CHAPTER FIVE

**FINDINGS, SYNTHESIS, RECOMMENDATIONS
AND CONCLUSION**

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to report and summarise the main findings that emerged from the literature study and empirical investigation. This is followed by recommendations, limitations of the study and also recommendations for further research. The implications of the recommendations listed will also be brought to the attention of the reader.

Chapter one highlighted an introductory orientation and understanding of the study based on "variables contributing towards an establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools" with reference to the Moretele Area Project Office (circuit office) in the North-West Province.

The problem statement, research questions, aims of the study, research design and explanation of concepts were also presented, supported by relevant literature study with an aim of obtaining more information and under-standing on this study.

In chapter two a discussion based on the variables contributing towards the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools was supported by the literature review, as outlined in the preceding section (see par. 2.1 to 2.9.2.1) with an aim of establishing to what extent the variables under investigation have had a positive or a negative impact on a culture of teaching and learning in high schools. Chapter three focused on the discussion and rationale for the research design and methodology. The description of the sample and sampling procedures are also outlined in this chapter (see par. 3.1.3, 3.2, 3.2.1 and 3.2.1.1). Both quantitative and qualitative approaches (questionnaires, observations and interviews) were therefore employed with an aim of getting a deeper under-standing of the problem under investigation, as well as the

consistency, validity and reliability of the study. Fraser (1998:527) supports the above by stating that "… the combination of multiple sources of data and techniques must be used to give a consistent story." Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998:21) note that "… mixed methods can answer questions which either methodologies in isolation cannot." In this study, questionnaires, interviews and observation were employed on three high schools in North-West Province which were purposefully selected based on their Grade 12 final examination results over a period of five years, as outlined in par. 3.2.1.1.

Data analyses, interpretation and discussion of the quantitative and qualitative results were done in chapter four, where cumulative results representing all three schools were analysed using frequency analyses (see tables 4.13-4.56), and was followed by comparison of responses across the three schools (see tables 4.57-4.80) as well as the ANOVA, using multiple comparisons at 0.05 level of significance (see tables 4.81-4.83). The main reason of employing more than one research instrument is to attempt to obtain reliability, validity and consistency of results, as well as the in-depth understanding of variables contributing towards the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools.

5.2   FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The main aim of this study, as mentioned in the previous chapters, was to investigate the variables contributing towards the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools. To achieve the aim above, the following objectives outlined in chapter one (see par. 1.5) were investigated and also supported by literature review:

▪   To determine which variables impact on the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools and what relationship these variables have with specific reference to the tasks and functions of the School Management Teams (SMTs), teachers, parents and learners.

▪   To investigate how different variables interact with one another when comparing the culture of teaching and learning in different high schools

and how the outcomes of the comparison could be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning in disadvantaged schools.

Through the literature review in the previous chapters, supported by both quantitative and qualitative methods, it became clear that the topic of this research is complex and has also shown that ongoing debates and discussions from educationists, researchers and relevant stakeholders are still proceeding since the inception of the new South African democratic society in 1994. On this note, authors such as Thembela (1991:42), Nxumalo (1993:53), Chisholm and Vally (1996:41), the Education Foundation (2000:57), Robinson (2002:290), the Education Africa Forum (2003:98) and media press such as the *Sowetan* (3 November, 2004:6) and the *City Press* (26 September, 2004:6), support the idea that a culture of teaching and learning in disadvantaged schools is declining based on the inadequacy of some variables mentioned previously (see chapter two). Although the literature showed the importance of the availability of variables in schools in order to improve a culture of teaching and learning, authors such as Kelly (1990:1), Pitout, *et al.* (1992:5), Mwamwenda (1990:22), Meintjies (1992:48), Dowling, *et al.*, 1994:14), Borich (1996:83), Smit, *et al.* (1996:4), South African Schools' Act, No 84 (1996:31), Amos (1999:5), Lemmer (2000:61), Department of Education (2002:3), Chrisman (2005:16-20), and Olson (2005:37-40) emphasised that commitment, dedication and obedience by all involved in the teaching and learning situation should also be taken into consideration. The integration of variables therefore plays an important role in the teaching and learning situation. On this note, a conceptual framework had been be formulated, as mentioned previously, that commitment, improvisation, qualification, and dedication (interacting with other available variables) could contribute towards the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

The former President, Nelson Mandela (in *Sunday Times*, 30 March 1997:5) Thabo Mbeki (in *Sowetan*, 9 April 1998:10) and former Minister of Education, Prof Kader Asmal (in *Sunday Times*, 2002:2) respectively stressed the above same opinion. I still maintain that it is necessary to explore this topic further because of its complexity and that the phenomenon "a culture of teaching and learning in schools" is now of concern to every teacher, learner, parent,

researcher, politician and other concerned stakeholders. It is on this note that I also employed as many integrated variables as possible in the data with an aim of attempting to explore their impact in the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

5.3   SYNTHESIS OF THE INSIGHTS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review in chapter two revealed a variety of variables contributing towards a culture of teaching and learning in schools, but that such variables are not the only distinct factors responsible for the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. This research therefore develops a flexible framework, which will inform teachers, learners, parents and other stakeholders about the complexities of employing integrated variables, and how they impact on the culture of teaching and learning. In other words, there are no distinct isolated variables that can positively enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools, instead the variables should integrate with an aim of enhancing teaching and learning. In interpreting and supporting the above, I used a multi-level structure of schooling according to Scheerens (1992:81) (see Figure 5.1).

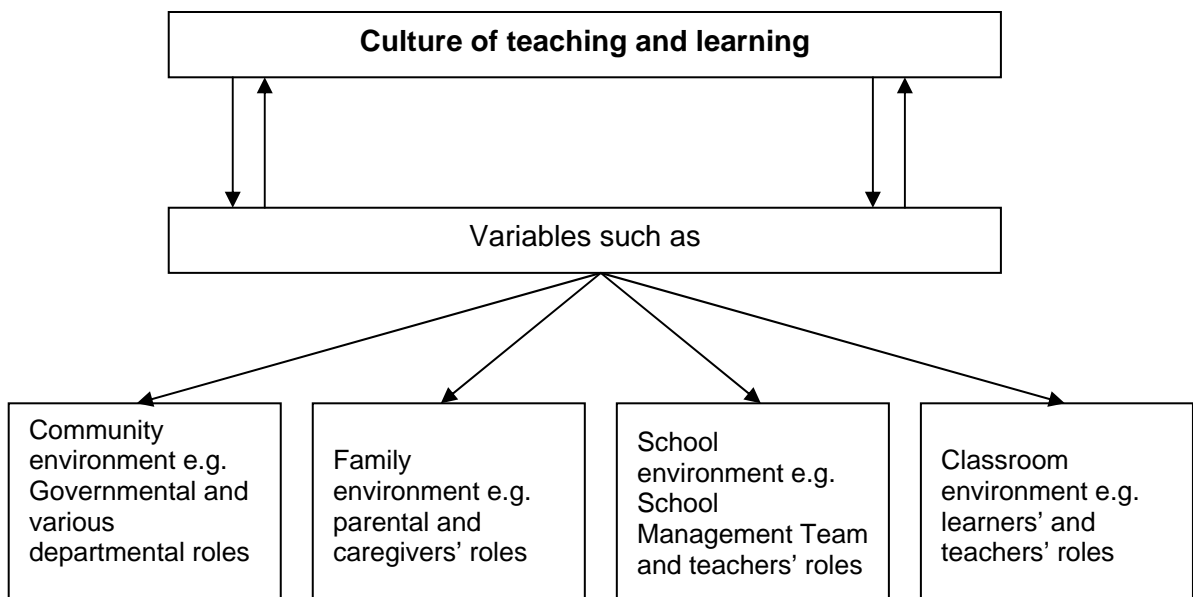| School context or environment | ←→ | School | ←→ | Class or teaching group | ←→ | Individual pupil |
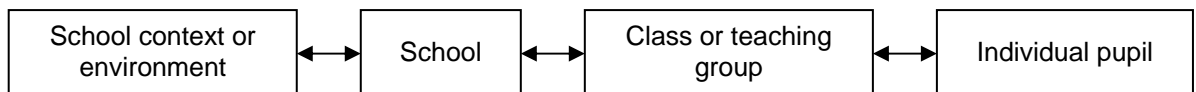
FIGURE 5.1:   MULTI-LEVEL STRUCTURE OF SCHOOLING (SCHEERENS 1992:81)

The structure portrays that the integration of variables and their impact on the culture of teaching and learning in schools should not be seen as closed units or levels but open permeable systems, beneficial for teaching and learning of learners. What I have portrayed in the model is the linear link or association between the factors influencing performance at school at macro level (policy and governance), the managerial responsibilities of the School Governing Body (SGB) operating at meso-level and finally the curriculum and instructional leadership demonstrated by educators or teachers at classroom level.

