An investigation into the management of reading culture in primary schools

by

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I declare that the dissertation titled **An investigation into the management of reading culture in primary schools** is my own original work and that all sources that I used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of comprehensive references.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late parents, Phillip Matome Molapo who passed away on August 15, 2001 and Maropeng Macheba Molapo who passed away on September 2, 2015 while I was busy with my studies. My late father took care of me and taught me responsibility at a young age. My late mother was a pillar of strength during my studies. May their souls rest in perfect peace.

It is also dedicated to my sister, Refilwe Betty Rabaloyi for her social support, and lastly to my caring wife, Kidivhone Eunice and our three sons, Kutollo, Katlego and Kabelo. Thank you for the love, moral, social, financial and spiritual support, and all the sacrifices that you made, especially when I was not there for you during my studies. May the almighty God protect and guide you. May His light shine upon you and grant blessings in your life; in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen!

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ABSTRACT

This study was prompted by the reading crisis prevailing in South African schools. The aim of the study is to investigate how primary schools promote and manage a reading culture in selected primary schools in the Limpopo Province.

A purposive, qualitative research approach was used with the aim of understanding and developing a holistic picture of how School Management Teams (SMTs) support, promote, develop and manage a reading culture. A multiple case study design was used in three primary schools in one circuit (Sekgosese East Circuit). Eighteen participants took part in semi-structured interviews. Documents were analysed. Artefacts in the classroom were viewed with the intention of establishing how a reading culture can be propagated.

The findings indicate that SMTs monitor reading progress by using class visits and by motivating team language teachers. Learners are encouraged to participate in reading competitions. It has also been highlighted that a lack of parental support in the promotion of a reading culture is an impediment to development. Challenges such as overcrowded classes, and shortage of reading material in the classrooms and libraries are experienced; some of these are beyond the control of the school as an organisation. It is important to determine the role played by teachers in planning, organising, leading and controlling matters related to a reading culture at their schools. Heads of Department have to take leadership in this matter by preparing, together with their teaching and library staff, policies and guidelines related to reading activities in the school. In this manner an appropriate environment will promote a reading culture in schools. A reading culture can be described as the creation of conditions that are favourable for ongoing reading. Such conditions require sufficient reading material, space and time for the support, development and nurturing of reading practices. How best can the school manage the situation without compromising a reading culture and the quality of reading and writing? A reading culture has to be sustainable. One of the primary aims is to promote enthusiasm for reading in the school and in the community.

Key words: Reading culture, promotion, management, development, support, creation, environment, reading crisis, challenges, reading activities.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANA   Annual National Assessment

PIRLS   Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

LTSM   Learner Teacher Support Materials

ZPD   Zone of Proximal Development

SMT   School Management Team

HOD   Head of Department

CAPS   Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements

MLA   Monitoring Learning Achievement

MBWA   Managing By Wandering Around

NGO   Non-Governmental Organisation

SGB   School Governing Body

SRE   Scaffolding Reading Experience

R   Rand

CBO   Community Based Organisation

FFLC   Foundation For Learning Campaign

HLE   Home Literacy Environment

EDB   Education Bureau

ICT   Information and Communication Technology

Datapac   Daily Assessment Teaching For Primary Aged Children

CAT   Canadian Achievement Test

TERA   Test of Early Reading Ability

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Language proficiency is one of the most important aspects of a learner's academic success. The ability of a learner to develop reading and cognitive skills in both English and mother tongue education is crucial (Morrow, Jordan & Fridjhon, 2005). It is important for a school to encourage learners to become engaged in reading and to be motivated to continue reading. This task, however, is not easily achieved; it takes time, hard work and commitment by the learners, parents and school staff. The staff members at a school must prioritise the acquisition of library resources by fully supporting the library's services and functions. All staff members must have a shared vision of the school's reading culture. For a school to achieve this goal, all staff members have to understand why it is important for learners to be continuously engaged in reading.

There are concerns because learners in South Africa have low achievement levels. Prinsloo and Heugh (2013) attest to the fact that "few learners in South African schools can read and write competently". In the 2012 Annual National Assessment results, learners in Grade 1 and 2 had very low performance in language usage. The Annual National Assessment (ANA) 2012 results that were released by the Department of Basic Education acknowledged that there are factors that play an important role in the performance of learners in South Africa, namely socio-economic, demographic and historical realities. For instance, the negative impact of poverty clearly emerged as one of the factors influencing performance of learners across various schools. Learners that come from schools in the lower poverty level consistently achieve more poorly compared to their counterparts in higher quintile schools (Department of Basic Education, 2012). Provinces that are predominantly rural and historically disadvantaged did not perform well and that is why there is a need for the promotion of a reading culture in schools (Department of Basic Education, 2012).

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (2006) found that South African learners performed poorly in reading achievement. The Grade 4 learners in South Africa had the lowest reading score as compared internationally. African learners that were assessed in home languages scored 300 points, while Sepedi learners obtained 200 points,

and isiNdebele and isiXhosa learners achieved the lowest average scores of 176.80 and 189.97 respectively. All South African achievement scores were well below the international average of 500 points. This means that there is a problem in reading achievement in South Africa and this calls for a focus on the development of a reading culture in South African schools (Van Staden & Howie, 2010).

The social, political, economic and cultural background makes it difficult for learners to be engaged in schooling that can promote a reading culture (Khotze & Strauss, 2006:39). The learner's reading achievement is influenced negatively by socio-economic characteristics such as parent's level of education and a lack of reading material at home. The unemployment rate experienced by parents makes it difficult to buy books for the home to help learners promote a culture of reading (Troutman & Lichtenberg, 2003). However, Clark and Rumbold (2006) argue that "reading enjoyment is more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status". Research for this study determined the role played by the school environment and its culture in managing a reading culture in a disadvantaged area.

This study is aimed at determining how primary schools in Limpopo province create and manage a reading culture in their schools. It also cherishes the idea of identifying artefacts that will propagate an environment that places development of reading at its heart. Places like classrooms and staffrooms, as well as libraries, corridors and the grounds should underscore the pleasures and benefits of reading and could provide intrinsic motivation for reading as a desirable goal to the school and its community.

Studies by Prinsloo and Heugh (2013) on classroom preparedness for reading and writing in Limpopo province revealed, among others, that teacher training has to focus on improving specific teacher subject knowledge on how to teach the language well and on the effective use of reading and writing time, as well as on access to quality learning material, including textbooks and library resources in schools. Schools must be able to influence behaviour by being exemplary. For learners to be part of a reading nation, school staff members have to be seen reading.

In 2012 there was a textbook crisis in Limpopo province when schools did not receive textbooks for the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Section 27,

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which is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) forced the Department of Basic Education through Judge Jody Kollapen to order textbooks to be delivered by June 15, 2012 (Chisholm, 2012). The non-delivery of textbooks had a negative impact on the promotion of a reading culture in schools.

In Rwanda learners and parents were encouraged to create their own text as the way to enhance a culture of reading (Ruterana, 2012). Ruterana (2012) emphasises the involvement of stakeholders in improving knowledge and searching for new information as a means to promote a reading culture.

1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

There is a reading crisis in South African schools (Pretorius & Lephalala, 2011). One of the greatest deprivations in life a young person can suffer is to be unable to read and write. It leads to frustration and misery because the child will struggle to find a decent job. It is one of the great causes of unemployment and criminality (Gross, 2010).

There are many reasons for the poor performance of learners in reading achievement, one of which is poorly resourced schools that serve large classes of children from low socio-economic backgrounds. This usually makes it difficult for classroom teachers to address the needs of individual learners with regard to reading achievement (Swart & Nathanson, 2011). One of the contributing factors to low literacy levels in schools can be the lack of a supportive literacy environment (Machet & Tiemensma, 2009).

The National Development Plan in South Africa highlighted schooling as one of the challenges especially with grade 6 learners that did not master the basic reading and numeracy skills. South Africa had the third highest learners that are functionally illiterate (27%) and 40 % of innumerate learners. Learners in historically disadvantaged schools had low proficiency in reading, writing and numeracy. Grade 5 learners in historically black schools are performing worse on average than grade 3 learners in historically white schools. The weak capacity of teachers and principals has contributed to the poor schooling outcomes in South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 2011: 270).

This study is anchored in promoting a culture of reading in deprived schools. It is important to identify and enhance all efforts by stakeholders – teachers, librarians and parents   to ensure all learners are given an opportunity to read efficiently.

1.3. PURPOSE OF AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The aim of study is to investigate how primary schools promote and manage a reading culture. It is important to determine the role played by teachers in planning, organising, leading and controlling matters related to a reading culture at their schools. Heads of Department can take leadership in this matter by preparing, together with their teaching and library staff, policies and guidelines for reading activities in the school. In this manner an appropriate environment can promote a reading culture in schools. There are challenges, some of which are beyond the control of the school as an organisation. The question is how best the school manages the situation, without compromising the reading culture and the quality of reading and writing. The reading culture has to be sustainable. One of the primary aims is to promote enthusiasm for reading at the school and in the community.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Literature is silent on how schools should support and manage a reading culture. The following research question forms the basis of this study:

The main research question is the following:

   How do primary schools promote and manage a reading culture?

Sub-research questions:

   (i)   What role do the School Management Teams, teachers and library personnel play in managing a reading culture in schools?
   (ii)   How do schools create an environment that promotes a reading culture?
   (iii)   What challenges do School Management Teams, language teachers and library personnel face in promoting a reading culture in schools?

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(iv)   What strategies do SMTs, language teachers and library personel use to promote and develop a reading culture?

1.5. PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

School culture can be defined as the way things are done around the school (Bipath, 2008). A reading culture can be defined as the way in which reading is regarded as a part of the specific culture and a habit shared and valued by that particular community (Magara & Batambure in Jonsson & Olssson, 2008).

The school plays a leading role in the life of a learner with one of its aims being developing a love of reading. Teachers should be aware of the tendency to focus on the academic benefits of the learners with regard to school-based literacy practice (Halladay, Billman, Park, Gao, Reffitt & Hasty, 2007). The Department of Education (2008a) states that illiterate parents may not know the role that they should play in promoting a reading culture. Reading plays a major role in promoting learners' confidence in the society, nationally and internationally. The ability to read is a panacea for learners to gain new information and knowledge for lifelong learning (Department of Education, 2008a). It provides learners with the skills to read newspapers and pay bills (McCardle & Chhabra, 2004).

There are challenges in creating a reading culture, namely a lack of research-based components and classroom practices (Nicholson, 1997). A lack of reading competency among learners could be another challenge. Some learners lack role models at home, school and community to engage in voluntarily reading and develop reading habits (Machet & Tiemensma, 2009). Some Heads of Department (HODs) lack the relevant leadership skills and experience to mentor language teachers in promoting a reading culture (Torres-Guzman, 1996). There is a lack of collaboration and trust among language teachers in general; SMTs could play a leading role in developing strategies to improve working relationships among teachers (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). Many teachers and HODs lack vision and clear perspectives on managing the whole school with regard to promoting a reading culture (Singh & Lokotsch, 2005). All members of staff should have a shared vision of promoting a reading culture (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009).

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There are school-related factors that have a negative impact on the reading achievement of learners, namely inadequate subject knowledge of teachers, inadequate communication between teachers and learners, lack of instructional material and poor teacher abilities to manage overcrowded classrooms (Van Staden & Howie, 2010). Some learners perform poorly in reading achievement because teachers have a low understanding of teaching literacy (Department of Education, 2008a). Teachers are found not to be motivated to promote a reading culture in schools (Du Toit & Bouwer, 2009). There are inadequate language policies that do not cater for learners' needs (Department of Education, 2008a). Schools experience inadequate physical resources, classroom over-crowdedness and insufficient Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSM) (Pretorius & Machet, 2004). Lack of role models, reading resources and poor reading levels have a negative impact on the promotion of a reading culture (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2005). Poor school management and teaching skills, low proficiency levels in the medium of instruction and poor delivery of learning materials to schools have negative effects on the promotion and development of a reading culture (Pretorius & Machet, 2004). This study explores how the School Management Teams, language teachers and library personnel manage and promote a reading culture.

