficit problems and hyperactivity.

Such learner's need a well structured and ordered environment, so it follows that ineffective discipline could exacerbate their learning problems.

P11 makes a thought provoking statement in saying that discipline in learners' homes is often non-existent due to parents' work commitments.

Parents are often, either too busy or too tired to discipline their children effectively. This places more of the disciplinary responsibilities on the teacher, who must ensure that the learners' lives are structured at school, to make up for the parents' shortcomings. P11 is of the opinion that discipline is important, for if a child is disciplined he/she can get on with the tasks set by the teacher, can concentrate and work to his/her full potential. P12 maintains that strict discipline must be maintained, because if this is not done, the results will be chaos and confusion, which is not conducive to learning. P24 is of similar opinion and believes that discipline is crucial for learning. A well-disciplined learner is one who listens and obeys. From the data, it is clear that teachers view classroom discipline as a prerequisite for the realisation of effective learning.

There are also indications of what constitutes discipline. Some participants are of the opinion that classroom routine positively contributes to effective classroom discipline.

P5 states that a steady routine gives learners a sense of security. P5 always follows the same routine in the morning when the learners enter the classroom. The learners greet their teacher, unpack their suitcases then letters and money are collected.

Learners all have a specific place to put their suitcases and hang up their blazers, which eliminates fighting and confusion as they all know where to find their belongings again. There are also set toilet times to reduce the number of learners leaving the classroom. P5 believes that once a routine is in place, it creates more freedom for the teacher and learners to work and experiment.

Children who feel safe and secure at school pass this feeling on to their parents and few problems arise when parents are happy with their child's schooling.

P6 is of exactly the same opinion regarding routine. P6 states that having a fixed routine is something, which should be instilled in every child, even from babyhood. A child without routine feels lost. A learner must know the classroom routine and know the consequences of certain kinds of conduct in class. P6 feels strongly that quality education is impossible to achieve without effective discipline. P7 also feels that routine is of cardinal importance so that learners are able to learn in a learning friendly environment.

The view of P2 is that when learners are used to a fixed classroom routine, they have a responsibility to be ready to work and learn at set times.

Teacher A states that there has to be order before a teacher can start teaching a lesson.

It is imperative that learners know and respect the discipline boundaries, although the discipline should not be militaristic. The learner should be afforded an opportunity to express himself and is also entitled to an opinion, but with respect. Self-discipline is very important. The learner must want to learn for his own reason and not in fear of punishment. For discipline to be effective it should be applied consistently. Teacher B believes that order and discipline definitely enhance the quality of education.

(e) Easily Accessible Resources

It is also vital that teaching and learning resources be readily accessible to the teacher and learners.

P2, P5, P9 and P25 all agree that class work books, text books, activity cards and worksheets must be stored in a specific place, so that the teacher and learners know where to find them or hand them in.

Everything must have its place and be easily accessible, so that there will be the minimum of movement in class.

(f) Time management

Time management appears to be an extremely important aspect of classroom management.

P2 is especially concerned about the effect that time management has on the quality of education. P2 proposes that teachers do the following to maximize teaching and learning time:

- An enlarged copy of the class timetable must be displayed and all learners must have a copy, so that they know the learning area, time, and place of the next lesson.
- Punctuality must be exercised.
- Procedures for handing out books, worksheets, or equipment must be in place. When learners are responsible for handing out and collecting procedures, rather than the teacher, time is saved.
- Administrative work must be completed during a short administrative period, as administrative work should not encroach on teaching time.
- The teacher should not mark work during lesson time. It is only acceptable to mark completed work in class if the learners directly benefit from it.

P4 and P23 also believe in effective time management. P13 complains about an increase in administrative work, which teachers have to manage.

He claims that the Department of Education is to blame for loss of teaching and learning time because teachers are increasingly expected to complete new forms and supply information on a number of issues, with only vague instructions from the Department. The result is that while teachers run about in an effort to find someone who can assist them with accurate instructions, the class is reduced to a state of chaos and valuable teaching time is wasted.

Both teachers A and B mention that extramural activities, especially sport, take up too much of a teacher's time. The organisation of equipment, venues and matches, encroaches on teaching time. Teachers work extremely long hours, and after returning home late from sporting events, are too tired to mark or prepare work for the following day. If teachers were afforded more time to prepare and mark work, the quality of education would definitely improve.

(g) Homework

Where homework is concerned, P6 claims that an integral part of planning and preparation entails informing learners of the dates for completion of homework assignments, and the teacher should be very strict in this regard.

Teacher A stresses that homework should only be given with the aim of consolidating the content or skills taught in class. Thus, too much homework should not be given since children must be afforded time to play, but should, at the same time, become used to a regular homework routine.

Teacher B similarly states that homework must consolidate the work covered in class.

Enough homework must be given so that the learner knows that the teacher is serious about work. Detention is a suitable punishment for learners who continually fail to complete homework.

4.3 Textual Analysis and Interpretation of Data

In this section I present the textual analysis and interpretation of the data. The abbreviation P represents the participants and the numeral refers to the number given to each participant's essay.