For the purpose of this research, variables emerging from both Scheerens' model (1990) and the data of this study will be clustered and briefly discussed below under the main findings from the literature review in the previous chapters, where sub-headings of levels of characteristics identified by Scheerens will be under each relevant heading of clustered variables of this study.

My flexible conceptual framework stated above is in line with the conceptual framework of Scheerens' model (1990) for school effectiveness, discussed previously in chapter one in which his model is also viewed as complex as does this study. His model is therefore adapted and integrated with the synthesis of the main findings and literature review to show its relevance and validity to this study (see an adapted diagrammatic representation from Scheerens' model, 1990, below.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│         Culture of teaching and learning      │
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          ↕                            ↕
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│               Variables such as               │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
│ Community    │  │ Family       │  │ School       │  │ Classroom    │
│ environment  │  │ environment  │  │ environment  │  │ environment  │
│ e.g.         │  │ e.g.         │  │ e.g.         │  │ e.g.         │
│ Governmental │  │ parental and │  │ School       │  │ learners'    │
│ and various  │  │ caregivers'  │  │ Management   │  │ and          │
│ departmental │  │ roles        │  │ Team and     │  │ teachers'    │
│ roles        │  │              │  │ teachers'    │  │ roles        │
│              │  │              │  │ roles        │  │              │
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FIGURE 5.2:   ADAPTED DIAGRAMATIC REPRESENTATION FROM SCHEERENS' MODEL, 1990

Based on the above diagram, the focus of both Scheerens' model and my framework is therefore on the following main factors as they consistently appear in each model:

a.   Contextual level (e.g. administrative levels, school size, student-body composition and school categories i.e. rural/urban).

b.   School level (e.g. educational leadership, co-operative planning, quality of school curricula e.g. content covered, orderly atmosphere and evaluative potential).

c.   Classroom level (e.g. time on tasks, structured teaching, opportunity to learn, pupils' progress, monitoring of pupils' progress and reinforcement).

d.   Outputs (e.g. teacher experience and parent support).

e.   Outputs (e.g. student achievement and socio-economic status).

There is a congruence between Scheerens' model and the work done by Reynolds (1985:6) when stating that "input-output model focus upon the resource inputs available to the school attended by pupils, together with the social background of the pupils as determinants of outcomes." This means that even if the school is the formal setting where learners are taught knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, their family achievement background is still of primary importance for their outcomes. That is the reason why I have included sections and sub-sections such as parental involvement, socio-economic status of learners and community involvement. For the purpose of this research, variables emerging from both Scheerens' model and the data of this study will be clustered and discussed below under the main findings from the literature review.

For this study the variables mentioned previously under chapter two were investigated and grouped as follows:

▪   The role of teachers and SMTs in the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools,

▪   the role of learners in the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools,

▪   teaching in powerful learning environments,

▪   parental involvement/support, and

▪   staff collaboration.

The clustering of variables according to categories of common features is important because it brings into picture a flow of ideas and the validity of the phenomenon under investigation. The clustered variables below are derived from the responses coming from both the questionnaires and interviews of respondents in the three schools, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

5.3.1 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS AND SMTS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CULTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGH SCHOOLS

5.3.1.1 Contextual, school and classroom characteristics

Both the role of teachers' and SMTs' main findings will be discussed together as they were clustered in one heading during both literature review and data collection. In Scheerens' model (1990), the role of teachers and SMTs is in all the levels, i.e. contextual, school and classroom level as indicated in par. 5.3.1.1. The relevance of this model is indicated through the literature studies for the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. For example, for teaching and learning to effectively take place, to site but a few examples, teachers should not dodge classes/lessons and arrive late for school (see par. 2.4 and Appendix 8, item no. 13). In other words there should be "… teacher stability and time devoted to school-based in-service activities …" as stated by Nyagura and Riddel (1993), in Scheerens (2001:365).

These variables form the basis of the role of teachers and SMTs in schools because if a teacher dodges lessons and arrive late for school, how can he/she present a lesson successfully, finish or complete the syllabus and achieve the set goals as other levels would have not been successfully achieved as stated in Scheerens' model. The above opinions are supported by Amos (1999:5) and the *Sowetan* (12 February, 2000:7) in chapter two when echoing that "commitment … respect promote emotional and cognitive growth, classes should begin on the reopening day to promote effective teaching and learning." This is confirmed by Scheerens (1992:80) when stating that "there is more chance of succeeding when there is a serious commitment to succeed." The implication of the above findings means that a culture of teaching and learning in schools seems not to be

improved where the mentioned variables are prevailing, as teachers would have difficulties in finishing the syllabus as mentioned previously and monitoring the learners' progress. Scheerens (1990) grades this type of attitude under school and classroom level where content has to be covered, progress be monitored and evaluated. If this level is not met, a culture of teaching and learning would possibly not improve.

This is only one component dealt with in the investigation to elucidate and expose teachers' and SMTs' general attitude and commitment to the teaching profession. One aspect that appeared to reflect itself as an important commonality explaining a prime reason for the poor performance of learners at schools is and remains teachers' lack of commitment towards the common tasks and functions. If all other variables remain constant (which appears to be the case when trying to identify the factors impacting on the different performances of the learners at the three different schools) then 'teacher commitment or dedication' remains the most important shared commonality for the schools that took part in the investigation.

Lasley II, Matczynski and Rowley (2002:46) conclude the above discussion by identifying some of the following roles of teachers. Teachers need to "develop a classroom climate characterized by warmth and encouragement, utilize oral modes of expression within the classroom, structure the classroom in formal rather than informal ways, utilize collaborative work environments that promote social interaction, from the concrete to the abstract, design learning activities that promote kinaesthetic modalities, utilize people oriented examples as well as utilizing as many positive role models as possible in the lessons presented to students." These roles are constantly appearing directly and indirectly in the Scheerens' Model (1990) and the literature review. This shows that teachers' roles are important in every teaching and learning situation as they engage with the systems/levels for the sake of unlocking the learners' potentials, thus the improvement of the culture of teaching and learning. To add to the above discussion, I am of the opinion that learners' achievement is also influenced by the classroom, family, community and instructional practices that constantly change to accommodate different learners as they are not all the same. Lasley II,

et al (2002:11) further support the preceding discussion by stating that "… not all students can learn exactly the same thing, in the same amount of time … and that students need to have certain conditions met if they are ready to learn."

5.3.2   TEACHING IN POWERFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

5.3.2.1 School and classroom characteristics

Variables clustered under "teaching in powerful learning environments", such as: the availability of electricity, the availability of sufficient libraries, laboratories and computers used by learners and teachers, media facilities, enough textbooks/ learner/teacher support materials and classrooms were revealed by the literature, that they are also important in the creation of a healthy and conducive learning environment thus an establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools (see par. 2.5, and Appendices 7, 8 and 9). The availability of the above variables in every school environment and classroom setting is supported by Fuller and Clarke (1994) in Scheerens (2001:364), concentrating on the 43 studies that "… class-size, teacher training, general facilities and equipment … is of significant positive effect" on school effectiveness.