1.6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.6.1. Vygotsky's theory

Vygotsky's theory is based on the socio-cultural nature of human cognition and learning. This theory regards the educational process of cognitive and learning skills as important (Kozulin, 2004:3). There are two themes that are central to Vygotskian theory, namely Socio-cultural and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The socio-cultural character of the learning process can play a role in the acquisition of different types of literacy (Kozulin, 2004:5). The ZPD can be applied when teachers use the dynamic assessment of reading comprehension to promote and manage a reading culture in the school. The ZPD in Vygotsky's theory has three different contexts, namely the emergent psychological function of the child, a standard psychometric testing, and interaction between every day and scientific concepts. The ZPD can be used for the development of a remedial programme for struggling learners to improve their reading difficulties. It focuses on the learning interactions between teachers and learners or between school-age peers (Kozulin, 2004:5-6).

Scaffolding is the temporary and adjustable support that teachers can offer to help learners in performing reading tasks (Michael and Patricia, 1997:135). Scaffolding creates the possibility that the learner can read with the support of teachers and peers (Rose, Gray & Cowey, 1999:30). There are three conceptual frameworks in a scaffolding approach, namely a model of spoken and written language, a model of reading, and a model of learning. The model of learning comes from Vygotsky's work that shows learning as a social process that interacts between learners and teachers. Vygotsky uses the term "Zone of Proximal Development" as the interaction that exists between a learner and a teacher (Rose, Gray & Cowey, 1999:31). This research explores how those interactions between teachers and librarians on the one hand, and learners and teachers can enhance a reading culture in primary schools.

1.7. RESEARCH APPROACH, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.7.1. Research approach

In this study a qualitative research approach was used. The researcher understood and developed a holistic picture of how SMTs support, promote and develop a culture of reading. Data on the views of teachers, librarians and SMTs for the need to develop a reading culture in schools was collected. It provided the researcher with adequate opportunity to conduct the study in the natural setting of the selected schools (Creswell, 2007). By talking face-to-face with the SMT, the researcher was able to determine various ways in which a school can develop a reading culture in order to reach acceptable levels of competent reading skills. The research is based on data collected by means of observations, document analysis and interviews. This study gave the researcher an in-depth understanding of the role played by SMTs in promoting a reading culture.

1.7.2. Research paradigm

The researcher used an interpretive paradigm because he had to understand multiple realities about low reading achievement of South African learners in selected primary schools. He used this paradigm to understand the context by studying in detail the transcripts of conversations and the observations (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011).

1.7.3. Research design

The researcher opted for a case study design because he wanted to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon and explore ways in which the school can empower teachers to improve learner reading skills. He involved multiple sources of information that are rich in context, especially in reading skills that have the aim of promoting and developing a reading culture (De Vos et al., 2011).

1.7.4. Sampling

The research sample included the principals or deputy principals, Heads of Department (HODs) in all three phases, namely the Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase and one language teacher per phase together with a librarian (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2009). The researcher used purposive sampling (Maree & Pietersen, 2011) because the three primary schools were found in rural areas where learners show low reading achievement. The researcher observed the context in which the development of a reading culture occurred in selected primary schools. He found schools that had the characteristics that would answer the research questions.

1.7.5. Data collection

1.7.5.1. Observations / viewing

The researcher observed the classroom environment in the three primary schools. He determined whether the classrooms have reading corners, reading resources and whether the classroom walls display reading pictures and charts. The observations gave him the opportunity to gain deeper insight into and understanding of the phenomenon being observed (Maree, 2011). For the purposes of this study it was not necessary for the researcher to attend reading classes, as the artefacts provided the data on the reading culture prevailing in the classroom. The general outlook of the school also provided information regarding this.

1.7.5.2. Documents

The researcher perused documents such as the school language policy in order to determine any extraordinary efforts on the part of the teachers in enhancing a reading culture. Documents such as the English and Sepedi Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), language policy, reading policy, timetable, school and educators' records of learners' language grades were perused. These documents helped the researcher gain an in-depth understanding on how SMTs propagate and support a reading culture reading in the school. The researcher searched for any form of creativity and management plans for the promotion of a reading culture.

1.7.5.3. Interviews

Interviews were used as one of data collection techniques (Greeff, 2011). Interviews provide ample opportunity to ask the participants relevant questions on how schools promote and develop a reading culture. The participants had the opportunity to share their ideas, views, beliefs and opinions about the promotion and development of a reading culture in the school. The researcher interviewed language teachers, librarians, Heads of Department (HODs), deputy principals or principals of the three selected primary schools that are located in Soetfontein village in the Sekgosese East Circuit. The researcher selected the schools in the area purposively to answer the research question. The aim of interviewing participants in the selected primary schools was to collect rich and descriptive data that could assist him in answering the research question (Maree, 2011) by using semi-structured interviews (Greeff, 2011). Permission was sought from the participants to use a tape recorder so that the interview could be recorded (Nieuwenhuis, 2011). Notes were taken (Greeff, 2011). By listening to the audiotape, reviewing notes and reflecting on the interview, gaps were identified in case there was a need for arranging follow-up interviews.

1.7.6. Data analysis

Interview data was transcribed (Nieuwenhuis, 2011) and the analysis of information collected during observations and document was embarked upon. By reading the interview transcripts repeatedly to gain an in depth understanding on how SMTs support, promote and develop a

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reading culture in selected primary schools was an important step. The data collected during observations was analysed to enable a compilation of findings about what SMTs do to support, promote and develop a reading culture in schools.

1.8. TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY OF THE STUDY

According to Maree (2011) reliability and validity are specific criteria that concern most in quantitative research. The qualitative research approach prompts the researcher to speak of credibility and trustworthiness (Golafshani, 2003:601). The researcher made sure that research is credible and trustworthy by using multiple methods of data collection, such as observations, document analysis and interviews. The researcher also interviewed SMTs, language teachers and librarians to determine their opinions, views, ideas and experience about promoting and developing a reading culture in their schools.

1.9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is not to generalise its findings. The study was confined to three primary schools in the Sekgosese circuit. Although only three schools and 18 participants were involved, all effort was taken to interview the respondents during break and after school, so as not to disrupt normal instruction and learning in selected schools.

1.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research was conducted according to the ethics and research statements provided by the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria. The researcher made sure the participants were not exposed to any undue physical or psychological harm (Maree, 2011). The participants signed letters to document their willingness to participate in the research study about the promotion and development of a reading culture in primary schools. He explained the purpose of the study and emphasised the fact that participants might withdraw at any time (Maree, 2011).

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1.11. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this research are useful to language teachers and library personnel. School staff members promote, manage, develop and support a reading culture in the school. Libraries play a supportive role in creating a reading environment. Posters, book quality and reading material create enthusiasm on the part of learners to continue reading, even at home. Learners can improve their reading skills if they are supported by parents, peers, the community and the school. Their curriculum has to be developed in such a way that it gives learners the opportunity to read and write fluently. District, provincial and national curriculum advisers need to support teachers to meet their professional obligations to improve the quality of instruction and learning, with a special focus on promoting and developing a reading culture in schools. SMTs should prepare policies and guidelines as enablers of a sustainable reading culture. The Department of Basic Education can use the findings of this research to support schools to create a conducive environment by providing resources to establish a reading culture in South African schools.

1.12. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organised in the following five chapters:

Chapter 1 provides the introduction and background to the study, a preliminary literature review on the management, promotion, development and creation of a reading culture, the research problem, the purpose and rationale for the study, and research questions and sub-questions, theoretical framework, research approach, design and methodology, the significance of the study, chapter divisions and conclusion.

Chapter 2 discusses the literature on the management of reading culture, including school culture, the management and promotion of a reading culture, the role of School Management Teams in advancing a reading culture, the role played by language teachers to promote and manage a reading culture, the involvement of families to enhance learners' reading ability, the international perspectives on a reading culture, the challenges for establishing a reading culture, theoretical framework and conclusion.

Chapter 3 outlines the research approach, research paradigm, research design, research methodology, ethical issues and the enhancement of the quality of the study and conclusion.

Chapter 4 deals with biographical information of principals, HODs, language teachers and librarians, research interview questions and themes for principals, HODs, Language teachers and librarians and conclusion.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the research findings, conclusion, recommendations, delimitations, limitations of the study, and possible future research topics.

1.13. CONCLUSION

In this chapter the background to the study is outlined in detail and the research question, purpose of and rationale for the study, research questions and research methodology are provided. In the next chapter literature on the promotion and management of a reading culture is summarised.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the background to the study is outlined and the research problem statement, purpose and rationale for the study, research questions and research methodology are discussed. In the current chapter the literature on the promotion and management of a reading culture and its theoretical framework are discussed in detail.

2.2. SCHOOL CULTURE

School culture can be described as the way things are done in the school (Bipath 2008:67; Kruger & Steinman, 2011:19). Culture is a collection of traditions, values, policies, beliefs and attitudes that constitute a pervasive context for everything we do and think in the organisation (Kruger & Steinman, 2011:22; Behrman, 2004:24). School culture can be defined as the historically transmitted patterns of meaning that include the norms, ceremonies, rituals, traditions and myths that are understood, perhaps in varying degrees by members of the school community (Kruger & Steinman, 2011:19).

It relates to the ways expressed by school community members with regard to their behaviours in the school. School culture can also be referred to as the attitudes, manners, habits that are shared by the school community to achieve the goals of promoting and developing a reading culture (Ruterana, 2012:19). Behrman (2004:24) also emphasises that culture is an integrated pattern of behaviour, practices, beliefs and knowledge that constitute the operating rules and procedures that staff members in the school must organise, so that it can be easier to maintain that particular culture.

2.3. READING CULTURE

A reading culture is clearly defined as an integrated pattern of reading behaviour, practices, beliefs and knowledge as explained by Behrman (2004:24). It relates to the favourable conditions, with sufficient reading material, space and time, which support, develop and nurture ongoing reading practices (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2005:8).

Magara and Batambure (In Jonsson & Olsson 2008:21; Ruterana 2012:19) regard a reading culture as part of a specific culture and a habit that is shared and valued highly by members of the school community. A reading culture plays an important role in people's day to day lives and should become best practice. The promotion of a reading culture in the school should contribute to the improvement of learners' academic performance and lifelong learning. The development of a reading culture among learners should start at an early stage so that it can be nurtured in the school.

2.4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.4.1.Vygotsky's theory

Vygotsky's theory places emphasis on the socio-cultural nature of human cognition and learning. The transmission of culture as the major goal of education should be spread from generation to generation. Learners are viewed as individuals that possess the natural functions of perception, memory and problem solving that can be used for the transmission of learning. Culture could be regarded as an informative content of the curriculum, external to the process of learning. Teachers should discover the ever-present phenomenon of a reading culture. Vygotsky's socio-cultural approach encourages scientific reasoning that is different from the culture of everyday cognition and the variety of literacy. Vygotsky's theory places the educational process as the source rather than the consequence of developing cognitive and learning skills. This theory puts external forms of activity such as reading, writing and numerical operations on an equal footing with higher cognitive functions (Kozulin, 2004:3).

There are two themes that are central to Vygotskian theory, namely Socio-cultural Theory and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The socio-cultural character of the learning process can play a role, especially in the acquisition of different types of literacy. This theory radically changed the image of literacy as it had previously been interpreted as a reading skill acquired by six to seven-year old children in the formal education setting. It is evident that the different types of literacy are acquired in different contexts and used for different purposes. The awareness of the multicultural and multilingual nature of the contemporary classroom has brought to the fore the question of second and third language literacy as well as the difference between academic and everyday life literacy (Kozulin, 2004:5).