P 1 believes that classroom management begins at the start of the school day when learners line up in their rows. The order and sense of formality, which is created when learners line up in rows, creates an atmosphere of discipline, which is an essential component of the learning process. B Rogers (1990) in Ayers and Gray (1998:16) believes that what happens in the classroom has a significant impact on the school as a whole. If this is so, I believe the converse could also be true. The degree of discipline applied and maintained throughout the school as a whole, would probably influence the way in which learners behave in the classroom. It follows that a well-disciplined school has well disciplined learners. In support of my claim, B. Rogers (1990) in Ayers and Gray (1998:16) states that discipline is seen as being determined by such factors as the teacher's approach to discipline and the consistency with which discipline is applied.

When lining up in an ordered manner becomes part of a learner's everyday routine, and all teachers supervise the learners while they enter the school building or specific classrooms, opportunities for bad behaviour are likely to decrease.

P1 does not allow any learner to shout out answers in class, since all learners need to be afforded an equal opportunity to respond to the teacher's questions. P1 appears to consider shouting out in class as disruptive and undisciplined behaviour. A relaxed learning atmosphere is probably created when learners have attained a degree of self-discipline.

P1 is of the opinion that all class-work and homework must be controlled.

Learners need to know precisely what the teacher requires of them with regard to class-work and homework activities or assignments. P1 implies that a fixed routine adds structure to the school day.

According to P1, overcrowded classrooms impede classroom management, since eye contact between teacher and learners is restricted, and learners are not afforded ample opportunities to participate fully in classroom activities.

P2 emphasises the importance of effective time management within the school and classroom and claims that effective time management increases instruction time. Ayers and Gray (1998:5) also emphasise the importance of scheduling classroom activities, especially in regard to length of tasks, and whether set tasks can be completed in the allocated lesson time. P2 is of the opinion that time scheduling can be promoted by means of a well designed time table, which will ensure that teachers and learners arrive at assigned classrooms punctually.

P2 appears to be concerned about time, which is wasted by teachers and learners during the changing of lessons and venues. Similarly, Smith and Laslett (1993:3) are also concerned about working toward achieving maximal instruction time. They contend that lessons, which make a brisk start, reduce opportunities for misbehaviour since learners are immediately engaged in useful activities.

P2 is also in favour of an administrative period in which the teacher deals with administrative duties in such a way that administration does not impinge on and reduce teaching and learning time.

P2 is also of the opinion that time saving procedures in class, in regard to the handing out and collection of books and worksheets, need to be in place. Learners who adhere to classroom procedures and the teacher's work policy or work ethic, feel secure in class, and consequently work more productively. It could be deduced that a fairly rigid classroom routine promotes a sense of security within the learners, which in turn reduces disciplinary problems, which leaves more time for teaching and learning.

P2 furthermore believes that resources, such as books, which are readily accessible to learners, promote the effective use of time. Mitchell, in Bacharach and Mundell (1995:221), reflects P2's opinion, who, believes that resources must be readily accessible to teachers and learners, because the availability of resources has an immediate impact on a teacher's ability to perform effectively. A teacher's energy needs to be channelled into teaching, not into searching for suitable resources. The marking of class-work during lesson time, is only acceptable if the learner directly benefits from the teacher's evaluation of the work.

P3 is of the opinion that discipline and planning are closely related to, and possibly enhance classroom management. In a class where there is an absence of discipline, the teacher is usually unable to control the situation and limited teaching and learning takes place. The same principle applies to planning. The W.C.E.D. Educator's Manual (200:85), states that, smooth day-to-day management relies on effective advance planning. P3 correctly maintains that a teacher, who has planned and prepared the day's lesson, will be able to continue teaching despite disturbances, which may occur.

Learners appear to be perceptive to a teacher's classroom management skills, for they display more self-confidence in classes, which are effectively managed.

In my opinion, learners achieve outcomes in well-managed classrooms more easily because they spend more time on-task and are constantly engaged in the learning content. Stones (1992:248) claims that teachers are the main determiners of the learning environment that evoke emotional states in learners.

By managing their classrooms effectively, by maintaining discipline and always being thoroughly prepared, teachers can instil self-confidence in learners, which contributes to high levels of achievement and attainment of learning outcomes.

P4 emphasises the necessity for thorough planning and preparation and the inclusion of captivating and interesting lesson content, which the teacher unfolds in a logical, systematic, and challenging manner. According to P4, effective time management is important.

The teacher can create a relaxed learning atmosphere, which facilitates the acquisition of social skills, such as co-operation, taking turns, sharing, and showing respect among learners. Respect is an important component of quality in education. Arcaro (1995:17) refers to the philosophy of Stephen Covey (The Seven Habits Of Highly Effective People) who claims that the foundation of quality is respect.

Various questioning techniques and skills may be implemented during the lesson while dynamic verbal and non-verbal communication skills keep learners interested and involved in the lesson content. P4's views on classroom management are in keeping with Creemers' model, which places the teacher at the centre of instruction at the classroom level.

P5 emphatically believes in a rigid classroom routine, which is followed every day, as it gives the learners a sense of security. P5 interestingly points out that teachers enjoy increased parental co-operation and involvement from parents whose children feel secure, safe, and happy in class. Once P5 has a routine in place, and administrative tasks have been dealt with, the remaining time is used for on-task teaching and learning activities.