The discussion above refers to a healthy school environment that is an aspect of a safe school; that is an orderly school environment conducive to teaching and learning to take place. This is in line with Scheerens' conceptual framework (1990) when he mentions that school level, among others, includes an orderly atmosphere. Dryden and Fraser (1996:1) add to the above by stating that "students' perceptions to their learning environments are significantly associated with their school environment." Scheerens (2001:362) further adds that "if basic resources and facilities are not present this will obviously be detrimental to the educational endeavour as a whole." Fuller *et al* (1994), in Scheerens (2001:364) conclude the above views by stating that major areas such as "availability of textbooks and supplementary reading materials, teacher qualities such as their own knowledge of the subject, instructional time and work demands placed on students" show significant positive effect on the culture of teaching and learning." In this context, the resources they refer to are for example textbooks, libraries,

laboratories, learner teacher support materials, electricity, water, toilets, classrooms and qualified teachers.

If schools, especially the disadvantaged schools, are affected negatively by the above variables, the literature derived from Kniker, *et al.* (1986:118), Campbell (1991:37), Chisholm, *et al.* (1996:13), Du Toit (1996:10), Czerniewics, *et al.* (2000:99), Knowles (2000:287), Hansen (2001:83) and *Daily Sun* (13 February, 2004:7), indicate that a culture of teaching and learning in high schools is more likely to decline because in such schools the shortage of variables to effective teaching and learning does not create a healthy and welcoming environment. Cross (1999:4) argues that "children cannot learn and teachers cannot teach in a place where they are not safe." The unsafe environment the discussion is about is created among others by the lack or inadequacy of clustered variables under discussion, and this has a negative impact on learners as they will not be able to perform practicals in the laboratories, read from the libraries, search information from the computers and use their textbooks to do their homework.

However, one has to distinguish between the school as safe haven accommodating learners on a daily basis, and a well-resourced and safe building where teachers have to perform their daily tasks and functions. The latter was applicable to this investigation exposing the phenomenon that in all three schools the learning environments were impacted upon negatively because of the limited resources and space teachers and learners had to work under. The fact that all three schools were under-resourced left a prominent impact on the teaching and learning that is taking place at those schools. Not only does it have a negative impact on teachers having to teach from class to class because of limited space but it also hampers effective teaching and learning where laboratories and facilities are required in order to achieve the outcomes envisaged by the national curriculum statements. Teachers' professional scholarship, their general focus, their dedication and self-esteem are negatively influenced when they have no ownership of their own private teaching space and allocated classroom. Teaching now becomes a 'common responsibility' and the reasons for underperformance and poor results are passed on to fellow colleagues, the system and management in general. Teachers do not feel accountable to teaching space

they have to share with fellow teachers. The teaching environments become dull with outdated, aged decorations, posters and teaching media as observed during data collection in the schools. The learning environments therefore do not induce and encourage active learning and this can influence the culture of teaching and learning in schools.

5.3.3   LEARNER TEACHER SUPPORT MATERIALS

5.3.3.1 Classroom characteristics

I found it very important to single out learner teacher support materials from the clustered variables as it is also playing a role in the teaching and learning situation in schools, and give a brief summary of findings from literature review. An author such as Mabogoane (2005:6) mentions that "… differences on how learners learn in the classroom are not only a function of differing teaching abilities but also of resources available for teaching." An emphasis throughout the literature in chapter two is on a cry for scarcity and unavailability of learner teacher support materials in the disadvantaged schools. A question one could ask is how can teaching and learning take place without learner teacher support materials? In Scheerens' model for school effectiveness (1990:61-80), this is emphasized under "quality of school curricula in terms of content covered and formal structure." He asks if the content covered is of good quality or not. In other words, if content is covered, is it covered with an aid of learner teacher support materials or not? If not, how could one justify that the quality outcomes or outputs were achieved at the end of the content presented? Colglough, *et al* (2003:111) support the preceding statement by stating that "the availability of adequate learning materials is an important condition for the quality of education".

From the above discussion one argues that teaching content without or with inadequate learner teacher support materials as appears in the literature review would lead to lower learners' academic performance and thus a poor culture of teaching and learning in schools, as there is no interaction between the content and learner teacher support materials. Scheerens (1990:61-80) also supports the above views by emphasizing the interaction between different levels where a

level in its own context should be positively met in order to allow learners to achieve better outcomes, thus an improvement in a culture of teaching and learning in schools. The above idea is confirmed once more by Scheerens (1992:81) when stating that "Continuity, consensus and solidarity have to be fulfilled at an acceptable level in order to ensure that the work does not lead to extreme uncertainty and a lack of job satisfaction." This means that levels e.g. contextual, school, classroom, teachers' and learners, should not be seen as closed levels but open systems in order to promote quality teaching and learning in schools.

5.3.4   PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT/ SUPPORT

5.3.4.1 Contextual characteristics

The family is the primary social and functional unit of any society and it plays a fundamental role in the developmental process of the child. This idea is supported by Mashile (1991:1) when saying that "it is at home that the foundations are laid." On this note I therefore clustered the following variables together: learners sometimes go to school being hungry, learners are in most cases alone at home as their parents are working far away and lastly, learners sometimes arrive late for school (see par 2.9, Appendix 18, P3A and Appendix 23, P2C responses). Numerous literature in chapter two for example, Kelly (1990:1), Munn (1993:1), Ryna (1994:43-44) and Lemmer (2000:61) reveal that a decline in a culture of teaching and learning might be influenced by the learning environment characterised by such shortcomings. Rambolt (1998:33) also believes that "parents who do not provide a stable and stimulating home background lay the foundation for an unhealthy, chaotic learning environment in the school." This shows that lack of parental involvement is also a contributory factor to lack of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Scheerens (1990:61-80) supports the above views by stating under "outputs, e.g. socio-economic status" that if the environment in which a learner finds himself, e.g. home, school and community is conducive to learning, then there would be a possibility of a better culture of teaching and learning in schools.

Schools should therefore not be regarded as a separate and secluded environment, not reflection, or rather not supposed to be reflecting the social environment the learners are representing. As illustrated by the literature review, the creation and management of powerful learning environments as well as established cultures of learning at primary as well as secondary schools, also depends on the support learners and teachers receive and will be receiving from parents and communities surrounding the schools and immediate surroundings. The support of learners and teachers from parents is also supported by Dowling and Osborne (1994:69) when mentioning that "… both schools and families should ensure their close co-operation and mutual support." Scheerens (1992:94) adds that "the involvement of parents in education is an environmental condition that appears to be beneficial to the quality of education". This is supported by Marjoribanks (2005:647) when stating that "if parents are positively involved in activities associated with children's learning, then the school outcomes of those children are likely to be enhanced." Lasley II, *et al* (2002:34) further emphasize that "… teaching styles of families ... and the ways in which they are encouraged, seem to contribute to the development of specific learning styles in children." The lack of parental involvement has physical origins (for example the absence of parents from home because of work commitments) as well as psychological and emotional roots (for example the poor involvement of parents in the activities, involvement and participation of their children at school).

Both manifestations impact on the performance of learners at school. 'Being parent and present' is not good enough, instead the purposeful interventions of parents in the involvement of their children at school is that which will eventually make a difference. Although black disadvantaged parents have for many years supported good education (and even excellence in education) for their children and have gone to the extreme to ensure that their children will receive the best tuition from a financial point of view had this been possible, it had not always been part of their immediate aim or intention to intervene positively in the teaching-learning environment at school. It is a culture to be established among parents, and many parents still underestimate their support, motivation and assistance towards the establishment of a positive teaching and learning culture at schools of their choice. Education should invest in educating parents in terms

of their support functions toward the creation of a better education and future for their children.

On this note, co-operation between home and school is essential to teachers and schools as this could be another way to attain and maintain emotional, physical, social and intellectual maturity of the child. In Scheerens' model (1990), the emphasis is actualising all levels (context, school and classroom levels) (see Figure 1.1) positively and that would lead to higher academic achievement from learners, thus a better culture of teaching and learning in schools. In other words, if there is that positive interaction between various variables in any teaching and learning situation, there is that likelihood that a culture of teaching and learning in schools can be achieved.