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2.4.2. Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

The Zone of Proximal Development can be applied when teachers use the dynamic assessment of reading comprehension to promote and manage a reading culture in schools. The ZPD in Vygotsky's theory has three different contexts. The first is the question of how to identify the emergent psychological function of the child; the second offers ZPD as an alternative to a standard psychometric testing; in the third ZPD appears as space of interaction between every day and scientific concepts. ZPD is used as a theoretical basis for the development of a variety of learning potential assessment techniques for reading comprehension. It can be used to differentiate between learners' current reading performance and their comprehension potential that can be facilitated by mediated learning. The concept of simultaneous and successive processing can be used for the development of a remedial programme for learners at risk of developing reading difficulties. Cognitive processes such as planning, and simultaneous and successive processing have an impact on learners' emergent reading skills. Vygotskian theory emphasises the concept of mediation as one of its central notions. It focuses on the learning interactions between teachers and learners or between school-age peers (Kozulin, 2004:5-6).

2.4.3. Scaffolding

Scaffolding is the temporary and adjustable support that teachers can offer to help learners in doing a reading task (Michael & Patricia, 1997:135). Learners must be effectively supported to operate well in reading. Scaffolding makes possible that the learner can read with the support of teachers and peers (Rose, Gray & Cowey, 1999:30).

There are three conceptual frameworks in a scaffolding approach, namely a model of spoken and written language, a model of reading, and a model of learning. The model of learning comes from Vygotsky's work that shows learning as a social process that interacts between learners and teachers. Vygotsky illustrates the interaction in the term called "Zone of Proximal Development" as the interaction that exists between learners and the teacher (Rose et al., 1999:31). The model of reading involves two skills, namely orthographic processing and meaning prediction. These two skills are central to fluent reading (Rose et al., 1999:32).

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Scaffolding makes it possible for struggling readers to use meaning prediction to support their low reading level skills. The model of language used to support learners to improve from low to higher order reading skills (Rose et al., 1999:32). The scaffolding reading framework should be flexible and adaptable for the struggling readers so that the teacher can select the best options suitable to help his or her learners (Michael & Patricia, 1997:135).

Pre-reading activities can prepare learners to read the selected text in scaffolding. During reading activities teachers help the learners to take note when they are reading a text. Post-reading activities help the learners to organise the information that they are gathering and recall the main points of the story (Michael & Patricia, 1997:135-136). Hobsbaum, Peters and Sylva (1996:20) point out that the teacher should avoid providing too much support to the struggling reader since more effort should be made by the learners themselves to improve their reading skills.

2.5. The management and promotion of a reading culture in the school

The school principal, Heads of Department (HODs), language teachers and librarians have a shared responsibility for managing instruction and learning with regard to the promotion of a reading culture (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009:3).

2.5.1. The role of the School Management Team in the advancement of a reading culture

The school principal has the responsibility to develop, manage and promote a reading programme in the school so that a reading culture can be instilled. He or she can organise staff training sessions and support the teaching of reading in the school. He can also involve parents in the reading programme so that learners can continue promoting the reading culture, even at home. Learners that excel in reading should be recognised by the school principal. The school principal should ensure that all learners learn to read. He or she should develop steps in the school that promote a reading culture (Department of Education, 2008a:16).

Modelling, monitoring and evaluation are the crucial tools to be used in the management and promotion of a reading culture. A good school should offer good models, especially on lesson

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preparation, subject knowledge, pedagogical approaches and reading assessment. The performance of teachers has to be monitored with a view to promoting a reading culture in the school. Constructive feedback should always be provided to the language teachers in order to boost the progress made in promoting a reading culture (Bush et al., 2009:6). The principal should have strong traits such as commitment, dedication, confidence and motivation that will instil a culture of reading in the school (Lekamge, 2010:49). Therefore the SMT should be held accountable for the quality of learning outcomes in the school, resources mobilisation for the promotion of a reading culture and resource management (Lekamge, 2010:43). It is the responsibility of the SMT to establish a reading culture where an effective system of knowledge is shared among language teachers (Duze, 2012:115). The principal as an instructional leader has to ensure that a sound culture of reading is promoted at all times in the school (Kruger, 2003:206).

The SMT should ensure that high performance of the language teachers is promoted in order to support a reading culture in the school. The primary task of the SMT is to create a reading culture that encourages better and excellent performance among the members of the school community (Botha, 2004:242). This role aims at creating a shared vision of promoting a reading culture for obtaining and developing a successful team in the school (Singh & Lokotsch, 2005:286). Teachers have to receive guidance and support on how best to promote the reading culture in the school (Botha, 2004:240) whenever opportunities arise (Edwards, 2008:29). The reading culture should be governed by specific rules so that it can shape learners' experiences (Behrman, 2004:28).

The SMT should work as a team to support one another in the management and leadership of a reading culture in the school (Department of Education, 2008a:16). SMTs should play a vital role in the management of the reading culture within the school-wide strategy (Bush et al., 2009:4). The SMTs should give high priority to the management and promotion of a reading culture in the school through modelling (leading by example) (Bush et al., 2009:4, 6).

2.5.2. The role of language teachers in cultivating a reading culture

Language teachers are the key pillars in the successful promotion of a reading culture in the school. Teacher training, development and support are essential in the promotion of a reading culture. Teachers, learners, principals and support staff should have at least half an hour after

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school where they are seen reading a book for enjoyment to promote a reading culture in the school (Department of Education, 2008a:15). Teachers are the main drivers of successful instruction and learning in order to promote a reading culture in the school (Duze, 2012:111).

Teachers have a role to play in cultivating a love of reading among the learners (Gambrell, 1996:14). The teachers should assist learners in becoming better readers that can read for pleasure and information (Gambrell, 1996:15). They should nurture learners to become independent readers (Ruterana, 2012:19; Kachala 2007:7). They should promote positive reading attitudes with learners (Ronnas, 2009:23). Teachers need to know how scaffolding can be used in the classroom to enhance learner reading skills.

Staff members, especially language teachers, should be actively involved in the development of a culture of reading so that it can be maintained. They should have common reading activities, behaviours and beliefs so that a reading culture can be promoted and managed well in the school (Behrman, 2004:24). They are prime movers in the implementation of curriculum and teaching and learning in the school (Duze, 2012:115).

Teachers have to demonstrate a passion for reading and serve as model readers for their learners. There must be a good relationship among parents and teachers to promote, foster and enhance a reading culture in the school and at home (Ruterana, 2012:57). Teachers should provide support or learner motivation to read and be involved in modelling reading (White & Kim, 2008:116). White and Kim (2008:117) emphasise that teachers should provide support for learners to use comprehension strategies, silent reading and reading aloud to their parents and to practise reading fluently.

Teachers can also repackage information and display it on classroom walls. Reading material can be displayed on the walls. Teachers can encourage learners to dramatise what they have read to promote a reading culture in the school. Weekly debates can be facilitated by language teachers on the issues derived from read stories. Teachers can organise reading competitions in the school. Language teachers can allocate reading on the general school timetable to promote a reading culture in the school. Teachers can assign reading roles to the learners to promote a reading culture in the school (Magara & Batambuze, 2009:123-124).

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2.5.3. The role of the teacher librarian in cultivating a reading culture

The teacher librarian should a play a crucial in cultivating reading culture in school. Kachala (2007:5-6) acknowledges that the library is a source of information for the learners. A library provides information to the learners with the aim of improving the low educational standards that are prevailing in the schools. The teacher librarian should provide learners with relevant information that can assist them in improving their low reading abilities. The teacher librarian is a resource person who serves the learners by providing relevant reading material.

Kachala (2007:7-8) posits that a library plays a crucial role in providing access to information. The teacher librarian assists learners to access relevant information and textbooks to promote a reading culture in the school; the teacher librarian ensures access to relevant reading material to improve a reading culture. Machet and Tiemensma (2009:60) acknowledge that reading material should be made available in the library. Learners can easily become voluntary readers because they have access to reading material in the school library. Doiron and Asselin (2011:115) point out that the teacher librarian, as the resource person, should respond to learners' interests, personal choice and a variety of diverse reading resources. Apeji (2000:27, 29) points out that the teacher librarian should ensure that a collection of books, magazines, audio-visual materials, reference books such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, biographical dictionaries, yearbooks, atlases, directories, newspapers, comics and periodicals are available in the school library. He or she should promote a variety of activities that could develop a love of reading among the learners.

Doiron and Asselin (2011:112) agree that the library is a rich resource. The library resources should motivate learners to have an interest in reading. The teacher librarian should ensure that reading resources such as fiction, non-fiction and video learning equipment are available to inspire the learners in the school.

2.6. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Families have to be involved in enhancing children's literacy development. One of the tensions apparent in the research literature on family literacy relates to expectations regarding the role that schools can play in the life of learners so that they can develop a love of reading. Families can play a role in attending to the social dimensions of schooling as a cultural

practice in order to promote and develop a reading culture (Halladay, Billman, Park, Gao, Reffitt & Hasty, 2007).

The Department of Education (2008a:09) (now referred to as The Department of Basic Education) points out that the educational background of parents has a strong influence on their children's achievement at school. Uneducated parents or parents with little education find it difficult to help their children if they do not understand the tasks that their children have to do.

Ronnas (2009:22) acknowledges that parents do not have time at home to read books to their children and this can be caused by their lack of interest in a reading culture. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (2005:14) points out that the illiterate levels of parents are very high and make it difficult to promote a reading culture. The high rate of unemployment and poverty among parents, which are directly influenced by linguistic, cultural and economic factors, has a negative impact on the promotion of a reading culture.

2.7. THE IMPORTANCE OF READING

Reading is part of nation building that our country is aiming at. It can be achieved by promoting a reading culture in all schools. It promotes a learner's confidence in a modern society and as a member of a national and world community. It enables people to act creatively and critically in a world that is ever-changing and competitive; it provides rapid, ready access to new information and knowledge that will help people with lifelong learning (Department of Education, 2008a:05). Reading is an essential and basic competence for living and taking control of one's life in our day and age (KwaZulu-Natal Education Department, 2005:13). Therefore promoting and developing a reading culture in the schools is one task that needs special attention so that learners can participate and compete with other countries.

The ability to read is both necessary and essential for children's academic success. The importance of success in reading for lifelong achievement cannot be under-estimated and how well a child learns to read may determine future opportunities. These include not only career possibilities but also the ability to accomplish the basic activities of daily living, namely reading a newspaper, obtaining a driver's licence or and paying bills. This implies

that teachers play a vital role in developing and nurturing children's reading skills in the classroom in order to promote a reading culture in the school (McCardle & Chhabra, 2004).

Reynolds (1998:152) believes that successful teaching of reading will bear the following fruits: equipping learners to draw on the sources of knowledge needed when reading for meaning, graphic knowledge, word recognition, grammatical knowledge and contextual information. It builds systematically on the skills learners have mastered earlier. It stimulates and requires good library use and gives time for productive individual reading at school and at home and opportunities for learners to share their responses with others. Therefore promoting and developing a reading culture will contribute to achieving academic success.

2.8. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON A READING CULTURE

Niklas and Schneider (2013) emphasise that the Home Literacy Environment (HLE) in Germany has an impact on the academic performance of learners at school. The home support that parents in the current research provided to the learners had a positive influence on the academic achievement at school. Parents were encouraged to read more books to learners at home to stimulate the interest in reading. HLE was regarded as the most important aspect for the development of early learner reading competencies in English and German, especially in the lower grade.

Kam (2012) points out that in Hong Kong the Education Bureau (EDB) implemented various strategies to improve learner performance in reading. The strategies proved why Hong Kong was regarded a top performing country in PIRLS 2011. Reading promotion is regarded as the vehicle of learning and as a source of pleasure as one of the four key goals of curriculum reform. EDB decided to launch Reading to Learn as the school development project to assist primary schools to improve teaching reading and developing school-based strategies for building a reading culture. It developed interactive reading website for learners, seminars and training programs to assist teachers and librarians to augment the use of children reading books in schools. Learners were encouraged to make full use of resources available in Hong Kong's public libraries and to develop reading as a lifelong habit. The availability of reading resources at schools boosted teachers' professional subject matter knowledge and pedagogy. Schools were provided with special funds to supplement reading resources, such as books and reading material. Schools were encouraged to develop innovative strategies to motivate

learners to read as a way of building a vibrant culture of reading. They were given the power to adjust the curriculum and timetable to promote reading; they could develop systematic programmes for teaching reading skills during lessons by organising reading clubs and making use of drama. Schools were encouraged to involve parents and the community to promote good reading habits at home.