Since P5 is a Foundation Phase teacher, he/she is able to organise the classroom so that it enhances classroom management. In my opinion, Foundation Phase teachers are fortunate in that they are able to take ownership of their classrooms, and organise their classrooms according to their own needs, since they remain in the classroom throughout the day.

Marland (1993:34) maintains that a classroom of one's own means that the teacher can create an atmosphere that reflects his or her character. It also means that the teacher can organise all the resources and equipment required for the day's lessons and have them readily accessible. In some schools, particularly in the Intermediate and Senior phases, teachers are not as fortunate. It often happens that teachers rotate, moving from one classroom to another, to teach various learning areas.

Teachers are forced to share classrooms with colleagues and have neither sufficient resources nor time to decorate all the classrooms they teach in. Teachers are also hesitant to organise classrooms to specifically suit their own needs, since the other teachers may want the class organised differently. Some teachers keep classrooms tidy, while others are not as conscientious.

According to P5, good planning and management leads to a good working atmosphere, with the results that disciplinary problems are significantly reduced.

P6 maintains that the teacher, together with the learners is responsible for classroom management, and implies that classroom management would not be possible without the learners' co-operation. Learner leaders, in particular, are able to assist the teacher with classroom management responsibilities. P6 emphasises that a rigid classroom routine is the foundation of most classroom management activities. Routine creates discipline, which P6 believes to be an essential part of quality education. Learners must be acquainted with the procedures to be followed in class, as well as rules, which apply to the completion and handing in of homework and assignments. The fact that the learners are co-responsible for classroom management, means that the teacher is afforded more time to concentrate on teaching.

P6 warns that the teacher needs to take the learners' personalities into account, with regard to group composition. Learners who find it difficult to co-operate with one another, need to be placed with learners having similar personality traits.

In my opinion, to avoid conflict, it may be preferable to place learners in personality groups, rather than in ability or mixed ability groups, as suggested by the W.C.E.D Educator's Manual (2000:94). P6 also believes that a teacher, who has planned well and thoroughly prepared a lesson, needs to know the lesson content well, so that the learning outcomes are achieved. To ensure that teachers acquire the necessary classroom management skills and competencies, P6 suggests that classroom management strategies and techniques be included in the course content for student teachers.

P7 claims that it is of the utmost importance that a teacher be well organised, especially in respect to lesson preparation. According to P7, it is inevitable that a class will become uncontrollable when a teacher is disorganised and unprepared. P7 refers particularly to learners of above average intelligence who work quickly and accurately and who require additional material, which will constantly keep them busy, challenged, and interested in the learning content. P7 emphasises that intellectually advanced learners need to be engaged in intellectually stimulating and motivating activities. The learner may not be kept busy with meaningless games, which will not require extra effort from the teacher. This means that teachers need to include additional worksheets and assignments for learners who need assistance and learners who are able to work independently, in their planning and preparation.

During my own teaching experience, I have often voiced concern for intellectually advanced learners whose intellectual needs are seldom met by teachers, as a result of teachers' concern for weaker learners who are more demanding in terms of a teacher's patience and time.

I believe that grouping learners according to ability is advantageous to both teacher and learner, as it enables learners to interact with peers who have similar abilities. In this way they keep each other intellectually stimulated. Creemers (1996:52), states that research has shown that the success of grouping is highly determined by the availability of proper instructional material and by teacher behaviour. Grouping learners according to ability and involving them with planned and prepared instructional material could probably enhance the standard of achievement of outcomes and the quality of education in the classroom. Arcaro (1995:16) claims that quality means, among others, expecting the best from every student and achieving higher standards.

In support of this argument, P7 also emphasises that learners who have a positive influence on each other work well in groups, and experience learning positively through co-operation. P7 is also in favour of pairing learners who display opposing educational characteristics, for example a learner with a neat handwriting could be seated next to a learner with an untidy handwriting, etc.

The essential ingredient, for effective classroom management, according to P7, is discipline. P7 finds that positive, well-disciplined learners can be recognised by means of rewards.

Smith and Lasslett (1993:106) point out that learners should earn a reward for doing something worthwhile, but the teacher has to guard against the reward becoming a bribe.

P7 is of the opinion that routine creates a learning atmosphere, which promotes success.

Learners, who know what is expected of them, feel secure in the classroom and achieve outcomes.

P8, P9, and P10 all demonstrate similar opinions in regard to an orderly classroom atmosphere. According to P8, one of the more important aspects of effective classroom management is that the classroom must be orderly and well organised, and its visual impact must be interesting and appropriate for the learner's age or subject taught.

P9 has found that classroom management affects the order of the day, if things are not in their place, both the teacher and learners become flustered when tasks and lessons need to be attended to. P9 believes that there must be order in a classroom from the time the teacher and learners enter until they leave at the end of the day. P9, furthermore, believes that the tidiness of a classroom is important, as it can lead to a calming or chaotic atmosphere, which by implication may enhance or impede learning. Marland (1993:34), also perceives order as an important component of classroom management, Marland believes that learners behave better in a room which is well organised and has individual character, and that the environment actually teaches. Marland states, " In a busy teaching day one cannot afford to be confused by clutter".