5.3.5   THE ROLE OF LEARNERS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CULTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

5.3.5.1 Learners' characteristics

Learners are also playing a role in the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. They should not be seen as passive agents of socialization in the educational milieu, but as active, taking part in both levels of discussions and decision-making relating to school matters. The research conducted by Lasley II, *et al* (2002:11) concerning active learners indicates that "… people remember about 10 percent of what they hear … and 90 percent of what they do." This means that learners should be actively involved in different school associations, organisations, class representatives and councils, where they will also be in the position to discuss and recommend with other relevant stakeholders how the culture of teaching and learning in schools can be improved. This is in support of Scheerens' (1990) conceptual framework where the emphasis for the improvement of a culture of teaching and learning is on learners' characteristics for inputs and learners' achievement, attitudes and motivation to continue learning under outputs.

The discussion above and Scheerens' conceptual framework interact well in this section, but are in contrast with what is found in the data and literature review.

For example, in tables 4.25, 4.56 and 4.63 respectively there is evidence that a high number of learners sometimes arrive late for school, go to school being hungry and also sometimes taking drugs. This type of conduct could lead to a poor culture of teaching and learning where, according to Scheerens (1990), learning content in the school level will not be sufficiently covered as learners will miss opportunities to learn. This is evidenced by what appeared in the *City Press* (2 January, 2005:9) "where … Mpumalanga matric candidates are still under investigation." This is a typical example of where learners with the help of teachers failed to get an opportunity to learn, to progress and cover the learning content, thus a decline in a culture of teaching and learning.

5.3.6   BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

5.3.6.1 Educators characteristics

In this research, biographical information includes teachers' current qualifications, gender, teaching experience and age. This is in line with Scheerens' (1990) conceptual framework in which educators' characteristics and levels in his model have similar variables as the ones above. Houser (1998:15) in the previous chapter views biographical information as important because "demographic characteristics influence the outcomes or dependent variables" and therefore it cannot be excluded from this discussion. This is supported by Scheerens (1990) in his model when stating that inputs and outputs include educators' characteristics and educators' levels. The inputs and outputs of educators in this context refer to teachers teaching experience, age and qualification, which if they are not positively met could lead to a poor culture of teaching and learning in schools. Podoursky, *et al* (2004:5) further state that "quality education cannot take place … if low teacher qualifications … are experienced." Table 4.3, for example, also indicates that there are 40% of teachers with a Bachelor of Arts degree. This is a lower percentage and could have a negative impact on a culture of teaching and learning, as such teachers might not have "from school level and classroom level" according to Scheerens (1990), the vast knowledge of driving and implementing the education policy, school curricula and monitoring skills, thus causing learners to be frustrated.

Frude (1990:16) adds to the preceding discussion by saying that "learners may even prefer an alternative and engage in disruptive activity." This may be a way for learners to challenge the teacher as the lesson is not interesting.

Based on the above discussion on biographical information, it can be concluded by saying that there should be integration between variables or levels as Scheerens' model (1990) indicates, and this could improve a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

5.4   SYNTHESES OF THE INSIGHTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATIONS

In this study, I employed both quantitative and qualitative methods as mentioned previously (see par. 3.1.1) that the aim was to establish validity, reliability and consistency of the results as well as an in-depth understanding of the variables contributing towards the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools, as stated in the previous sections. Questionnaires designed for teachers, SMTs, learners and parents were used, as well as interviews and observations for teachers, SMTs and learners with the exception of parents as mentioned previously (see Appendices 4, 5, 6, 10 and 11 for interviews). Interestingly, the results yielded similar results in such a way that the difference was so small that I was prompted to synthesise the main findings of these methods simultaneously with an aim of trying to avoid monotony and confusion. The following findings emerging from these methods based on three schools will therefore be discussed jointly as I have discovered during the interpretation of data that these schools experience in most cases the same results with regard to variables contributing towards a culture of teaching and learning. A distinction will be indicated at the end of the discussion as to why one school is still performing better than the other despite the difficulties and problems the schools face (see results in par. 5.4.5).

The results from these methods used in the investigation revealed that the following clustered variables below played a prominent role in establishing a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

5.4.1   BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Under the biographical information, the findings revealed that gender equity in schools, qualifications of teachers and parents as well as studying further played a prominent role in establishing a culture of teaching and learning in schools. The idea of gender equity in schools is supported by Coutts (1996:80) when saying, "women in South African schools predominate in the pre-primary, junior-primary and junior class." High schools still have a higher number of male teachers than females as this has been created by the belief in the past that women do well only as housewives and primary school teachers. Ironically, female parents are more than male parents. Within this framework it is time that schools are important agents for ensuring that gender equality is in place from generation to generation in order to improve gender equity in an educational setting.

Secondly, with regard to the issue of fewer female teachers in high schools, this could also have an impact on learners as they will lack a sense of role-identity as female learners, thus resulting in role confusion, and this will to a certain extent not motivate female learners to study further as they see fewer female teachers. This in a way will affect the culture of teaching and learning in schools. Regarding qualifications, there is a lower percentage e.g. 40% of teachers with Bachelor of Arts degree (see table 4.3) and this is a serious concern because new South Africa has changed and is faced with new challenges, new curricula and new ideas, therefore upgrading one's qualifications and self-development are important in the teaching and learning situation. The findings above could have an impact on a culture of teaching and learning because if most teachers are not in possession of a Bachelor of Arts degree, there is that likelihood that they would lack know-ledge and expertise to teach the subject allocated to them, as they will not be specialists in that subject/learning area.

5.4.2   THE ROLE OF TEACHERS AND SMTS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING SITUATION

Regarding the role of teachers and SMTs in teaching and learning situation, the findings revealed that teachers sometimes dodge classes/lessons and also arrive late for school (see Appendix 7, item 20 and Appendix 8, item 13). For me this is

a problem because if lessons are missed it will be difficult to catch up, achieve the objectives of the lessons, and finish the syllabus. Teachers will therefore just rush over the prescribed content without allowing and enabling the learners to internalise and understand the schoolwork. Thus there will be a probability of a decline in a culture of teaching and learning in schools. The cheating mentioned previously evidences this, for example of Grade 12 final examination by learners in Mpumalanga Province, reported in the *City Press* (2 January, 2005:9) that "… matric candidates … are still under investigation of examination fraud." This implies that teachers and management teams resorted to cheating after seeing that the Grade 12 work was not covered because of e.g. factors such as teachers missing or dodging lessons. The implications in this regard is that both teachers and SMTs are minimally playing a role in the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools, as evidenced by even the recent (2004) Grade 12 results. The responses from teachers, School Management Teams and learners were positive and supportive regarding the cooperation and commitment of the teachers teaching at the three schools that participated in the investigation. More that 75% of the teachers and SMT saw the teachers as cooperative and committed to teach, while close to 75% of the learners shared this specific view (see Table 4.39 of Chapter 4). According to the learners therefore it would be difficult to link their poor performance to any lack or absence of a commitment from the teachers side. Teachers therefore appear reasonably dedicated in order to try to improve the performance of learners at schools.

What did stand out in the investigation was the fact that learners were not convinced that their teachers were following a democratic approach in the classrooms. Table 4.42 of the thesis highlighted the fact that only 51% of all learners agreed to the statement that teachers are democratic in their teaching, while 49% were uncertain and also disagreed to the comment (see Table 4.42 of Chapter 4). On the other hand many learners (75%) thought that their teachers managed the classrooms well and that the feedback on tests, assignments and projects they had been receiving from the teachers, had been immediate and satisfactory (see Table 4.43).