Kam (2012) emphasises that language teachers should focuse on reading strategies and skills instruction in the classroom. Teachers assisted learners by stimulating the love to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT), the internet and education software. They used differentiated instruction, multisensory teaching and one-on-one-hands-on experience to improve learning in the classroom. They also used Daily Assessment and Teaching For Primary Aged Children (Datapac) to assit struggling readers. Teachers, parents and older learners should spend 15 minutes daily in assisting struggling readers. Struggling readers were engaged in paired reading to complete reading tasks and read for enjoyment. Learners were encouraged to play reading games to improve their reading skills.

Chuy (2012) emphasises that in Canada the main goal of the education system is to improve teaching, learning and achievement for all learners. Learners were encouraged to be better readers by ensuring that reading is practised, modelled and supported at all times. Teachers were supported with curriculum documents that included suggestions and recommendations on reading instruction, assessment, teaching units, supporting resources, textbooks and best reading practices. Learners were also encouraged to improve reading, literacy experience, information acquisition and reading for enjoyment. Teachers provided scaffolded support to help learners to learn new literacy strategies and skills by modelling, guiding, thinking aloud and supporting them in practising reading. They used differentiated instruction for individual and small groups in assisting them in improving reading skills. Teachers should teach and model reading to stimulate learners' thinking skills that enable them to understand, appreciate and evaluate what they have read. Teachers selected meaningful and interesting texts that could arouse learners' interest in reading. They were encouraged to use educational technologies in the classroom and various modes of software to assist learners in developing critical thinking skills to support reading and writing. Learners with reading difficulties were supported by means of remedial corrective or skill-building instruction, specific learning strategies, alternative reading material, an adapted curriculum, tutors and assistive technology, for instance screen readers. Classroom teachers monitored learners' reading

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progress by using ongoing classroom assessment, national assessment and jurisdictional assessment. They used various assessment strategies, such as teacher observation, portfolios and classroom-based tests for formative and summartive purposes. Teachers also used various standardised tests such as the Canadian Achievement Test (CAT), the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test and the Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA) to assess reading achievement. Teachers communicated learners' progress by means of report cards, parent-teacher conferences and e-mails.

Commeyras and Mazile (2011) acknowledge in their study there was no culture of reading in Botswana. The researchers point out that teachers were of the opinion that Botswana did not read books in a public place (Commeyras & Mazile, 2011:418). Commeyras and Mazile (2011:418) believe that promoting a reading culture in Botswana can be facilitated by teachers. For a reading culture to exist in the school, it needs the support of the teachers. The activities that teachers, parents and learners propagate in the school to create and maintain a pattern of a reading culture actively are important. The activities could be used to design ways of promoting a reading culture among the school community members, such teachers, learners and parents (Commeyras & Mazile, 2011:419).

The Botswana Government has the goal of promoting a reading culture in the school as one of their immediate tasks (Commeyras & Mazile, 2011:419; Republic of Botswana, 1994:27). The promotion of a reading culture in Botswana has improved learners' reading ability and achievement. Learners view reading as enjoyable parts of learning. It provides them with an opportunity to learn about other cultures and has also improved their English skills that are needed to pass examinations (Commeyras & Mazile, 2011:419).

Botswana has propagated a reading culture among primary school teachers in Botswana by establishing book clubs so that learners can be encouraged to read in and out of school (Commeyras & Mazile, 2011:422). A book club is group of people who come together to talk about a book they have all read (Commeyras & Mazile, 2011:425). Teachers were encouraged to establish reading clubs. They were also encouraged to read short selections and share these with other teachers during lunch time at least once per month. Teachers engaged learners in creating simple books as a means of expanding the reading material available within each classroom. The books can be made with materials such as paper, elastic, cardboard from cereal boxes, gift wrap and even sticks found in the school yard (Commeyras & Mazile,

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2011:422). Teachers provided guidance regarding more difficult material to promote a reading culture (Commeyras & Mazile, 2011:426).

The following explanation summarises how teachers in Uganda promoted a reading culture: they advised learners on how to use books and the library; they encouraged learners to read books during pleasure time. Teachers facilitated reading lessons on the general school timetable and encouraged learners to form reading clubs. Learners organised reading committees to monitor and encourage reading in the school. The teachers organised reading demonstrations by reading first and later allowed learners to read on their own. The library made reference books available when they prepared lessons and used library books as teaching resources (Magara & Batambuze, 2009:117-119).

School principals supported the promotion of reading in Uganda in the following ways: they provided overall management of the library and identified opportunities that benefited the library, and monitored as well as supervised teachers to make reading and teaching media available at times when preparing daily lessons. Learners were given incentives if they did well. Learners were also praised and encouraged to read during assembly. The principal provided facilities such as reading material and supplementary readers that would promote reading to the library (Magara & Batambuze, 2009:120-121).

Parents were actively involved in promoting reading in school by keeping books safe at home where reading was supervised. They went the extra mile by purchasing textbooks for their children. They were involved in school activities through contributing gifts or prizes for learners that participated in reading competitions (Magara & Batambuze, 2009:120).

2.9. CHALLENGES IN CREATING A READING CULTURE

2.9.1. Reading difficulties

There are several reasons that contribute to reading difficulties, including the economic and social status of the community (Nicholson, 1997). Learners who lack reading competency are not able to function in an information society. Without the proper educational stimulation and encouragement from the home, the school and community, most learners will not develop a reading habit or engage in voluntary reading (Machet & Tiemensma, 2009). Kibirige (2011)

agrees that many learners with reading difficulties do not succeed at school and that is why it is very important for SMTs to develop and support a reading culture in the school. This will help learners to improve their reading performance. Learners who do not learn to read have a much harder time to succeed in school and in the workplace, which in turn affects emotional health, economic security and the overall well-being of the learner (McCardle & Chhabra, 2004).

2.9.2. Mentoring

Torres-Guzman (1996) defines mentoring as the relationship in which a mentor furthers the profession and personal development of a person by providing information, assistance, support and guidance. Mentoring is the process that the SMT can use to build a relationship with the staff members by supporting them in promoting a reading culture. Schools have serious challenges of finding suitable mentors that can develop the language educators to promote a reading culture. Most of the HODs lack relevant leadership skills and experience in developing language teachers. The scarcity of mentors leaves the schools with two options: using veterans, or experienced and innovative teachers to help in developing a reading culture (Torres-Guzman, 1996).

SMTs can play a major role in creating a learning environment that is conducive to the propagation of a reading culture in the school. They could play a mentoring role in helping language teachers to promote a reading culture (Torres-Guzman, 1996). The whole exercise depends on the needs of the school.

Collegiality is an important factor in enabling mentoring to flourish in developing a reading culture in schools. When there is a lack of collaboration and trust between language teachers in general, the SMT could play a role in developing strategies to facilitate closer relationships among colleagues (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002).

2.9.3. Empowerment

Empowerment is a demanding task for the school manager; it comes with responsibility and commitment of making sure that a reading culture is promoted in the school. The leader needs to share the vision of developing a reading culture with staff members. Empowerment

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and accountability in developing a reading culture in the schools is a priority. Many teachers and SMTs have limited vision because of their immediate jobs or roles and lack a clear perspective on the school with regard to the promotion of a reading culture (Singh & Lokotsch, 2005:282). The SMT has to cultivate a passion for reading in the schools so that a reading culture is promoted (Van Staden & Howie, 2012). It is the shared responsibility of the SMT and classroom teachers to create an environment of instruction and learning in the school. All the staff members involved must share the same vision (Bush et al., 2009).

2.9.4. School-related factors

Van Staden and Howie (2010) admit that there are school-related factors that have an impact on the reading achievement of learners; these are inadequate subject knowledge of teachers, inadequate communication between learners and teachers in the language of instruction, a lack of instructional material, and teachers' inability to manage classroom activities effectively in overcrowded classrooms. The SMT should empower and mentor the language educators so that learners can perform well in reading.

2.9.4.1. Improving teacher competency in schools

Many teachers in South Africa have an under-developed understanding of teaching literacy, reading and writing and that is why learners perform badly in reading (Department of Education, 2008a:08). Teachers find it difficult to help struggling readers. They do not know how to stimulate reading inside and outside the classroom. The Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) survey in 1999 found that the employment of under-unqualified teachers in the Foundation Phase in rural schools was a common practice. The employment of such teachers had a negative impact on the quality of teaching and contributed to the poor performance of learners (Department of Education, 2008a:08). The obstructive factor is the great number of employed teachers who, in their schooling and professional education and training, were not encouraged to become competent readers themselves and were not introduced to relevant, effective and varied methods of teaching and nurturing reading (Kwazulu-Natal Education Department, 2005:14). Du Toit and Bouwer (2009) declare that there are teachers that lack interest in promoting reading.

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Learners require assistance to develop school readiness regarding literacy skills. Teachers should guard against a tendency of focusing on the academic benefits associated with school-based literacy tasks (Halladay et al., 2007).

2.9.4.2. Language barrier

Most schools have inadequate language policies that do not address the learning needs of the learners. Foundation Phase teachers have generally not been taught to teach reading in the home language of African learners. There is the added problem that African languages are structured differently from English or Afrikaans (Department of Education, 2008a:9-10).

2.9.4.3. Insufficient instructional material

Pretorius and Machet (2004:129) support the idea that the poor academic performance of learners in many of our schools can be attributed to a wide range of factors. The learning environment in the African context in general is characterised by poverty. Schools have inadequate physical resources, overcrowding and inadequate supplies of learning material and books. The Department of Education (2008a: 09) agrees that inadequate instructional support material makes it difficult to deliver quality education in as far as the promotion of a reading culture is concerned.

Poor reading levels, insufficient role models and lack of access to appropriate reading materials in education institutions are, among others, things that hinder a strong reading culture (Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education, 2005:10). Jonsson and Olsson (2008:84) state that there are obstacles that hinder the promotion of a reading culture in the schools, namely poverty and a lack of reading material.

2.9.4.4. Poor school management

Pretorius and Machet (2004: 129) underscore the fact that the policies and practices of apartheid education gave rise to an extremely dysfunctional education system characterised by poor teaching, reliance on rote learning, low proficiency levels in the medium of tuition and poor school management. Poor school management and poor delivery of learning

material to schools had an effect on the promotion and development of a reading culture. These conditions are not conducive to the development of meaningful literacy practices.

School managers often lack the capability and motivation to develop, sustain and monitor instruction and learning effectively, especially in the management and promotion of a reading culture. The principals are said to be failing to accept personal and collective responsibility for weak learner outcomes (Bush et al., 2009:6).

2.10. CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher reviewed international and national literature on the promotion and management of a reading culture and much attention is paid to the discussion of the challenges of managing a reading culture and the role played by the School Management Teams and language teachers. Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding as the theoretical framework guiding this study are discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH APPROACH, RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the researcher reviewed literature on the promotion and management of a reading culture and its theoretical framework. This chapter deals with the method used to answer the research questions. It outlines the research approach, research design, research paradigm, research methodology, research site, sampling, data collection, research procedure, data analysis and ethical issues. The reseacher used a qualitative research approach.

3.2. RESEARCH APPROACH

A qualitative research approach was used in this study for purposes of understanding and developing a holistic picture of how School Management Teams support, promote, develop and manage a reading culture. This study required of the researcher gather data on the views of teachers, librarians and School Management Teams on the need to develop a reading culture in the school. It has provided him with the opportunity to conduct the study in natural settings that comprised selected schools (Creswell, 2007). By talking face-to-face with the SMT, language teachers and library personnel, the researcher determined various ways in which a school can develop a reading culture in order to reach acceptable levels of reading skills. It is based on data collected by means of observation, document analysis and interviews. This study has enabled an in-depth analysis to understand the role played by SMTs, language teachers and library personnel in promoting a reading culture.