The visual impact of a classroom may also enhance its atmosphere. P8 and P10, rightly claim that the visual impact of a classroom must be interesting and appealing. Marland (1993:34), states that wall displays, which are relevant to the current themes and lessons being dealt with in class, can be attractively arranged. Displays consisting of pictures, charts, and the learners' work can make a classroom a happy and pleasant place to spend most of one's day in.

P8 and P10, like P4, also refer to respect in the classroom, which appears to be a necessary part of every classroom. As mentioned previously in P4, Stephen Covey considers respect to be a precondition for quality.

P9 and P10, advocate that desks must be organised in such a way that the teacher and learners can move around unhindered.

In regard to a teacher moving around the class, from my own experience, I have discovered that the quality of the learners' work improves significantly when I walk among the learners' desks and either comment on, or assist them with the tasks I have given them. At times when I have sat at my table while the learners worked, the overall quality of work appeared to be inferior. I believe the teacher's presence, as she moves between the groups or rows, is a positive motivating factor for the completion of work of a high standard.

P11 is in favour of a teacher being thoroughly prepared. A teacher must know exactly what is to be achieved during a day and have all the necessary equipment, worksheets and books on hand. In order to be thoroughly prepared, a teacher will need to comply with Creemers' (1996:50) indicators of quality, as set out in his model, which comprises structure and clarity of content, explicitness and ordering of goals and content, and the use of advance organisers.

In my own opinion, P11 accurately points out that many learners often lack discipline, as parents are too busy or too tired to discipline their children. What I find slightly irritating, however, is that P11 believes that it is teachers' responsibility to discipline their learners.

I believe that it remains the parents' duty and responsibility to discipline their children, and that it is the learners' duty to behave in class, so that the teacher can fulfil the task she is qualified to do, which is to teach.

P12 believes it is important to involve learners with the learning process as much as possible. To make this possible, learning must be enjoyable. To this end, the teacher must be innovative, think creatively and produce stimulating and interesting visual material, which will captivate learners' attention and interest. An important principle would be to take the learners' interest, needs, and life experiences into account. Marland (1993:34) is in favour of wall displays as teaching aids, which contribute to an interesting learning environment, which can influence learners positively.

P12 also believes that group work can be valuable and therapeutic in the sense that learners learn from and with each other. Discipline is also seen as a precondition for successful group work.

P13 has a grievance and complains about the unreasonable amount of administration that teachers have to deal with daily, to the detriment of classroom management and ultimately the quality of education. P13 blames the increase in administrative work on the principal and management team. In my own opinion and from my own experience, I have found that administrative duties, although a necessary part of teaching, often interfere with teaching and learning, especially where a teacher is responsible a sport or cultural activity. Teachers are at times called from their classrooms to receive telephone calls regarding match fixtures, etc. and leave their classes unsupervised.

The teacher's absence has a negative impact on learner discipline and time management. Smith and Lasslett (1993:3), state that a learner's feeling of self-esteem and sense of competence in a particular learning area depends on the teacher's ability to "get on with it". Thus, it could probably be deduced that in situations where the teacher is not allowed to "get on with it", learners will be negatively affected. P13 also attributes classroom management problems to the insufficient information, which is forthcoming from the various Education Departments, as well as new, sometimes time consuming and unnecessary forms that teachers have to complete. The study of new methods of teaching, especially since the implementation of Outcomes Based Education, also takes up a large percentage of a teacher's time.

P14 believes that organisation, planning and preparation, and strict discipline, contribute positively and are beneficial to classroom management. P14 has, however, mentioned that a teacher's priority is not only to teach, but also to be sensitive and to listen to learners' problems.

It is important that a teacher maintains a positive attitude towards classroom management. Cohn and Rossmiller (1987:382) provide substantial evidence, which confirms that, although a commitment to learning must permeate the entire school, it is within individual classrooms and through the efforts of individual teachers, that this commitment is given meaning.

P15 mentions planning, clear instructions, the discipline of a class, and the class and classroom size as components, which could influence classroom management.

An important component, which P15 mentions which no other participant referred to, is the home or environmental circumstances of learners. Factors, which may impede the creation of a favourable classroom atmosphere, may arise from the learner's home situation or the milieu he or she lives in. Learners do not feel safe and secure and do not develop in homes and schools, which are located in areas that are subject to crime, conflict, and violence.

Schools that are located in milieu handicapped areas; often have overcrowded classrooms owing to factors such as poverty. To add to the discomfort, the classrooms are often vandalised and in need of repair. Mitchell in Bacharach and Mundell (1995:220), points out that in a good work place, there are among others, few repair problems and proven pride in the building. In my own opinion, classrooms, which are in need of repair, create unforeseen difficulties for teachers and learners alike, and impact negatively on the quality of education.

P15 states that the teacher's attitude towards education, influences the way in which she manages a classroom. In my own opinion, what concerns me most is P15 's comment that her mood on a particular day will either impede or enhance the quality of education provided in her classroom. Moods are normally inconsistent feelings. It therefore follows that classroom management will also be inconsistent if it is implemented according to the teacher's mood.

According to the textual analysis this far, I deduce that inconsistent teacher behaviour creates feelings of insecurity in learners, which impedes their learning and consequently negatively influences the quality of education.