5.4.3   TEACHING IN POWERFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

With regard to teaching in a powerful learning environment, it was found that the three schools are not 'modern' i.e. old, not well-resourced, have no electricity (see Appendix 8, item 26 and Appendix 9, item 2) and classrooms are overcrowded with an exception of School C. Overcrowded classrooms in most cases are a barrier to learners' individual attention and therefore their weak points and learning problems will not be noticed. What was again interesting to note was again the discrepancy between learners' and teachers' opinions regarding the overcrowding of classrooms. Most teachers (67,5%) agreed with the statement, while learners as well as their parents (71% and 70% respectively) were uncertain or disagreed that the classrooms were overcrowded. There are also not enough media facilities, inadequate supply of learner teacher support materials (LTSM) (see Appendix 8, item 8, and Appendix 9, item 7), as reported by the *Daily Sun* (13 February, 2004:7) that, "last year it was very difficult to cover the syllabus due to lack of books, yet the government expected better results from these schools." Teaching approaches are old and outdated (see Appendix 18, M1A, Appendix 19, M2B and Appendix 23, M2C responses), some of the learners are even taking drugs, which might cause a high rate of absenteeism, dodging lessons and also engaging in fighting, as observed by me in School C during the administering of the questionnaires at 08:00 in the morning just after assembly.

The learners from all three schools rejected the claim that the schools were well equipped with teaching media. As illustrated in Table 4.72 85%, 93% and 97% of the learners from the three schools respectively indicated that they were either uncertain or agreed that the schools were not well equipped. To elaborate on the above statement, it could also be stated that the three high schools have old buildings (see Appendix 8, item 4) and that could demoralise and frustrate both teachers and learners, thus contributing to a decline in a culture of teaching and learning. However, parents (85,7%, 88,1% and 87,5% respectively) from all three schools responded that the schools were modern (see Table 4.78) while teachers and SMTs (see Table 4.59) and learners (see Table 4.68) were convinced that the three schools that participated in the investigation were not modern in terms

of the resources, structures and equipment found at these schools. Findings of this nature had already been supported by Ornstein (1990:8) in 1990 when claiming that "… learners are more comfortable in a highly structured environment." For learners and teachers to be successful in the teaching and learning situation, they need well-resourced school buildings conducive to teaching and learning with adequate resources. It became clear from the literature review that for effective teaching and learning to take place the environment has to be conducive in order to optimise the learners' academic performance (see par. 2.5).

The old teaching approaches revealed by the findings also hinders learners from constructing their own knowledge as stated in the previous section of chapter two by Ducret (2001:165) that "constructivism deals with the creation of concepts and reflection." Lasley II, *et al* (2002:34) refer to "constructivism" as a synonym of "… field-independent … where learners can more comfortably organize the material and create a meaningful structure." Learners in that context are likely to experience difficulties in assimilating and applying constructed knowledge in any given situation, thus no meaningful learning will take place. It was interesting to find that teachers, the School Management Teams and learners regarded teachers as specialists in the subjects or learning areas that they taught. Close to 80% of the teachers and School Management Teams, and 82% of the learners expressed their satisfaction with the subject specialisation demonstrated by the teachers in the classroom (see Table 4.38 for further reference).

One also has to take into consideration that South African teachers have seen significant changes in newly adopted classroom practices for the last 10 years, for example it commenced with the introduction of outcomes-based education (OBE) as broad underpinning philosophy of thinking about education and also by converting to the facilitation of learning in the classroom as opposed to the traditional transmission modes of delivery, we have become accustomed to and acquainted with in our schools prior to the introduction of OBE. But notwithstanding the many hours of in-service training teachers have been undergoing in the schools since 1994 as well as the many formal in-service programmes teachers have been following at the many teacher training

institutions in the country, there appears to be little evidence that all these interventions are having a significant influence on teaching and learning in our disadvantaged high schools. The majority of participants from all three schools have indicated that most teachers still follow traditional teaching approaches in the classrooms and that little new is done to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Experience has also shown that where facilitation practices and strategies are followed, a *laissez faire* approach seems to be followed by teachers when teaching has to take place. This was one of the opinions raised by the average and poor performing schools' participants in the investigation. It was mentioned previously that the relatively poor academic and professional scholarship of some of the teachers teaching at the schools might be a reason why the learners are not performing academically to the level of expectations achieved by many learners in many other South African schools. Such postulation is further strengthened by the observation that learner performance on average remains poor notwithstanding the many hours of in-service training, professional development and skills development teachers have been undergoing nationally in South African schools. It therefore becomes a justifiable question to ask whether many practicing teachers have the capacity and will to enhance their professional careers and to make a difference in the lives of learners and fellow colleagues.

5.4.4   PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT/SUPPORT

Regarding parental support/involvement, it was revealed that learners sometimes go to school being hungry (see Appendix 8, item 23). In most cases they are usually alone as their parents work far away from home and learners sometimes arrive late for school. The above findings interestingly enough are in agreement with what was deliberated in chapter two under the literature review. This is the reason why the former Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, had called for joint action effort "Tirisano 2000" in establishing and resorting to the culture of teaching and learning. Again being hungry at school has a negative impact on a culture of teaching and learning because learners might loose concentration thus a decline in academic performance, that is why the "feeding scheme" is in place

in some of the provinces as mentioned previously, even though the Government continue to have difficulties in monitoring the scheme.

The study did not reveal a very good relationship between teachers, SMTs and learners. Table 4.41 of the report reflected an uncertain and moderately disagreeable relationship according to the teachers and SMTs between the teachers, SMTs and learners (close to 61% cumulatively). The learners on the other hand were more positive (71,2%) and regarded the relationship more favourably. When it comes to parents assisting their children with homework, the majority of teachers and SMTs (98%) were either uncertain or sure that this was not the case, while learners (76%) on the other hand were quite positive that they were receiving assistance from their parents (see Table 4.45). The majority of parents (81%) had also indicated such support to their children. Similar discrepancies were observed regarding the provision of stationary and textbooks by parents and the attendance of school meeting. Most teachers and SMTs argued that parent do not attend these meetings (97%) while parents confirmed the opposite (88%) (see Table 4.48). Parents mentioned that they do provide their children with the necessary stationary and textbooks (63%), while teachers and SMTs (68%) mentioned that this was not the case (see Table 4.46).

Despite all the above negative factors in these schools, School A is still being singled out as a good school by the Department of Education of the North-West Province; for its Grade 12 final pass rate, one wonders what makes the school's performance consistently better over a period of five years. To attempt answering the question, I went through evidence from the observations, school's archives and interviews as I visited the school many times and came to the following conclusion that falls under par. 5.4.5.

5.4.5 VARYING CONTEXTS OF EACH SCHOOL'S EFFECTIVENESS IN RELATION TO THE VARIABLES CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS A CULTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

In this section a comparison of the schools under investigation in terms of why Grade 12 final pass rate results differ is discussed, based on the variables contributing towards an establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in

schools. Observation and findings from both interviews and questionnaires were used (see chapter four) with an aim of obtaining valid and reliable differences in schools' performance in Grade 12; and this is discussed as follows:

One of the purposes of this investigation was to determine to what extent the sustained differences in academic performances of the learners from the three schools in the final Grade 12 examination could be ascribed to specific factors as they manifest themselves under different circumstances at the three selected schools. It was therefore hoped that by being able to identify the variables impacting on learner performance at the three schools, learner academic performance might be enhanced through a careful manipulation of these variables. However, it quickly became evident that the differences in performance of learners at the three schools were not related to the impact of clearly distinguished variables as what one would have liked to isolate in the investigation. What applied to the one school did not apply to another school and what was applicable to one sample population had little or no impact on other learners, teachers, parents or SMTs. The fact that it became very difficult to relate the reasons why one school appeared to under perform or outperform the other without being able to ascribe specific reasons for such performance might be linked to the fact that all three schools actually represented one broad community or area in general. The three schools were not that distinct from one another, neither were they that different in terms of teacher representation, community representation and managerial infrastructure. All three schools represented a single education department and were managed in terms of the same guidelines applied to all other schools that fell under the jurisdiction of that specific provincial department of education.