Creswell (2007:37) points out that the qualitative researcher should collect data in natural settings; the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the participants of the three selected schools that were managing and promoting a reading culture. He examined documents such as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (Sepedi and English) (CAPS), and timetables and reading policies. He observed the classroom environment to determine whether it was conducive to promoting, supporting and creating a reading culture. Creswell (2007:38) highlights that the researcher should use "multiple sources of data" to enhance the quality of the research. The researcher used observations, interviews and

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documents in this study. Qualitative research allows the researcher to be involved in an inductive process by working back and forth with the themes.

The commitment of the researcher in a qualitative study calls for much time for data collection and data analysis; the researcher interviewed 18 participants in his study, trying to gain insight into how School Management Teams, teachers and library personnel manage, support and promote a reading culture in their schools (Creswell, 2007:41). The disadvantage of qualitative research is that the analysis of data is time consuming because the researcher has to sort extensive data into a few themes to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2007:41).

3.3. RESEARCH PARADIGM

The researcher used an interpretive paradigm that involved understanding and interpreting the opinions of the participants in managing and support a reading culture (Ogina, 2015:220). He opted for this paradigm because he wanted to understand multiple realities about low reading achievement of South African learners in selected primary schools. He used this paradigm to understand the real context by studying in detail the transcripts and conversations obtained during the observations and interviews (De Vos et al., 2012).

The researcher was able to interpret what he had observed in the classroom environment. He interpreted the artefacts observed on the classroom walls. In addition, the researcher interpreted how schools promote, manage, develop and support a reading culture (Creswell, 2007:39). The researcher investigated the research problem and research questions aimed at understanding how SMTs, language teachers and library personnel support, develop and manage a reading culture. He respected the views of the participants and the research site when he collected data (Creswell, 2007:24). He also understood that the participants could have different views on how schools could manage a reading culture. The researcher wanted to understand the phenomenon through the opinions of the participants in the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:59).

3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN

Yin (2009:13) defines case study as the investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context, more especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not vividly explained. Creswell (2007:73) describes a case study as the methodology that the researcher investigates. It is a bounded system or multi-bounded system that has a meticulous in-depth data collection strategy of multiple sources of information. The researcher used a case study to understand a complex shared phenomenon experienced by SMTs, language teachers and librarians. He was able to understand the holistic meaning of the real-life concept of how School Management Teams, language teachers and library personnel manage and support a reading culture in the school (Yin, 2009:2).

The researcher opted for a case study design because he wanted to have in-depth understanding of the phenomenon and explore ways in which the school can empower teachers to improve learner reading skills. He involved multiple sources of information that were rich in context, especially in reading (De Vos et al., 2012). In this study the case study enabled an investigation into the management of a reading culture in primary schools around Limpopo province. The researcher selected three primary schools in Sekgosese East Circuit in the Mopani district in Limpopo province.

Chih-en Hsieh (2004: 96) points out that a case study is flexible because the researcher selects data collection methods and analysis that suit his study. The researcher uses different methods for data collection, such as observation, interviews and documents to gather rich information on how SMTs, language teachers and library personnel promote, support, create and manage a reading culture (Chih-en Hsieh, 2004:99).

Barter and Jack (2008:550) are of the opinion that multiple case studies could allow the researcher to analyse within each setting and across settings. Multiple case studies could be viewed as robust and reliable but one of their disadvantages is that they could be time consuming and expensive to conduct. Nieuwenhuis (2011:75) outlines that a case study provides the researcher with a holistic understanding of how SMTs, language teachers and librarians relate to and interact with one another regarding the management and promotion of a reading culture in the schools. A case study views the phenomenon in a real-life context by engaging SMTs, language teachers and library personnel in the management and promotion of reading in schools (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2009:254).

3.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.5.1. Research site

Soetfontein village is a deep rural area found in Limpopo province in Mopani district under the Greater Letaba municipality in Ward 15. The area is under the control of two local chiefs who are regarded as traditional leaders. There are four primary schools and three secondary schools in the area. Most of the families are affected by poverty because parents are mostly unemployed. Problems that affect the schools and community are soil erosion, veld fires, pollution, unemployment, a lack of learning and teaching support material (LTSM), lower levels of education and malnutrition. Some of the family members work on farms about 32 kilometres from the village. Most of the learners are under the guardianship of grandmothers because many parents work in urban cities in South Africa. A non-governmental organisation managed to build a library that is presently controlled by the local municipality. The community library is open from at 08:00 to 16:30 during the week and it remains closed on the weekend. Therefore it does not serve the learners who are willing to use it on weekends. All three primary schools where the research was conducted are in quintile 1 and parents are not allowed to pay school fees.

3.5.2. Sampling

The research population was drawn from Mopani District in Limpopo Province. There are five municipalities in Mopani district namely Greater Letaba, Greater Tzaneen, Greater Ba-Phalaborwa, Greater Maruleng and Greater Giyani. Sekgosese East is one of the circuits found in greater Letaba Municipality in Mopani District. Sekgosese East circuit had 26 primary schools and 16 secondary schools. The research study was done at Soetfontein Village and there are four primary schools and three secondary schools. School A has an enrolment of four hundred and ninety (490) learners; School B has four hundred and eighty seven (487) learners while School C has one thousand three hundred and forty seven (1347) learners. The area has a population of six thousand four hundred and twenty four (6 424) people (Census 2011 Statistics South Africa).

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The research sample included the principals or deputy principals, Heads of Department (HODs) for all three phases, namely the Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase, as well as one language teacher per phase together with the library personnel (Cohen et al., 2009). The researcher used purposive sampling (Maree & Pietersen, 2011) because the three primary schools were found in deep rural areas where learners were displaying low reading achievement levels. The researcher observed the context in which the development of a reading culture occurred in selected primary schools.

Eighteen participants were selected from three schools; two principals, one deputy principal, six Heads of Department for the Foundation Phase and Intermediate and Senior Phase, three Sepedi home language teachers, three English First Additional Language teachers and three teachers who acted as library personnel and stock controllers; they were interviewed on how they support, create, develop and manage a reading culture. The participants who were interviewed in this study were ten males and eight females. The research used face-to-face semi- structured interviews.

3.5.3. Research methods

Research methods are tools used by the researcher to collect data (Dawson, 2007:28). In this study the researcher used observations, interviews and documents to collect data on how SMTs, language teachers and library personnel manage a reading culture in primary schools. Nieuwenhuis (2011:84) states that observation is an essential data collecting technique that aims at getting insight into and an understanding of the phenomenon. The researcher was able to use "self-consciously sensory gathering data through sight and touch" to view the reality of a reading culture artefacts pasted on the classroom walls (Somekh & Jones, 2005:138). The researcher requested permission from the school principals to view the classroom environment. This helped him determine whether it promoted and created a reading culture. The researcher determined whether the classrooms had reading corners, whether reading resources were available and whether the classroom walls displayed reading charts. The researcher took notes while observing the classroom environment.

The researcher used interviews as one of the data collection techniques, and this provided ample opportunity to ask the participants various questions on how the school promoted and developed a reading culture in their schools. The participants had the opportunity to share

their ideas, views, beliefs and opinions about the promotion and development of a reading culture in the schools (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:87).

3.5.4. Research procedure

Permission was sought from the Limpopo Department of Education to conduct research in Mopani district in the Sekgosese East Circuit, and an application letter was forwarded to the Head of Department, indicating the research topic. The application was approved. The Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria as well as the circuit manager of Sekgosese East also granted approval. Permission was granted by the school principals, and letters relating to participation were forwarded to the Heads of Department, language teachers and librarians.

The researcher held a brief session with each participant before conducting the interview and explained the background to the study. Research aims were clarified. Participants gave consent to take part. The informed consent letter stated that participants might withdraw from the process at any moment if they did not wish to continue with the interview.

Arrangements and appointments with the participants were made concerning the dates, time and venue for the interviews. The interviews were conducted after school and during break. The interview sessions were well planned so that research activities could not disrupt the smooth running of the school. Participants chose the time that suited their schedules best. For example, some of the interviews were conduct after school working hours when other teachers and learners had already left the premises. The interviews were conducted in English even though some the participants were allowed to communicate in Sepedi to emphasise a point. The researcher translated participants' responses in Sepedi into English.

3.5.5. Data Analysis

Schurink, Fouche and De Vos (2011:397) state that qualitative data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of gathered data. Nieuwenhuis (2011:99) adds that qualitative data analysis is an interpretative philosophy aimed at understanding the meaning of a phenomenon and it is an iterative process. Creswell (2007:148) explains that qualitative data analysis involves preparing and organising data in textual form into themes.

Schurink et al. (2011:398) point out that qualitative data analysis is a messy, ambiguous, time consuming, creative and fascinating process.

The researcher allotted an identifying pseudonym to each participant (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:104). He coded each interview with the number of the participating school, namely School A, School B and School C. School A was represented Principal 1, HOD 1, HOD 2, Teacher 1, Teacher 2 and Librarian 1. School B was represented by Principal 2, HOD 3, HOD 4, Teacher 3, Teacher 4 and Librarian 2, and School C by Deputy Principal 3, HOD 5, HOD 6, Teacher 5, Teacher 6 and Librarian 3.

The researcher transcribed the data that was recorded during interviews sessions with the 18 participants. The audio tape was transcribed verbatim by the researcher (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:104) and was time consuming (Schurink et al., 2011:398). The researcher also analysed data that was collected during observations and document analysis. He coded the meaning of the segments based on the data collected from participants' interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:105). The researcher decided to code each segment with different colours and identified particular phenomena in data collected during interviews; thereafter he grouped concepts around phenomena (Schurink et al., 2011:411). Data was then reduced into meaningful segments and assigned a name. Codes were combined into broader themes to explain how SMTs, language teachers and library personnel manage a reading culture (Creswell, 2007:148).

3.6. ETHICAL ISSUES

Approval letters were obtained from the Head of Department in the Limpopo Department of Education, from the circuit manager and ethical permission was granted by the University of Pretoria. The researcher made sure that results and findings of the study were treated confidentially and he protected the participants' identities. Pseudonyms were used as indicated in Paragraph 3.5.5 to protect the participants' identities and schools' names.

A disc of the tape recorded information has been kept under lock and key at the University of Pretoria since completion of the study. Research was conducted according to the ethics and research guidelines provided by the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria.

The researcher was always honest, respectful and sympathetic toward all the participants and provided briefing to the participants before interviews and observations could commence. Participants were not exposed to any undue physical or psychological harm (Maree, 2011).

The principal, deputy principal, HOD and language teachers together with librarians of the three selected primary schools received informed consent letters to sign to participate in the research study on the promotion and development of a reading culture in primary schools. Before the interview could start, a brief explanation of the research that was to be conducted was given to the participants.

3.7. ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF THE RESEARCH

Trustworthiness and credibility were ensured by a peer debriefing session and discussion of the study to assist with the interpretation of the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:80; Creswell 2007:208). Member checking by inviting the participants to make comments on the interview transcripts and reflective notes and the participants' views on the credibility and accuracy of the findings and interpretations were used (Creswell, 2007: 208; Burnard, Gill, Steward, Treasure& Chadwick, 2008:431).

Trustworthiness was established because the findings reflect the meanings as described by the participants of the study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The researcher ensured the trustworthiness of the study through the use of various strategies such as reflexivity, audit trail, triangulation, peer debriefing, and prolonged engagement (Lietz, Langer and Furman, 2006).

Documents were used during the research process so that an auditing trail could be maintained and this was another way of maintaining accuracy (Creswell, 2007:209; Schurink, Fouche & De Vos, 2011:422).