Participants of essays 16 to 25, have all referred to similar aspects of classroom management, which in their opinion, influence the quality of education, These aspects of classroom management, have already been textually analysed and interpreted in the preceding essays, therefore I shall not conduct an individual contextual analysis on each of them, since they do not provide additional, meaningful data.

4.4 Linking Categories

Merriam (1988: 135) believes that categories need to be fleshed out and made more robust by searching through the data for more useful units of relevant information. In this study I, linked categories with each other to reveal relationships that exist between them and to describe the manner in which the categories appear to interact and depend on one another.

The data analysis, subsequent findings and data interpretation revealed that discipline is the category which plays the most influential role in classroom management. Discipline can, therefore, be linked to all the categories in this study.

4.4.1 Linking preparation and planning with discipline

Thorough preparation and planning conveys the idea to learners that the teacher is knowledgeable, is familiar with the content and is serious about the lesson. A thoroughly prepared lesson, in which learners are academically occupied and challenged the entire period, significantly reduces any opportunities for misbehaviour. An interesting variety of teaching aids stimulates a learner's natural desire to discover new things and to learn.

Teachers, who are able to captivate and keep learners' attention by supporting the teaching with teaching aids, probably seldom encounter serious discipline problems.

4.4.2 Linking teaching aids with discipline

Teaching aids support teaching by adding new dimensions of interest to the lesson content. Lesson content, which is not supported by teaching aids, will not capture the imagination of the learners. Learning will be limited because young children learn primarily through sensual stimuli. Boring lessons, which are not made interesting by the use of pictures, books, charts, etc, will not inspire learners to participate optimally in the teaching and learning process. Bored and unchallenged learners may resort to adding their own form of excitement and variety to the lesson by misbehaving, which results in discipline problems, which impede teaching and learning.

4.4.3 Linking group composition with discipline

According to Marland (1993:39), the manner in which learners are grouped is the greatest single management device.

Marland recommends that the furniture in the classroom should be grouped so that each learner can have the degree of privacy necessary for the majority of work, and the possibility of co-operative groupings at other times.

It appears as if the composition of groups of learners in a classroom could influence the discipline of a class. Disruptive learners, who are grouped together, can create chaos and make teaching and learning problematic, if not impossible, resulting in serious discipline problems, which impedes quality education.

4.4.4 Linking teacher behaviour with discipline

Cohn and Rosmiller (1987:382) have found that the use of school time, classroom management and discipline have a significant influence on academic achievement.

Marland (1993:7) claims that a good teacher is a good classroom manager. Since routine is an important component of classroom management and routine creates disciplined learners, it follows that discipline influences routine.

- Discipline:Classroom Atmosphere

The findings reveal that effective classroom management appears to generate a positive classroom atmosphere, which may enhance discipline.

- Discipline:Cleanliness and Neatness

Learners tend to behave better and work more productively in a neat and clean classroom. It appears that a neat and clean learning environment is calming, while an untidy classroom may create a sense of chaos, which impedes learning.

- Discipline:Decoration

A classroom, which is decorated with learners' own work, generates a sense of pride and ownership in the classroom, which is a precursor for good behaviour.

- Discipline: Time Management

Poor time management could result in discipline problems. Lessons which do not begin on time and which end early provide learners with ample time to misbehave.

Movement to and from classrooms should be brisk, since misconduct often occurs during the changing of classes. Loitering increases opportunities to misbehave.

- Discipline-Routine

Consistent discipline is required to establish a fixed, workable routine in a classroom, while an established routine appears to enhance learners' discipline. Without discipline, a classroom routine cannot be established, and activities and procedures occur haphazardly. The absence of a class routine can invite chaos and leaves learners with a sense of confusion and insecurity. A permanent classroom routine enhances discipline since learners know exactly which activity takes place at any given time.

Learners also know what the teacher expects of them. The school day is structured and organised, both essential requirements for quality teaching and learning.

- Discipline: Safety and Security

Smith and Laslett (1993:17), claim that classroom rules define the boundaries for behaviour within a classroom. A good code of conduct, consistently enforced by the teacher, generally reduces the possibility of learner of misbehaviour. Learners feel safe and secure in a classroom where the teacher is in control of discipline, and are consequently able to pay attention and concentrate on given tasks. Standard of work improves when learners are able to concentrate on tasks.

- Discipline:Arrangement of Furniture

Marland (1993:39), claims that circulation space in a classroom facilitate disciplinary control. If Marland's claim is true, it follows that the arrangement of furniture in a classroom could probably influence discipline.

Furniture should be arranged so that every learner is visible to the teacher, with the teacher being the focal point of the classroom. Learners whose movements cannot be seen by the teacher at all times, have ample opportunity to engage in mischievous behaviour.

- Discipline:Class and classroom size

According to Cohn and Rosmiller (1987:382), a number of researchers have focused on learners in developed nations in an attempt to identify the most powerful determinants of student academic achievement.

The findings of the studies show that average class size, accounts for little or none of the variance in student achievement.

I disagree with this claim because extremely large groups of learners are probably more difficult to control and discipline than smaller groups. Overcrowding and cramped conditions, where learners are seated too close to one another, may result in misbehaviour and discipline problems. The teacher is also restricted in her movement around the class.