The following paragraphs below will attempt to justify and explain why, according to me, there appeared to be a difference in academic performance of learners in general at the three schools.

5.4.5.1 The complex uniqueness of each school summary findings

(a)   School B

The explanations for the summary findings of each unique school's establishment of a culture of teaching and learning are too complex as mentioned previously, and not easy, but nevertheless each will be discussed here under. The complexity of the culture of teaching and learning and its variables under study made me assign School B as a benchmark, while School A and School C are both forming part of a comparison on this study under this chapter. The reason for such grouping was to explicitly attempt to bring forth the uniqueness of each school's context. Another reason is that School B appeared to have been an average rating, as I saw during my observation and also from participant's responses. For example, it is known for its Grade 12 final pass rate results to be around 50% over a period of five years. Again, School B, unlike the other two schools, has and is still being managed by the same school principal over a period of 20 years. To add to the above reasons, it can also be stated that the school is neither too old nor new as well as being not too small nor too big with learners' enrolment. The school is also situated between school A and C. The above reasons therefore urged me to consider this school to be assigned a control group, and what follows will be a discussion of School A and School C.

(b)   School A

School A as described in the previous section, is situated in the area where the majority of families are still faced with poverty as it is in most disadvantaged communities. This is evidenced as stated previously by the data which produced some of the following results: poverty, overcrowded classrooms, drug abuse, unavailability of electricity, computers, media facilities as well as absence of modern buildings, and learner-teacher support materials (see Appendix 25, and par. 4.12.2 - 4.12.7). On this note I am convinced that School A, irrespective of being surrounded and dominated by negative factors is still academically performing better than School B and C. A question asked is: What makes this school a good school with better Grade 12 learner's final pass rate results for a period of five consecutive years? In an attempt to answer this question, I, through report findings (see Appendix 18, LTSM2A and LTSM2A responses) am

convinced that teachers, SMTs and learners improvise and also teach and attend lessons respectively during Saturdays and school holidays. In this school, the Grade 12 results are therefore influenced by the improvisation and commitment of the teachers, SMTs and learners, which was also said by the principal during one of our informal discussions when observing the school. The results of the empirical investigation (both the quantitative collection of data as well as the interviews conducted with learners) clearly illustrated that in most cases as reported (by learners, teachers, SMTs and parents) the teachers and managers of School A reflected a much higher level of dedication, commitment and professional attitude towards their tasks and function than what had been the case with School C. One could therefore come to a conclusion that if all other variables remain the same, scholarly dedication and commitment towards one's profession, task and functions still remain the most important factors influencing learner success at high schools with specific reference to the preparation of learners for the final Grade 12 examination. Various participants who took part in the investigation reiterated the commitment and dedication of the teachers working at this specific school.

On this note I am convinced that poor and negative conditions prevailing at School A appear to be less influential on the culture of teaching and learning at school. Therefore, teachers' improvisation, dedication and commitment in School A bring into fore its distinctive nature to other schools, as these factors confirm the development of the effective school. School A is thus regarded as a good school based on the highlighted explanation above.

(c)   School C

School C is the smallest, most rural, high school in Makapanstad as mentioned in the previous section, with the lowest total number of less than 50 Grade 12 learners (see chapter four and all tables on comparison of total responses of School C learners). School C is rated as the poorest with regard to the Grade 12 pass rate results over a period of uninterrupted five years. It is ironic because when there are fewer learners per classroom, in most cases such a class is more easily manageable with individualised teaching, thus the possibility of improving the Grade 12 results. What was even more interesting in School C is that when I

visited the school at about 08:00 in the morning, learners (two boys and a girl) started fighting at assembly; that to me showed a lack of discipline and prevalence of bullying, thus a negative culture of teaching and learning. A question in this context is "why is School C obtaining poor Grade 12 pass rate results?" In an attempt to answer the question I am convinced, through evidence from the literature (see chapter four) that the morale at School C is low due to it being labelled as a "trap school" or Education Action School (EAZ). This school fell under EAZ because of a lack of morale as mentioned by one of the head of departments during an informal discussion, and this low morale could have been the result of the school's composition.

Another reason could be that the school's geographical situation observed by me is so dull, far away from all better resources and entertainment as compared to School A, and this also could affect the school negatively, thus a decline in a culture of teaching and learning. What has become a well-documented known phenomenon applicable to this school is that better and academically stronger learners are often lured away by bigger schools close to town and cities. They offer a wider range of subjects, activities and provide learners with more opportunity to pursue their goals and aspirations. Schools that could be classified as 'School C's in the context of this investigation, often lack a core of well-qualified teachers, better resources and more stable learner enrolment as mentioned by one teacher. The learners enrolled at such schools are often inclined to shift from school to school as their parents migrate from one area to the other in search of work, while the learners who attend the bigger city and township schools have a more stable learner and teacher population. The same applies to the teachers who teach at the classical 'C category' of schools listed for the purpose of this investigation. They often only remain at the school for a very short period of time and also often wish not to teach at such schools due to the isolation of the schools. This is evident with the principal of School C who has less than five years in that school.

I, therefore, think that teachers, SMTs and learners should be committed, dedicated and improvise in the teaching and learning situation (see Appendix 18, D1A and LTSM2A and Appendix 19, D1B responses). President Thabo Mbeki (in

Sowetan, 9 April, 1998) also supports the statement by saying "… we cannot lay all blame for our failure on society and past occurrences while we ignore our own responsibilities to teach and learn." Seven years later, President Mbeki in his speech on Freedom Day, 27 April 2005, emphasised that "… it is impossible to alleviate this poverty in rural areas within 10 years." This means that, since the alleviation of poverty, poor education in most of rural areas is going to take a long time, teachers, SMTs, learners, parents and all other stakeholders should not relax and blame the education system but be dedicated, committed and obedient to schoolwork like School A does, in order to improve a culture of teaching and learning. In other words, School C should also follow the example of what School A does in order to try to improve the Grade 12 final examination results.

In concluding the uniqueness of the above discussed schools, I am of the opinion that the strategies for closing achievement gaps stated below by Lasley II, *et al* (2002:22) will serve a purpose in attempting to improve a culture of teaching and learning "… extended professional staff development, reduced class size, identification of at-risk students, clear expectations for staff and students, establishing and reviewing annual achievement goals, increased parental involvement, additional use of instruction, increased community partnership, using multiple assessments and increased extra curricular activities …" These strategies are in line with Scheerens (1992:80) when stating that "… all factors e.g. determination to achieve better results maximization of learning time and structured teaching are relevant but … there is more change of succeeding when there is a serious commitment to succeed." In other words, commitment and dedication to teaching and learning using the available variables could enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

5.5   RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

This study revealed from both literature review and empirical investigation that different and integrated variables play a vital role in establishing a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Therefore the following recommendations are made in order to improve or promote a culture of teaching and learning in high

schools. These recommendations are clustered because they are derived from variables that are clustered into categories of commonalities (see chapter four).

5.5.1 TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS

The empirical investigation revealed that a large percentage of teachers (40%) who participated in the investigation were actually graduated at Bachelor's degree level while the rest were in possession of diplomas and even certificates (see table 4.3). This causes a general concern to the South Africans, that is the reason why I recommend that the government award more bursaries to teachers in order to improve their qualifications and this in turn will encourage them (teachers) to adopt a policy of furthering their studies in order to equip themselves with relevant knowledge which will in turn be used to improve the culture of teaching and learning. This is supported by Coutts (1996:117), when stating, "a great deal of learning will be on-the-job self-improvement and new development in education." Dalin (1993:21) writes, "… teacher competence is critical to success." Through this solution, opportunities for broadening know-ledge and improving skills will enable the teachers to effectively communicate knowledge to learners thus improving a culture of teaching and learning, and in this context higher education institutions will admit learners who are ready to learn and develop various skills without compromising the quality of education, thus improving the economy of South Africa.