3.8. CONCLUSION

In this chapter a detailed discussion of the research approach, research paradigm, research design, research methodology, and ethical issues is presented. This research followed a

qualitative approach to determine how School Management Teams, language teachers and library personnel manage a reading culture. The next chapter provides a detailed discussion of the research findings and the data analysis.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS, DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews by engaging primary school principals, HODs, Sepedi Home Language teachers and English First Additional Language teachers, as well as librarians regarding the management of a reading culture in primary schools. The classroom environment was observed and documents such as the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for Sepedi home language and English First Additional Language, language teaching policies and timetables were read and analysed. Literature is silent on how primary schools support a reading culture. The aim of this study is to investigate how the primary schools promote and manage a reading culture in the three selected primary schools in Limpopo Province, Mopani District, Sekgosese East Circuit. The research questions are *How do primary schools promote and manage a reading culture? What role do School Management Teams, teachers and library personnel play in managing a reading culture in the school? How do schools create an environment that promotes a reading culture? What challenges do School Management Teams, language teachers and library personnel face in promoting a reading culture in their schools? What strategies do SMTs, language teachers and library personel use to promote and develop a reading culture?*

4.2. Biographical information

The tables below (Table 4.1., Table 4.2., Table 4.3. and Table 4.4.) illustrate the experience level of the participants in the study. The researcher considered participants' experience when gathering data. Teachers' work experience ranged from 11 to 24 years; the managerial experience of SMTs ranged from four to 16 years. The library personnel's experience ranged from six to 21 years. The experience level of the participants helped the researcher to gather rich data on the phenomenon in the study (Merriam, 2008).

Eight females and ten males were interviewed. Data collected during interviews provided the researcher with an in-depth understanding of how to promote and manage a reading culture in schools (Creswell, 2007).

Table 4.1. Biographical information of the principals

School code	Type of participant	Gender	Experience	Total
School A	Principal 1	Male	4 years	1
School B	Principal 2	Male	16 years	1
School C	Deputy principal 3	Male	8 years	1

The principals that participated in the study had working experience in deep rural primary schools.

Table 4.2. Biographical information of the HODs

School code	Type of participant	Gender	Experience	Total
School A	HOD 1	Female	10 years	1
School A	HOD 2	Male	4 years	1
School B	HOD 3	Female	10 years	1
School B	HOD 4	Male	10 years	1
School C	HOD 5	Male	10 years	1
School C	HOD 6	Female	4 years	1

The HODs that participated in the study had managerial experience in working in deep rural primary schools. The managerial experience of the HODs ranged from four years to ten years. The knowledge gained by HODs helped the teachers to promote a reading culture in their schools.

Table 4.3. Biographical information of the teachers

School code	Type of participant	Gender	Subject taught	Experience	Total
School A	Teacher 1	Male	Sepedi	11 years	1
School A	Teacher 2	Female	English	21years	1

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School B	Teacher 3	Female	Sepedi	21 years	1
School B	Teacher 4	Male	English	24 years	1
School C	Teacher 5	Male	Sepedi	19 years	1
School C	Teacher 6	Male	English	11 years	1

The teachers who participated in the study taught in rural primary schools. Three teachers taught Sepedi Home Language while the three remaining teachers taught English First Additional Language. They had working experience in teaching Sepedi or English in their respective schools that ranged from 11 to 24 years.

Table 4.4. Biographical information of the librarians

School code	Type of participant	Gender	Experience	Total
School A	Librarian 1	Female	21 years	1
School B	Librarian 2	Female	21 years	1
School C	Librarian 3	Female	6 years	1

These teacher librarians worked as stock controllers or asset managers. None of the three schools had a full time teacher working as librarian. They had working experience that ranged from six to 21 years.

4.3.   Interview questions and themes: Principals

Research interview questions and themes for the principals are reflected in the table below:

Table 4.5: Interview questions and themes: Principals

Interview questions for principals	Themes
1. What do you understand by a culture of reading?	Understanding a reading culture
2. How do you motivate language	Teacher motivation in promoting a reading

teachers to promote a reading culture in the school?	culture
3. What kinds of incentive does your school have to promote a reading culture?	Rewards as incentives for promotion of a school reading culture
4. How do you support teachers in promoting a reading culture?	Teacher support for the promotion of a reading culture
5. What kinds of intervention strategy does your school have to promote and develop a reading culture?	School intervention strategies for the development of a reading culture
6. What challenges are you faced with in cultivating a reading culture?	Challenges in cultivating a reading culture
7. Does your school have reading resources? If not, why not? If yes, how were they acquired?	Resource availability

4.3.1. Findings and discussions based on themes: Principals

The following discussion is based on themes that emerged from the principals' interview questions. The principals were labelled Principal 1; Principal 2; Deputy Principal 3.

4.3.1.1. Theme 1: Understanding a reading culture

Principals regard a reading culture as referring to some form of [1]*encouragement* to learners *to read perfectly (*Principal1). For learners to have reading skills teachers have to be *dedicated* (Principal 2). Teacher competence and dedication will materialise if reading resources in the form of *reading books* (Principal 2) are made available.

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[1] Words and phrases in italics are verbatim quotations from participants' responses.

The aforementioned understanding by principals relates well to what Behrman (2004:24) emphasises, namely the need to have sufficient reading material with sufficient support, development and nurture on an ongoing basis.

4.3.1.2. Theme 2: Teacher motivation in promoting a reading culture

Principals motivated teachers by *acknowledging* good work in *staff meetings* (Principal 1). Kathleen (2000:3) emphasises that principals should always praise language teachers when they have performed excellently in promoting a reading culture. The principal could recognise the teachers' accomplishments in promoting reading. The accomplishment of language teachers could create an effective working environment that is conducive to promoting a reading culture. Principals should also acknowledge language teachers' success in promoting reading by celebrating such successes. They should utilise platforms such as staff meetings, School Governing Body (SGB) meetings and school newsletters to share good news about teachers' success in promoting a reading culture.

4.3.1.3. Theme 3: Rewards as incentives for promoting a school reading culture

Principals use rewards as incentives in promoting a reading culture in their schools. These serve as motivators for learners in the schools. Best performing learners were awarded with incentives such as *certificates, school bags* (Principal 1) and *trophies and medals* (Principal 2). School A and School B did not provide *incentives for teachers* (Principal 1) while School C recognised *teachers that performed best in promoting reading* in the school by awarding certificates (Deputy Principal 3). The Department of Education (2008a:16) emphasises that it is the responsibility of the school principal to recognise learners' achievement in reading. The school principal should ensure that all learners learn to read and that steps are taken to promote and instil a reading culture in the school.

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4.3.1.4. Theme 4: Teachers support for the promotion of a reading culture

a) Training of teachers

Principals regarded *teachers as the custodians of teaching* reading (Deputy Principal 3). They supported teachers in promoting a reading culture in the form of *school-based workshop*s (Principal 1). Teachers could share best practices and challenges in teaching reading. Teachers attended training *organised by the Department of Education and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)* found in the community (Principal 2). The Department of Education (2008a:16) explains clearly that school principals are responsible for organising staff training and supporting the teaching of reading in schools.

Despite the training organised by the Department and NGOs, teachers were not empowered to promote a reading culture in schools. Even the schools that claimed to have organised internal training were not doing enough since there is no evidence that proves that internal workshops were presented.

b) Mentoring

The senior teachers were delegated *the responsibility* of mentoring *new teachers* and sharing their best practices in teaching reading as a means of supporting teachers in promoting a reading culture (Deputy Principal 3). Rhodes and Beneicke (2002:302, 304) point out that SMTs should develop strategies to create working relationships with teachers so that trust and support can be developed. SMTs should select the best mentor to support new teachers in promoting a reading culture. The SMTs should prepare the mentor in understanding and executing his or her role by supporting the development of the new teacher effectively.

c) Teamwork

The principals *encouraged teamwork* so that it is easier for teachers *to assist one another* in promoting reading activities in the school (Deputy Principal 3). Attarzadeh (2011:05) points out that scaffolding is the dialogue process in which one person supports another in performing a function that cannot be done alone. In this regard the principal helps teachers to

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improve learners' performance in reading through engaging in meetings to share their experiences.

4.3.1.5. Theme 5: School intervention strategies for the development of a reading culture

a) Monitoring the reading progress

The principals monitored reading progress in the school by using class *visits* as their managerial intervention strategy *to assess whether reading levels are up to standard* (Principal 1). In my opinion he used a Managing By Wandering Around (MBWA) leadership style to evaluate reading progress in the classroom as intervention strategy. The SMTs in School C delegated the deputy principal to *monitor and evaluate* reading progress performed *by teachers* as their intervention strategy to promote and develop a reading culture (Deputy Principal 3). Bush et al. (2009:06) emphasise that SMTs should monitor teacher practice in a systematic way. Southworth (2004:80) states it is clear that "monitoring involves visiting classrooms, observing teachers at work and providing feedback". SMTs should monitor reading progress as one of the opportunities for developing and supporting teachers in promoting reading in the school. Monitoring reading in the classroom is regarded as part of the SMT's leadership role.

b) School reading improvement programme

The principals also introduced morning study, *reading at assembly and Friday debates for two hours* as their intervention strategies to develop a reading culture in the schools for learners to *read aloud* (Principal 2). Gambrell (1996:19) says the availability of books could increase reading opportunities at school.

c) Plans for reading exercise

The principals developed reading year plans that included reading weeks and set reading *targets* as their intervention strategy (Deputy Principal 3). Lekamge (2010:43-44, 49) states that principals as instructional leaders should set goals to improve learners' reading ability. The role of the principal in planning and organising the school activities is to develop an

annual plan. Principals as the transformational leaders should do the planning and organisation of the school, as well as the management of the curriculum; as transitional leaders they should be committed to developing their school's reading culture.

d) Learner idenfication in the reading programme

The principal *identified learners* with *reading challenges* so that they could be provided with remedial support by teachers (Deputy Principal 3). Botha (2004:240) emphasises that teachers should be provided with guidance and support by SMTs in promoting reading. Duze (2012:116) points out that the principal as an instructional leader should focus on the human development aspects of teachers to promote a reading culture effectively.

e) Parental involvement

The deputy principal explained that *parents were called* to come to the school so that they could *assist in supervising* reading tasks at home (Deputy Principal 3). This implies that parents were involved in supporting a reading culture at their respective homes. Shartrand, Weiss, Kreiderand Lopez (1997:30) mention that effective communication between parents and the school could improve learners' reading skills. Parents could promote a reading culture by reading to children at home and showing interest in learners' school work.