According to Jensen (1988:54), a well-designed learning environment can create a favourable relationship between the learner and the subject matter, stimulating thought processes, creativity and curiosity.

• Discipline:Homework

A fixed homework routine also conveys the message that the teacher is serious about the learning area and the learners' mastery of it.

Homework is a form of discipline, it requires discipline on the part of the learner, and also creates self-discipline.

• Discipline:Intellectual level of the learner

Learners tend to lose concentration and interest in lessons and activities that are either too easy or too difficult for them. Learners whose intellectual levels are not catered for and whose intellectual needs are not met may create discipline problems in a class.

4.5 Implications of Links Between Discipline and other Categories

The implications of the findings are that discipline appears to play an extremely important and meaningful role in classroom management and appears to be indispensable in classroom management. Classroom management, on the other hand, can create a favourable disciplinary environment. The effective maintenance of classroom management probably enhances quality of education. Conversely, ineffective classroom management, together with poor discipline, probably impedes quality of education.

4.6 Additional Category Links

4.6.1 Linking class size, and classroom organisation to homework.

In an overcrowded classroom, circulation space for a teacher is sometimes limited. The arrangement of the furniture makes it difficult for the teacher to check the work and homework of every learner, as the teacher usually has to negotiate an “obstacle course” to reach learners. For this reason teachers often neglect to check homework. Learners sometimes take advantage of this limiting factor and fail to complete homework assignments on a regular basis.

4.6.2 Linking class size and classroom organisation to time management

A teacher needs to check that every learner has completed assigned homework. In a class comprising a minimum of forty learners, checking homework could become a time consuming exercise, which impacts negatively on time management, as teaching time is reduced.

4.6.3 Linking class size and organisation to accessibility of teaching aids

Teaching aids require space in the classroom. A classroom, which is crowded with desks and chairs of forty or more learners, leaves limited space for the storage and use of teaching aids, such as an overhead projector and its trolley. Valuable audio-visual aids such as television sets and video recorders are usually stored in a secure area, some distance from classrooms, which impacts negatively on their accessibility. Gaining access to teaching aids can also influence time management, as time is needed to fetch and return audio-visual equipment.

4.7 Recommendations

With the data interpretation complete, I am able to make certain recommendations regarding classroom management, which in my opinion may probably influence the quality of education provided by a teacher in a classroom. The recommendations I have made have originated from my own subjective interpretation of the data. They are, therefore neither absolute nor free from limitations, and should be viewed tentatively as guidelines, which may be useful to a teacher wishing to improve on classroom management strategies, with the ultimate aim of improving the quality of education, provided in the classroom.

4.7.1 Planning and preparation

It appears that planning and preparation are an indispensable part of classroom management, as many of the participant teachers referred to planning and preparation in their essays. Teacher A and B believe that the entire classroom management process begins with and depends on planning and preparation.

The planning and preparation of lessons cannot occur in a fragmented manner, and require some thought on behalf of the teacher. As far as planning is concerned, the teacher is required to develop a macro plan of the entire year's work for each learning area, and specify the content, which must be covered each term, to pace the tempo of teaching and learning, and to ensure that all the learning content is taught. In this way, the teacher is able to acquaint herself with all the knowledge, skills, and values that have to be taught.

Once the planning is complete, the teacher is able to prepare specific lessons.

Participants have suggested that preparation needs to be done on a weekly basis, one week in advance. This is done to afford the teacher sufficient time to obtain the necessary resources, audio-visual aids and equipment required to make the lesson interesting and meaningful, to achieve the learning outcomes.

From the contextual data analysis, it becomes apparent that the needs of all the learners in the class must be addressed in the lesson preparation. Additional activities or assignments serve as enrichment for intellectually advanced learners, and need to be included in the lesson preparation, so that these learners are able to optimise their potential.

Some participants point out that learners are able to detect unprepared teachers. Once learners realise that the teacher is disorganised, does not know the facts of the lesson, and has not prepared challenging worksheets or interesting audio-visual aids, they become restless and talkative. Learners, who are not actively engaged in learning content for the entire duration of the lesson, develop discipline problems. The idea is to keep the learners so busy, that they do not have time to misbehave, therefore, the teacher needs to prepare sufficient work, to keep all learners actively involved in the lesson. A teacher who has planned and prepared thoroughly, would probably discover that the remaining components of classroom management, such as discipline, time management, homework, etc, are easily implemented.

A teacher who neglects planning and preparation will probably not be able to motivate and guide learners to obtain high standards of achievement, which impedes the creation of a quality teaching and learning environment.

4.7.2 Group composition

The most prominent view to arise from the discussion on group composition is that the teacher needs to group learners with the utmost circumspection. Important aspects, which need to be taken into account when grouping learners, are, among others, the learners' personality types, and abilities. The central aim of Outcomes Based Education is co-operative learning and for this reason, the teacher must ensure that learners are grouped in such a way that they are able to learn from and with each other, and that they influence each other positively.

Discipline problems and conflict may arise in some groups, owing to differences in personality. The teacher must consider all the grouping options, once she knows the learners well. As stated previously in the literature review, the ideal appears to be the arrangement of groups in such a way that each learner can have the degree of privacy necessary for the majority of work, and the possibility of co-operative groupings at other times.