Another recommendation based on the teachers' qualification is that of introducing an outsourcing method where retired subject specialist teachers are re-employed in order to uplift the standard of teaching and learning in schools. NCES (1993:94) adds that "concern about the quality of education in the United States has focused interest on teaching qualification and student exposure to well-qualified teachers." It is not only in South Africa where the qualifications of teachers are of a concern even in other countries they do face this problem. Teachers need teacher development, pre-service and in-service training so as to be provided with scholarship and bursaries to study in the areas that need to be improved for teaching in order to improve the culture of teaching and learning in schools. Those granted with bursaries should sign a contract with the

Government for coming back to teaching after completion for a period of stipulated years, as it was done in the past, with the aim of improving quality of teaching and learning. There has been a huge improvement in the general upgrading of teachers' qualifications for the last 10 years but in the majority of cases where teachers have been undergoing in-service education, the programme and subject options mainly fell of the 'soft options' such as special needs education, education management and policy studies, life skills and sexuality education, curriculum studies and classroom assessment. It is true that one has to have a very holistic view of education in general to be able to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools but the success at secondary schools depends mainly on the command teachers have of their subject specialisations and field of study. Good pedagogy will help very little to improve the quality of teaching and learning. It is a teacher's knowledge and command of his or her subject that will eventually restore the self-confidence of the teacher and improve the academic performance of learners in the subjects or learning areas. In-service teacher education should focus more prominently on 'problematic' subjects such as mathematics, English, accounting, general science, physical science (physics and chemistry) and biology.

Another recommendation is to introduce the method of "zig-zag" in schools as mentioned in *Sunday Times* (2 January, 2005:13), where experts from other schools are borrowed in order to teach in other schools where their services are needed as this can improve the culture of teaching and learning in schools, thus improving academic achievement of learners. This method was used in one of the schools in the Cape Province and it successfully benefited the school as the Grade 12 pass rate final results were improved.

5.5.2 GENDER COMPARISON

The findings indicate that male teachers are more than female teachers and this according to my opinion could hamper a culture of teaching and learning because some female learners might lack role models and also be discouraged to improve their qualifications in order to be the future leaders. Based on this point, I recommend that equity policy be equally and speedily implemented all over the

country of South Africa with an aim of employing equity in all South African positions, aiming at being fair to all teachers and other stakeholders.

5.5.3   TEACHING IN POWERFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

5.5.3.1 Modernity of schools (well-resourced schools)

With regard to the findings on well-resourced schools, it was found that the schools' structures are very old and not conducive to teaching and learning (see Appendix 8, item 4 and Appendix 20, SB1C responses). Based on this statement, I recommend the introduction of clustering of school subjects from different neighbouring schools. This means that teachers who have expertise in their learning area/subject are requested to group together Grade 12's at a well-resourced school and do the actual teaching, and in that way all the students in Grade 12 will benefit in that area. This solution could also help in encouraging other teachers to learn more and improve on their quality of teaching and learning.

This idea will enable learners to enjoy the benefits of expert teachers and schools which are more well-resourced in structure than theirs, as well as encouraging a sense of sharing and partnership, thus discouraging the spirit of negative competition but encouraging cooperative learning, thus improving the culture of teaching and learning in schools. Investing in one or two good schools with possible hostel facilities could also be a solution to children not getting the support and encouragement from home. This has been a very successful model in many previously privileged 'white' and private schools and good cultures of teaching and learning became established in urban and rural schools that build their environments on well-equipped hostels and learning facilities. There are many good examples in South Africa one could relate to, for example, many farming school communities still have excellent boarding schools and although the Department of Education has cut back on the subsidies earmarked for these schools, they still serve the communities very effectively. It would be a costly engagement but a much better investment for the learners.

5.5.3.2 Professionalism

The recommendation on "arriving late for school" is that the provincial government should introduce a transport system (see Appendix 7, item 8 and Appendix 9, item 12) in most of the disadvantaged schools in order to combat late coming, like it was done in former farm schools. This will enable both teachers and learners to be punctual, thus not missing lessons. This recommendation can only succeed if there is good partnership and a contact between the Government and the transport company owner in order to avoid unnecessary strikes. The Government should also speed up the implementation of an appraisal system in institution of learning as it is done in other government sectors – this might help teachers to work harder as they would like to be appraised, thus improving the culture of teaching and learning.

The importance of good school management has already been stressed in this final chapter. It is evident that good school discipline does ensure a better monitoring of learners and teachers to and from school. A lack of control of both teachers and learners has the opposite effect. Good teaching and learning environments cannot be built on poor school management. School management *per se* is not the responsibility of principals only but the task and responsibility of each and every management structure built into the schools system. Furthermore, there has to be mechanisms in place to deal with chronically underachievement. In-service training itself does not have the capacity alone to improve the professional development of teachers and decisions will have to be taken at certain stages to clear the system of incompetent teachers and managers.

5.5.3.3 Teaching approaches

Research findings in this study indicate that some teachers still use the traditional approach of teaching where learners tend to be passive whilst teachers do too much talking with an aim of finishing the prescribed syllabus. Based on these findings it is recommended that there should be an increased shift from the out-dated methods of teaching in order to enable learners to improve their academic

achievements, as they will be able to interpret, create and analyse their learning content. A constructivism approach, as stated previously, should be encouraged as one of the new approaches to teaching, as prescribed in OBE. This might improve the culture of teaching and learning in schools. This concern links to the development of a teaching scholarship within a school and the monitoring of the practice by principals, district officials and subject advisors. I have already stress-ed the importance of subject specialisation and the need in upgrading teachers' performance in terms of their subject knowledge and related teaching skills. It brings us back to the observation that schools that are achieving success are built upon a core of teachers willing and wishing to make a difference at those schools. Principals, SMTs and parents should attempt to adopt a policy of 'no tolerance' towards poor classroom teaching. Those schools that are achieving matric pass rates of 95% and beyond have over the years appointed and developed a core of competent and dedicated staff where learner success has become the pride of the school and the environment and this is still found lacking in many of the South African disadvantaged schools.

5.5.3.4 The use of computers and other equipment in schools

I have dealt with the importance of well-equipped and well-resourced schools in one of the previous paragraphs as a measure to ensure better teaching and learning in schools. It is necessary to focus on the importance of technology and computer literacy as a measure to achieve excellence in all schools. Research findings reveal that those high schools do not use computers, because there is no electricity (see Appendix 21, SB2A, Appendix 22, SB3B and Appendix 23, E1C responses) and this is a barrier towards the enhancement of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools. I therefore recommend that more fund-raising be put in place and speedy intervention by the government in order to firstly have electricity and then use computers effectively. This needs urgent attention here in South Africa so that the country should strive for equal financial and human resources in order to provide equal educational opportunities to all learners, thus enhancing a culture of teaching and learning. Owing to a lack of or access to computers, learners are denied the right to enhance their learning experience, thus no chances to be technologically sound and this is a barrier to

better job opportunities. The statement above is in line with what Heese and Badenhorst (1992:78) have mentioned "society dependent on technology for teaching and their use surely is necessary pre-requisite for good education." However, one should utilise them with an aim of realising the outcomes of the lesson.

5.5.3.5 Adequate supply of textbooks to schools

The findings in the previous section show that there is insufficient supply of free textbooks from the government to certain disadvantaged schools (see Appendix 18, Ltsm1A, Appendix 19, Ltsm1B and Appendix 21, R6A responses). Based on this, I recommend that there should be an improvement of supply of adequate textbooks in South Africa. The Government should improve its capacity, finance, monitoring system, delivery service, and equal distribution of learner-teacher support materials in the province, as this could help in enhancing the culture of teaching and learning because both learners and teachers will be able to refer and get information from textbooks independently, thus improving the academic performance. This is supported by the *Daily Sun* (13 February, 2004:7) when stating that "some of the rural schools in the Vuwani region have still not received their exercise books and textbooks and some of their pupils are borrowing exercise books from students in other schools who received books as early as January." The insufficient supply of free textbooks from the Government is according to Tshoane, Tleane, Vally and Jansen (2001:21) caused by "policy implementation failure in most disadvantaged schools." This need to be improved by training the suppliers sufficiently in order to address this problem as it hampers the quality of education in the country.