4.3.1.6. Theme 6: Challenges in cultivating a reading culture

a) Lack of reading resources such as textbooks

The principal pointed out that *a shortage* of reading *material* such as textbooks in the school was regarded as a challenge that made it difficult to cultivate a reading culture (Principal 1). The lack of *LTSMs* (Learner Teacher Support Materials) causes the cultivation of a reading culture to be a serious challenge, especially to a school that has *high enrolment figures.* The textbooks *did not cover all the learners* in the school (Deputy Principal 3). The Department of Education (2008a:09) agrees that inadequate instructional support material makes it more difficult to deliver quality education, especially in promoting a reading culture in schools. Edward (2008:23) agrees that the distribution of books remains a serious challenge due to the limited budget of the schools.

b) Lack of library buildings and dilapidated classrooms

The principals pointed out that school infrastructure such as school *buildings are dilapidated* and this poses a serious challenge in the school to promote a reading culture (Principal 1). The unavailability *of library* buildings in the three schools could be regarded as a major challenge in cultivating a reading culture at school (Principal 2). Moore and Hart (2007:16) found that 50% of schools in South Africa lack library facilities.

c) Overcrowded classrooms

The principal explained that it was difficult to cultivate a reading culture in overcrowded classrooms. Overcrowded classrooms could *hamper the reading* progress *of the learners* (Principal 1). *Overcrowding is a serious challenge* in cultivating a reading culture since it *puts a lot pressure on the teachers*, especially at schools that have *high enrolments* (Deputy Principal 3). The Department of Education (2008a:09) admits that a high learner-teacher ratio in schools makes it difficult to deliver quality education.

d) Lack of parental support

The principals pointed that they experienced a lack of parental support as a serious challenge to cultivate a reading culture. Parents did *not participate fully in the reading culture* (Principal 1). *Parents do not provide sufficient support* to the learners with regard to reading tasks (Deputy Principal 3). *Parents do not know* how to support a reading culture at home (Deputy Principal 3). Lack of parental support at home has dire consequences for the cultivation of a reading culture. Ngwaru (2012:28) states that parents are not aware that they should be involved in their children's reading development. Some parents are not knowledgeable regarding how to support a reading culture and they are unable to support their children at home.

e) **Child-headed families**

Child-headed families are viewed by principals as a serious challenge to cultivating a reading culture. Child-headed families lack parental support at home since the *parents are working in*

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faraway places (Deputy Principal 3). Shisana and Simbayi (2002:11) point out that there were approximately 13.0% of children aged two to 14 years that had lost a mother, father or both parents. Approximately 3.0% of households were identified as child-headed. Therefore the above-mentioned statistics conveys a strong message that it is difficult to promote reading because learners lack parental support at home.

f) Vulnerable children

Principals were of the opinion that vulnerable children pose a serious challenge to the cultivation of a reading culture in the school. Some of the *learners cannot read and write, not* even their names and this poses a serious challenge to reading (Principal 2). Such learners lack parental support. USAID (2008:32) underscores the importance of teacher training in order to engage vulnerable learners.

g) Inadequate training of teachers

One deputy principal was of the opinion that inadequate training of teachers was the main challenge experienced because *management is not fully happy with training* offered by the Department of Education (Deputy Principal 3). The training offered did not support *promoting a reading culture* (Deputy Principal 3). Many teachers still do not have the knowledge and skills to support a reading culture. Van Staden and Howie (2010:48) underscore the fact that that poor performance of learners' in reading is exacerbated by the inadequate subject knowledge of teachers.

4.3.1.7. Theme 7: Resource availability

Principals pointed out that they have reading resources that are *not sufficient* for all learners (Deputy Principal 3). The reading resources were *donated by NGOs* found in the community in School A (Principal 1). The principal explained that in School B he was *using old reading resources provided by the Department of Basic Education* (Principal 2). All three schools were supplied with resources by the *Department of Basic Education,* especially the workbooks and some textbooks but they were insufficient (Deputy Principal 3). School Governing Bodies *provided* reading resources such as *newspapers* to assist in promoting a

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reading culture (Principal 2). Winburg and Botes (2005:98) explain that schools could play a crucial role in promoting and supporting a reading culture by ensuring that learners have access to a variety of reading material.

4.4. Interview questions and themes: HODs

Research interview questions and themes for HODs are reflected in the table below.

Table 4.6. Interview questions and themes: HODs

Interview questions for HODs	Themes
1. What do you understand by a culture of reading?	Understanding of a reading culture
2. How do you motivate language teachers to promote a reading culture in the school?	Language teacher motivation in promoting a reading culture
3. What kinds of incentive does your school have to promote a reading culture?	Rewards as incentives in promoting a school reading culture
4. How do you support teachers in promoting a reading culture?	Language teacher support for the promotion of a reading culture
5. What kinds of intervention strategy does your department have to promote and develop a reading culture?	Internal intervention strategies for teacher development
6. What challenges are you faced with in cultivating a reading culture?	Challenges in cultivating a reading culture
7. Does your department have reading resources? If not, why not? If yes, how were they acquired?	Resource availability

4.4.1 Findings and discussions based on themes: HODs

The following discussion is based on the themes that emerged from the Heads of Department (HODs) interview questions. The HODs have been labelled HOD 1; HOD 2; HOD 3; HOD 4; HOD 5; HOD 6.

4.4.1.1. Theme 1: Understanding a reading culture

Heads of Departments (HODs) understand a reading culture to be a *continuous process* that makes use of *different strategies* for learner *development* (HOD 1). HOD 1 is interested in developing reading and language skills to ensure learner progress from *pre-reader, emergent reader, early reader, early fluent reader and lastly to the independent reader.* These stages of a reader enable language teachers to assess learner development in reading; the stages represent scaffolding. The HOD, as an expert, should collaborate with teachers to provide guidance or assistance in how to use scaffolding to help the learner to improve from a lower level to higher reading level (Attarzadeh, 2011: 03; Rose et al., 1999:32).

4.4.1.2. Theme 2: Language teacher motivation in promoting a reading culture

HODs motivated language teachers by using words of *encouragement* so that teachers *worked as teams* to promote a reading culture (HOD 1). Language teachers were given words of appreciation and acknowledgement *of their wonderful work* in staff meetings by the HOD when *informing fellow staff members* (HOD 5). Lekamge (2010:49) points out that SMTs should be committed, dedicated and motivated to instil a culture of reading in the school.

4.4.1.3. Theme 3: Rewards as incentives in promoting a school reading culture

HODs awarded best performing learners with incentives such as *school bags, ball pens, dictionaries, books, calculators* (HOD 1)*, trophies, gold, silver and bronze medals* (HOD 3) *monies and certificates* (HOD 5) to motivate learners. In School C teachers were also awarded certificates as a sign *of appreciation and recognition of the wonderful job* of promoting a reading culture (HOD 5). Wigfield and Guthrie (1997:422) posit that reading for recognition is the most important aspect for success in reading. Clark and Rumbold (2006:21)

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add that learners should be rewarded with incentives such as books and book vouchers. Learners could develop reading motivation because of the rewards related to reading activities.

4.4.1.4. Theme 4: Language teacher support for the promotion of a reading culture

a) Training of teachers

HODs provided language teachers with support in the form of *workshop* training to assist in dealing with challenges experienced in promoting a reading culture (HOD 6). Rhodes and Beneicke (2002:303) underscore the fact that SMTs as team leaders in schools have an important duty in helping teachers to improve their work. In my opinion this form of assistance could be done in the form of staff training.

b) Mentoring

HODs used class *visits to support language teachers* to promote a reading culture (HOD 2). HODs also *demonstrated* to teachers how reading instruction could be facilitated in the school (HOD 3). This happened while teachers were observed in the classroom. Kathleen (2000:3) explains that the HOD, as a mentor, should share his or her professional knowledge with language teachers. The principal should always give the language teachers full support in promoting a reading culture. He or she should always be aware that a reading culture could benefit the learners to improve their academic achievement.

c) Providing reading resources

HODs provided teacher support in the form of reading resources such as *different reader books* (HOD 2), *magazines, newspapers, dictionaries* (HOD 4), reading material such as *pamphlets, alphabets, vowel and consonants charts* (HOD 5). The Department of Education (2008a:17) advises that a good learning and text-rich environment could encourage learners to perform well in reading and teachers should collect sufficient reading resources to teach reading effectively. Magazines and other relevant materials could enrich the reading experience of learners in the school.

4.4.1.5. Theme 5: Internal intervention strategies for teacher development

a) Monitoring reading progress

HODs used *class visits* as an internal intervention strategy to develop teachers to promote a reading culture (HOD 4). Some of the HODs used class visits *to check reading activities* happening at school (HOD 1). Archer, Scherman, Coe and Howie (2010:77) posit that monitoring reading achievement should be vital in schools to assist the SMTs in making informed decisions to improve a reading culture.

b) Moderation of lesson plans

HODs *moderated teachers' lesson plans* by *ensuring that reading* activities were taking place in the school (HOD 6). SMTs should ensure that reading lessons in the school are effective (Bush et al., 2009:1).

c) Reading improvement programme

HODs introduced reading *competitions, debates* and ensured that *learners read during* morning devotions *(assembly)* as their intervention strategies to improve learners' reading abilities in the schools (HOD 6). Wigfield and Guthrie (1997:422) argue that extrinsic motivation and performance goals are the aspects that guide the teacher in reading competitions. The teacher should stimulate the desire in learners to outperform others. Learners have the desire to be evaluated by the teacher in reading competitions.

4.4.1.6. Theme 6: Challenges in cultivating a reading culture

Most of the challenges HODs experienced, such as overcrowded classrooms, unavailability of libraries, shortage of textbooks, lack of parental support and inadequate staff training are similar to the others outlined in Section 4.3.1.6 as challenges faced by principals in cultivating a reading culture. The researcher concentrated on the challenges that were different from the ones outlined in Section 4.3.1.6.

a) Teacher demotivation

HODs regarded teacher demotivation as a serious challenge in cultivating a reading culture. Some teachers *lacked motivation* to support and promote a reading culture, due to ignorance (HOD 5). *Teachers were not committed* to promote a reading culture in the school (HOD 6). Teachers did not provide learners with enough reading activities in the workbooks and learner activity books. The reading activities, if provided, were not controlled. No reading lessons were prepared by the teachers. Therefore teachers presented reading lessons without proper lesson planning. Bush et al. (2009:9) underscore the idea that SMTs lack the capability and motivation to develop, sustain and monitor effective instruction and learning in the school. Osman (2012:53) posits that young people, especially new language teachers, may feel discouraged to promote a reading culture in schools due to inexperience and personal low reading achievement. Osman (2012) emphasises the fact that teachers are not committed, show less esprit and are more unfriendly in the workplace in supporting the promotion of a reading culture.

b) Teachers' impatience

One HOD explained that teachers' impatience could be regarded as a serious challenge in cultivating a reading culture in the school. *Teachers do not have the patience* to work with struggling readers, especially *the slow readers* (HOD 5). The Department of Education (2008a:08) highlights the fact that some teachers clearly have not been trained to teach reading and experience difficulty in assisting learners with reading difficulties in the classroom. Teachers do not know to how to foster a reading culture inside and outside the classroom.

4.4.1.7. Theme 7: Resource availability

HODs pointed out that reading resources are available even though *they are not enough* (HOD 6). The NGOs donated *library books* even if schools still had a shortage *of fiction books* (HOD 2). In some of the schools the SGB improvised by *purchasing reading resources* (HOD 4) through the usage of *Norms and Standards* funding (HOD 6). *The Department of Basic Education provided schools with books and workbooks* to improve learners' reading skills (HOD 1). Gambrell (1996:21) posits that a book-rich classroom environment is critical

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to fostering and supporting learners. Learners should have high quality books and other relevant reading material to support them to become motivated readers.

4.5. Interview questions and themes for language teachers

Research interview questions and themes for language teachers are reflected in the table below:

Table 4.7. Interview questions and themes: Language teachers

Interview questions for Language Teachers	Themes
1. What do you understand by a culture of reading?	Understanding a reading culture
2. How do you develop and nurture learners' readings skills in general?	Development of and nurturing reading skills
3. What reading practices do you apply in promoting and developing a reading culture?	Application of classroom reading practices
4. What challenges do you experience in promoting and developing a reading culture?	Challenges in promoting and developing a reading culture
5. What strategies do you use to help struggling readers in the classroom?	Strategies for helping struggling readers
6. How do you get the resources to cultivate a reading culture at your school?	Resource availability
7. Do you encourage your learners to enter for reading competitions?	Learner motivation to read

4.5.1. Findings and discussions based on themes: Language teachers

The following discussion is based on the themes that emerged from the language teachers' interview questions. The language teachers have been labelled Teacher 1; Teacher 2; Teacher 3; Teacher 4; Teacher 5 and Teacher 6.

4.5.1.1. Theme 1: Understanding a reading culture

Language teachers understand reading culture as the *creation of an environment* that encourages the learners to develop *a love for reading* in the school (Teacher 6). It is *everyday reading* practice that prevails *at school and at home* (Teacher 4). The learners cultivate an interest and develop the desire *to read with understanding* and *enjoyment* (Teacher 1). The learners could *develop a habit of reading* that motivates them to be engaged *in voluntarily* reading and develop an interest to access reading resources (Teacher 5). Clark and Rumbold (2006:15; 27) pointed out reading could be a fun activity that helps learners to gain new knowledge in understanding the world and develop a love of reading.