This may sound ideal in theory, but may prove difficult in practice, particularly in overcrowded classrooms, which makes rearranging of furniture a difficult, time-consuming exercise. In my opinion, the type of furniture available to the teacher may also influence grouping procedures. Single desks and chairs are easier to group than the older double seat and desk combination, which are heavy, cumbersome, and difficult to move around in a classroom.

Participants claim that the way in which learners are grouped, can influence the classroom atmosphere positively or negatively, which can have an effect on the quality of education provided in a classroom.

4.7.3 Classroom management and organisation

Every teacher needs to organise the available teaching and learning space effectively. The most prominent aspect of classroom organisation referred to in the data, is that eye contact needs to be maintained between the teacher and learner for the entire duration of the lesson. All learners must be visible to the teacher, and all learners need to have an unobscured view of the teacher. The placement of furniture is an influential factor in classroom management, and for this reason the teacher's table needs to be prominently placed in the classroom, preferably near the front. It is also important for the teacher to have easy access to learners' desks as well as circulation space between their desks, so that she can check progress, assist, and encourage.

In order to establish a well-organised classroom, the teacher also has to decide on the layout of the classroom. She must find suitable storage space for books, audio-visual aids, worksheets, and equipment.

In my opinion learners are often capable of organising a classroom efficiently and often contribute to classroom organisation with great enthusiasm, by packing away books and equipment, which can save a teacher time, and thus promotes time management in the classroom.

4.7.4 An orderly atmosphere

Creemers (1994:110) believes that one of the main concerns of an effective teacher is to build a quality teaching and learning environment. The teacher, and in particular the learners, spend long hours inside a classroom, and for this reason it is imperative that the classroom be both aesthetically pleasing, as well as educationally attractive.

It is important to note that Jensen (1988:54), states that a well-designed learning environment can create a favourable relationship between the learner and subject matter. A favourable environment also stimulates thought processes, creativity and curiosity, and excites learners. Best of all, a favourable environment can instil in learners, positive feelings about school. In my opinion, it is essential that learners look forward to school each day, and that they need to experience the classroom as a safe and happy place.

The atmosphere in a classroom is, therefore, probably determined by the way in which the classroom is decorated. Classrooms could be seen as a display room in which learners' work is exhibited. Displaying learners' efforts enhances the educational atmosphere of the classroom and instils a sense of pride in learners. Proud learners constantly try to improve the standard of their work, and continuous improvement, according to Arcaro (1995:15) is synonymous with educational quality.

4.7.5 A clean and tidy classroom

Marland (1993:34) believes that learners' behaviour improves in a classroom, which is clean and tidy. According to Marland, a clean and tidy classroom contains a tidy, but practical layout of furniture, a clean blackboard with no smudges from previous lessons, neatly packed and stored books, empty dustbins, and a litter-free floor.

In my opinion, it is important that learners take turns to dust and sweep their classroom, empty dustbins, and tidy up at the end of the school day. It instils in them a sense of responsibility, pride, and respect. Marland (1993:34) correctly points out that "In a busy teaching day one cannot afford to be confused by clutter".

4.7.6 Discipline

In this study, the data referring to the role played by discipline in classroom management has been discussed in detail. From the data analysis, I deduce that effective classroom management creates effective discipline, and conversely, ineffective classroom management probably gives rise to ineffective discipline. I also deduce that classroom management is influenced either positively or negatively by learners' discipline. Undisciplined learners neither keep a classroom clean and tidy, obey time constraints and complete homework regularly, nor do they demonstrate respect for school property, the teacher, their peers and themselves. My recommendation, therefore, is that discipline appears to be the component of classroom management, which influences the quality of education most significantly. Many of the participants mentioned that education couldn't occur without consistent discipline.

4.7.7 Easily accessible resources

Resources enrich learning and help learners achieve learning outcomes. The most important resources, which impact on a teacher's ability to perform effectively and which probably influence the quality of education provided in a classroom, are time, equipment, materials, and supplies. As this study has shown, resources need to be readily and easily accessible to teachers and learners. According to Creemers' model (1996:51), it is essential that the teaching of content be supported by appropriate instructional aids. I deduce that all resources play a valuable role in classroom management therefore; learners need to have access to as many of them as possible.

4.7.8 Time management

There are several aspects of time management, which need to be addressed at classroom level. The teacher needs to be conscious of time management principles, in order to maximise opportunities for teaching and learning. Timetables, a brisk start to a lesson, the length of the lesson, and a timeous ending, when enforced, all contribute to time efficacy.

In my opinion, two crucial aspects of time management, which were not referred to at all in the data, are teacher and learner punctuality, and teacher attendance. Valuable teaching and learning time and opportunities are lost when a teacher is absent from school. Punctuality and excellent school attendance are professional aspects of teaching, which teachers particularly need to be made conscious of. They go hand in hand with self-discipline and the creation of a quality educational environment.

4.7.9 Use of Homework

Homework ought to be given to learners according to time limits prescribed by policy documents for each learning area. It is important that the purpose of homework, which is primarily meant to consolidate learning content taught in class, be borne in mind by teachers.

4.8 Strengths and Limitations of this Study

4.8.1 Strengths of this study

The data provided ample material for obtaining a better understanding of the various aspects of classroom management. The contextual analysis of the data afforded me the opportunity to draw directly on the experience of teachers. Two aspects which were referred to by the majority of participants were planning and preparation and discipline.