5.5.3.6 Overcrowding in classrooms

The recommendation on "overcrowding in classrooms" is that the provincial and national government should double the efforts of building more classrooms for learners in order to improve a culture of teaching and learning in schools as learners will be attended to individually and also identify their academic barriers earlier, thus improving their school performance. Fraser (1994:1) previously

mentioned that "the classroom is a focal point for student interpersonal and educational development" (see Appendix 19, Ratio 1B responses). This is evident of too many learners as compared to the desks allocated to the classrooms. Policies from the Government are there to remedy the problems and what is needed is the implementation and time frames for distribution of resources. Secondly, multi-shifts in schools can be used where there are overcrowded classrooms, giving access to individualised teaching. This type of method was employed in Chile and Venezuela where time and the number of hours make no significant difference in student achievement. According to Bishop (1989:75) the performance of students in double session rural schools was superior to that of single session schools.

5.6   GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to provide quality educational opportunities, policy makers and the government should as a point of departure, be aware of the differences of learners' family back-grounds, schools' characteristics and also provide thorough training, time frames as well as monitoring policies and procedures which are going to be implemented. In other words, the government should restructure and reorganise the education system in such a way that services in life orientation, career guidance and counselling as well as other learning areas (subjects) are maximised and are also in line with both current societal, cultural and social background of learners. This will therefore improve the culture of teaching and learning, as there will be continuous flow of sufficient information relevant to learners, teachers and other stakeholders.

- Proactive approach to partnership implemented where higher education institutions, parents and community groups be in close partnership with schools with an aim of guiding and providing continuous support to teachers and learners. This could help in improving the quality of education in schools. Compron (2005:313) adds to the above recommendation by stating "to be successful we should establish professional development schools, i.e. PDS." This means there should

be collaboration between education department, unions, teachers communities, schools and higher education institutions where the partnership personnel share decisions. To bring the above recommendation into operation, and be successful, there need to be joint planning and contributions from all the partners in the teaching and learning situation. In that context, competency can be achieved, as it requires contributions from both schools and communities as a whole. Teachers need to be team-based, collegial and also share their knowledge, not thinking of themselves, their learners and their classrooms alone but also of the community as a whole. One can therefore state that if there is a relationship between co-operation and accountability of different stakeholders, a culture of teaching and learning will be enhanced.

- Introduction of Telematic and online teaching in the disadvantaged schools could help in alleviating the problem of insufficient supply of textbooks only if electricity is supplied, because Telematic and online teaching is a philosophy of flexible teaching and learning that uses variety of methods and technology to ensure interaction of learners and teachers, both in disadvantaged and advantaged schools. On this note, Telematic and online teaching cannot be ignored when we want to improve the culture of teaching and learning in schools because that is where higher education institutions are going. The department of education should therefore put the following in place for effective teaching and learning to take place through Telematic and online teaching approach: provide adequate funding to the centres, network with other institutions and departments in order to share ideas, sufficient training be provided to staff members and also provide learners with relevant study materials that promote interactive teaching and learning.

- Introduction of cybernetic principle of planning be encouraged in the disadvantaged schools. This type of planning is used for improvement or corrective oriented action where assessment, feed back, reflection and encouragement are the central points. In other words assessment should

be continuous as stated in the National Curriculum Statement policy document and if implemented appropriately, this planning can be of beneficial to schools thus improving the culture of teaching and learning.

- Appraisal system approach be speedily introduced (see par. 5.5.3.2) where hard working teachers would encourage other teachers to competitively work harder thus improving a culture of teaching and learning in schools. This approach will help teachers to identify areas in which they need development and improvement of knowledge and skills. Appraisal system should therefore also be introduced in such way that it formulates the solution of the problem identified, resulting in an individualised training and day-to-day support of teachers by appraisers. If appraisal system is appropriately implemented e. g having: plan in place, trust, confidentiality and specified objectives, there will be that possibility that teachers' performance can be improved thus a better culture of teaching and learning.

- Well resourced after school centres be introduced or built in disadvantaged schools to help learners cope with homework helped by experienced expert teachers deployed from other best schools. These types of centres should be in such a way that they are multi-disciplinary and support learners in their holistic development e.g. looking at (them) learners in their totality. This assistance should be thoroughly supervised by the department of education. In this way, a culture of teaching and learning could be improved as these centres will be playing a role in promoting learners' optimal development in areas that they (learners) did not benefit much during normal school teaching time.

- All stakeholders need to be continually and thoroughly in-service trained for the development programmes, learning area (subject) content and skills as well as other specific roles related to school matters such as school policies and policy documents. The department of education officials during school holidays should monitor the training, as this will not interrupt the actual teaching and other formal school activities.

- Centres of excellence should be established in every Area Project Office (APO) of North-West province. These centres should be supplied with adequate learner teacher support materials with an aim of helping expert teachers to facilitate teaching and learning to learners from different schools. Such centres hold the advantage to communicate information and ideas among all participants who would engage in the activities of the centres. This will strengthen the full participation and flow of information between teachers and learners. These type of centres will therefore become open learning environments to those in need thus providing learners with adequate learning opportunities

5.7   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The results obtained in this study cannot be generalised to the whole population of schools in the North-West Province because the participants were only drawn from three high schools, which were purposefully selected. This is supported by Scheerens (2001:367) when stating that "… four studies is obviously too small a number to draw firm conclusions." The findings are therefore only a representation of a smaller population of three schools. The structured questions in the questionnaire also limit the generalisation of the findings to the broader population.

5.8   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research intended to investigate variables contributing towards the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in high schools, but not all variables were intensively explored as they are unlimited, therefore, there is an urgent need for further research on the other variables contributing towards the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools, especially in disadvantaged schools.

Secondly, further research needs to be conducted regarding the involvement of all stakeholders in the education of learners. This problem was revealed by

literature studies, in this study; in many occasions the stakeholders particularly parents in the disadvantaged schools are lagged behind.

Learners in high schools should be recommended and encouraged to enrol their subjects on similar grade e.g. higher grade, as it was done in the past, and this could correct the debate of questioning the education standards in the country as revealed by literature review in the preceding chapter two. A report revealed by Umalusi (2004:8) is in support of the above idea by stating that "areas of concern that require attention include: decline in higher-grade enrolment, decline in the level of the English second/additional language curriculum and language proficiency in the medium of instruction in South African schooling".

Lastly, further research be done on computer integrated instruction looking into those areas that could assist in the construction of new knowledge by learners in the learning process by presenting information in a dynamic way, and also allowing for practical application, as well as to be on the same par with other technologically advanced countries.

5.9   CONCLUSION

In this research, variables contributing towards a culture of teaching and learning were discussed with a view to seeing their importance in improving a culture of teaching and learning in high schools. I therefore investigated the broad variables contributing towards the establishment of a culture of teaching and learning in schools, using literature review and empirical investigation. The literature review showed that the phenomenon of a culture of teaching and learning is complex and debatable, amongst the teachers, learners, parents and stakeholders. The cause of debate on this issue originates from the legacy of apartheid where disadvantaged schools in rural areas were inadequately financed, with demoralised teachers facing difficulties in teaching learners under unfavourable conditions. This does not mean that teachers should wander and relax when faced with this discouraging and frustrating problem. Instead the teachers should strive for efficiency and commitment by e.g. employing new approaches to teaching with an aim of developing a child holistically.

It is through these new approaches and committed to teaching with other factors that learners as tomorrow's citizens of this country will be fully equipped and prepared to improve the quality of education throughout South Africa, thus enhancing the culture of teaching and learning in schools. In other words, integration of variables is important in any teaching and learning situation if enhancement of a culture of teaching and learning need to be achieved. Recommendations and limitations of the study were made based on the research findings as well as suggestions for further research.

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