As a teacher, I am now particularly careful and conscious of the quality of my own planning and preparation, and prefer to prepare thoroughly for every lesson, well in advance. I am also increasingly aware of the benefits of consistent and firm discipline and the influential role it plays in classroom management.

4.8.2 Limitations of this study

Few participants succeeded in linking classroom management with quality education, which could be viewed by some as a limitation. However, teachers would most probably assume that good classroom management implies quality education. Participants probably did not deem it necessary to explicitly link the two concepts, and even if they wanted to, would have found it both difficult to provide evidence that quality education had occurred and to measure the extent to which it had occurred.

It may be that some teachers have perhaps not thought about quality in terms of education, or the measures they can take to improve quality, particularly in their own classrooms.

4.9 Conclusions

4.9.1 Participants' Conclusions

The relationship between classroom management and quality education can be superficially discerned in some of the participant's comments, which reflect their opinions on the influence of classroom management on quality education.

P2: Effective classroom management is absolutely necessary and definitely influences the quality of education.

- P3: A teacher's class is like a business. If the teacher is a poor manager he will not make any profit.
- P4: Good classroom management definitely influences the quality of education.
- P5: Good classroom management definitely influences the quality of education.
- P6: A successful day at school depends largely on good classroom management.
- P8: Classroom management definitely influences the quality of education. It creates the correct atmosphere for learning and education. Meaningful learning and education can only take place if the teacher knows how to apply classroom management.
- P10: Every teacher should follow a proven model of classroom management.
If the teacher realizes that certain aspects of his classroom management do not enhance quality of education, he should immediately adjust his classroom management strategies to ensure that learners are exposed to high standards of quality education.
- P11: Classroom management is the alpha and the omega of instruction.
- P12: Good classroom management ensures a successful education.
- P13: Effective classroom management lies in the hands of the teacher. Unnecessary time and energy is wasted when the teacher does not have effective classroom management. This is when behavioural and other non-educational problems occur.
- P14: Classroom management definitely influences quality of education.
- P15: Classroom management definitely influences quality of education.

- P16: Classroom management definitely influences quality of education.
- P17: I have found that classroom management affects the order of the day.
- P18: Good Classroom management definitely influences quality of education.
- P19: Classroom management definitely influences quality of education. Good management is the recipe for success, which ensures good teaching and learning.
- P20: Good quality education begins with good management.
- P23: Good classroom management is essential for quality education. Education cannot take place when chaos prevails.
- P25: Good classroom management definitely positively influences the quality of education.

4.9.2 Conclusion of the study

I am unfortunately unable to draw a conclusion regarding the precise nature of quality in education, owing to the fact that teachers did not refer to aspects of quality education in their essays. Teachers failed to provide clarity on their understanding of what constitutes quality education. Possible reasons for this could be that teachers have not yet been exposed to discussions regarding quality in education, and are unaware of the need for continuous improvement. Perhaps they do not understand the meaning of quality, since it is an elusive concept to define. There could be various interesting reasons, which would warrant further investigation. Teachers were, however, able to write with authority on aspects of classroom management, a concept they were familiar with and had experience in.

Creemers (1996:115) states that policy discourse in most societies has concerned the school level, not the classroom level. It is clear that the neglect of a coherent focus upon classrooms has been very costly indeed. Put simply, the classroom learning level has maybe two or three times more influence on student achievement than the school level does. In light of this statement, I am able to deduce and conclude that certain aspects of classroom management are likely to enhance or impede the quality of education. The concept classroom management embraces all the activities, procedures, actions, verbal and non-verbal communication, which takes place in a single classroom on a daily basis. The teacher and learners interact cognitively, academically, socially and emotionally with each other, with the aim of achieving specific learning outcomes.

It appears that the achievement of these outcomes probably depends to a large extent, on the teacher's ability to manage and control, every input into the teaching and learning process. In the classroom, discipline appears to be the aspect of classroom management, which seems to influence the quality of education more than any other, since most teachers commented on discipline in their essays.

The enforcement of strict and consistent discipline, together with a structured daily routine, appears to be indispensable, if high standards of teaching and learning are to be maintained. It also appears as if discipline could influence aspects of classroom management, such as time management, class size, the composition of groups and homework.

The importance of planning and preparation was a recurring theme in the majority of essays.

I believe that planning and preparation could also significantly influence quality of teaching and learning.

In support of my conclusion and the validity of this study, I would like to draw on the opinions of, Reynolds *et al*, and Cohn and Rossmiller, in regard to classroom management: Reynolds *et al* (1996:41), advocate that it is clear that school effectiveness is mainly determined by classroom effectiveness, which brings the teaching and learning process into the centre of the improvement process.

Furthermore, Cohn and Rossmiller (1987:382) state that a number of researchers have focused on students in classrooms in developed nations in an attempt to identify the most powerful determinants of student academic achievement. The results of these studies show that, among others, variables such as composition of the student body, academic emphasis of school, classroom management, discipline, use of school time and the home-school relationship are consistently related to student achievement. Certain aspects of classroom management, therefore, probably influence and enhance quality of education.