4.5.1.2. Theme 2: Development of and nurturing reading skills

Teacher developed and nurtured reading skills by involving learners in *pre-reading* activities such as *viewing cover pages, authors' photographs, scanning the title and headings* and also allowing the learners to have a notebook in which *to write down difficult words* (Teacher 1). Learners were encouraged to write *a summary* of the story (Teacher 1). Teachers *grouped learners according to their reading ability* so that it would be easier to identify *learners that cannot read* well (Teacher 2). Learners were provided with *textbooks to read* the text (Teacher 2). Michael and Patricia (1997:134) state that it is the responsibility of all teachers to help struggling readers to improve their reading skills. The authors continue to argue that the Scaffolding Reading Experience (SRE) has two phases that a teacher should consider when teaching reading to the learners; these are planning and implementing. The teacher should consider the following aspects during the planning phase: the learners, the selection of the text to be read and the purpose of reading. The teacher should also be mindful to emphasise the following during the implementation phase: Pre-reading activities, during-reading activities and post-reading activities. All these activities aim at effective reading in the classroom. The teacher can use the pre-reading activity to prepare learners for the

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upcoming selected text and to assist learners to engage with and comprehend the text. During reading the teacher provides scaffolding support by helping learners to take notes of important events in the text. The teacher can provide support to learners by helping them to organise and recall the main points of the story.

Teachers developed and nurtured reading skills by using *picture* viewing as the best way to develop a *love of reading* (Teacher 5). Teachers used independent reading to allow learners *to read on their own* so that they could enjoy and develop understanding of what they read (Teacher 6). The Department of Basic Education (2011:10) states that reading skills are vital to successful learning across the curriculum. Learners should develop proficiency in reading. Independent reading could encourage learners to become critical and creative thinkers. Teachers should encourage learners to do independent reading in their leisure time. The Department of Education (2007:27-29) advises that language teachers should guide the learners to select a text that they can read with a high degree of success. Language teachers should allow discussion and dialogue with learners during independent reading sessions. Language teachers are encouraged to observe, listen and gather information about learners' reading behaviour during independent reading lessons; they should manage learners effectively in independent reading sessions by establishing rules, providing each group with a name, using task boards and indicating the number of tasks to be done.

Teachers used *shared reading* to allow learners *to pick out certain characters* in a story and learners wrote down *difficult words* while the teachers *guided them* (Teacher 6). Teachers used shared reading to read the story to learners and thereafter learners shared the topic by *reading together* (Teacher 6). The Department of Education (2007:19) states that language teachers should read with the class or group during shared reading methods. Learners should read with comprehension and become highly motivated in reading. Language teachers can use the shared reading method to create a supportive learning environment that could assist struggling readers in becoming better readers. They are advised to plan the shared reading lessons carefully so that theses could be effectively presented to the learners. In the Foundation for Learning Campaign (FFLC) the Department of Education (2008b:09) emphasises that teachers should ensure that the learners understand and encourage them to respond to the text. According to the Department of Basic Education (2011:10) language teachers in the Intermediate Phase should use shared reading to guide the learners, especially in Grade 4. Teachers could apply shared reading methods when teaching learners with Big Books and storytelling. Language teachers should read to the whole class or small groups

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using material that is relevant to the learners' understanding (Department of Education, 2007:26); they should use the reading aloud method to assist learners to develop a love of good literature and motivate them to read on their own. Language teachers should use this method to expose learners to new vocabulary and stimulate interest in reading books. Teachers should allow the learners to reflect on the story that they have read by responding to the story, dramatising it, discussing it and writing down new vocabulary in their personal dictionaries (Department of Education, 2008b:09).

Teachers used guided group work when the teacher was reading with the learners and guided them to find the meaning of *difficult words* (Teacher 6) while some teachers used this approach to *group learners according to the level of reading ability* and paid special attention to the groups that experienced reading difficulties (Teacher 2). Pretorius and Lephalala (2011:10) are of the opinion that guided group reading could allow learners the opportunity to read with members of a supportive group that are on the same reading level.

Reading aloud was used as a way of assessing *independent reading* so that teachers could allocate *marks* (Teacher 6). Mohlakwana (2013:15) posits that teachers should understand the purpose of assessment. Teachers should identify the reading needs of learners. They should plan learning programmes and track learners' reading progress; they should also diagnose learners' reading problems and develop intervention strategies to help learners at risk to improve their reading ability. Teachers should evaluate the effectiveness of the learning programme and assess their reading teaching methods; they should manage and design both formative and summative assessment and keep record of learners' reading progress.

Teachers used *phonic reading* so that learners could master the letters of the *alphabet* to make it easier for them to use sounds *to construct words* (Teacher 3). Language teachers should understand that phonics instruction helps the learners in the Foundation Phase to decode the meaning words (Department of Education, 2007:12-13); they should be aware that phonics instruction is the building block in reading instruction; they should use sight words to assist learners in recognising a word by its shape, length and features. Language teachers should use phonemic awareness when teaching poetry, songs and rhymes in reading lessons.

4.5.1.3. Theme 3: Application of classroom reading practices

Teachers applied reading practices by ensuring that learners *read* during *assembly* (morning devotions) (Teacher 1). Some teachers were discouraged to read the Bible in morning devotions so that only *learners were ones who read during assembly* to provide *an opportunity to inculcate a culture where learners get used to reading at school* (Teacher 6). Teachers involved the HODs by submitting *a list* of learners of struggling learners so that they could *assist* them (Teacher 1). Teachers did remedial work *after school for 30 minutes* (Teachers 1) by *remaining with learners* (Teacher 4). Some teachers used *morning study* as sufficient time for learners to read (Teacher 4). Classroom reading competitions were introduced to *cultivate a love of reading* (Teacher 2). Teachers *improvised by bringing old newspapers, current newspapers and magazines for learners to read in the classroom* (Teacher 5) and learners *found articles* to be read in newspapers (Teacher 2). The Department of Education (2008a:12-14) posits that language teachers should actively teach reading in their classrooms.

4.5.1.4. Theme 4: Challenges in promoting and developing a reading culture

a) Lack of reading resources such textbooks

The teachers explained that there was a *lack of proper Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSMs) such as textbooks and story books* (reading books) (Teacher 6). The schools are *really running short of story books* for learners to read, therefore a shortage of textbooks makes it difficult for teachers to promote and develop a reading culture (Teacher 6). The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (2005:10) agrees that a lack of access to relevant reading material in schools jeopardises establishing a strong reading culture. Moore and Hart (2007:16) declare that a lack of learning materials such as books, textbooks and relevant reading material creates an environment that is not conducive to valuable literacy development in schools. Pretorius and Machet (2004:48) share the perspective that inadequate supplies of learning material and books contribute to the poor academic performance of learners, especially in reading. Poor delivery of learning material to schools creates an environment that is not conducive to promoting and developing meaningful reading practices in schools.

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b) Lack of parental support

Teachers pointed out that they experienced the challenge of a lack of parental support as a serious challenge to promote and develop a reading culture in schools. Parents failed to provide adequate support to the learners with regard to reading tasks because *they did not help* them at home (Teacher 2). Learners find it difficult to perform reading activities because they do not have parents that can *monitor* and guide them during *reading* activities *at home* since some parents are not around to assist them (Teacher 6). A lack of parental involvement in the promotion of a reading culture is aggravated by a lack of parental commitment to help their children with reading tasks. Parents sometimes refuse *to sign* learners' activity sheets to show that they did assist their children with reading tasks (Teacher 1). The Department of Education (2008a:09) underscores the low literacy levels of parents who find it difficult to assist learners because they do not understand the reading tasks. Therefore the illiteracy levels of parents could be an attributing factor to learners' lack of knowledge. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (2005:14) agrees.

c) Lack of learner commitment

Teachers pointed out that learners lack the commitment *to do the reading tasks provided* by teachers (Teacher 2). They lacked enthusiasm to perform reading tasks and as a result of not performing their reading tasks, they could not achieve academic goals. A lack of learner commitment to promote reading is aggravated by a lack of *parental support at home* to help vulnerable learners in reading (Teacher 6).

Schools are experiencing a reading crisis; learners that are unable to master reading skills should be supported by attending a recovery reading programme at school (Department of Education, 2008a:15). Osman (2012:951) states that some learners are irresponsible, undisciplined, untrustworthy and trouble-prone in promoting a reading culture in the school. Edwards (2008:27) agrees that learners lack the confidence to take the lead in promoting reading.

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d) Lack of library building

One of the biggest challenges experienced by teachers is a *shortage of library* building in the schools (Teacher 6). Teachers find it difficult to provide learners with tasks that require *investigation due to a shortage of libraries* in their schools (Teacher 6). Teachers believe a shortage of libraries is *holding them back* to develop and promote a reading culture (Teacher 6). The Department of Education (2008a:08) acknowledges the challenge evident in most of the schools that has a negative impact on the quality of instruction and learning.

e) Overcrowded classrooms

Overcrowded classrooms had a negative impact on teachers who wanted to pay *individual attention* to learners' reading progress (Teacher 6). Overcrowding forced teachers *to walk the extra mile* by *categorising learners and allocating extra reading work because during working hours* they did not cope in assisting learners with reading challenges (Teacher 6). Moore and Hart (2007:16) support the idea that overcrowded classrooms create an environment that is not conducive to the development of a reading culture in schools.

f) Vulnerable children

The most vulnerable learners lack the *basic* reading skills that are provided in the Foundation Phase. Teachers believe that vulnerable *learners are not committed* to *reading* tasks (Teacher 5). The situation of vulnerable learners poses a serious challenge to developing and promoting a reading culture since *they are not able to read* in their home language (Teacher 5). The Department of Education (2008a:08) agrees that teachers find it difficult to assist learners with reading difficulties and to aggravate matters they have not been explicitly trained to teach reading in the classrooms.

g) Child-headed families

Child-headed families could be regarded as a serious challenge in developing and promoting a reading culture in the schools. Child-headed families lack parental support at home because *their parents have either passed away or are working* in faraway places (Teacher 6). Learners

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do not have an adult figure *to encourage or monitor their reading at home* (Teacher 6). The Department of Education (2008a:04) has found that many families have no books at home. Learners find it difficult to read books in their mother language and there is a serious shortage of books in African languages.

4.5.1.5. Theme 5: Strategies for helping struggling readers

Teachers used remedial work to develop struggling readers *after school contact time and during morning study* (Teacher 6). Learners were grouped *according to their reading barriers* (Teacher 3). One teacher developed a *reading register* to record struggling readers so that it could be easier to monitor their reading progress (Teacher 3). Parents of struggling learners were invited to school *to discuss reading progress* (Teacher 6). Teachers selected *best readers to help struggling learners* in the classroom with reading tasks (Teacher 5). Struggling readers were involved in group guided reading so that it could be easier for them to understand well by using a *finger pointing* reading strategy (Teacher 4). Learners were encouraged *to read articles on newspapers* and teachers *set various questions* to test their understanding (Teacher 4). Difficult words were *explained in the home language* so that struggling readers could understand the important information (Teacher 4). A local community librarian was involved to help struggling learners with extra reading tasks *to serve as home support due the absence of parents* (Teacher 6). Learners were encouraged *to read out instructions* in the classroom in all subjects *to promote* reading at school (Teacher 6). A teacher established study groups to support struggling readers when doing *assignments and homework* at home (Teacher 5). A teacher also assisted struggling readers to *develop personal diaries* by using exercise books to record their daily reading *activities* (Teacher 5). Teachers used different *teaching methods* to accommodate *struggling learners* when providing reading instruction in the classroom (Teacher 5).

The Department of Education (2007:33-34) outlines the importance of support to learners with reading difficulties: teachers should try to diagnose reading difficulties as early as possible. They should do diagnostic tests on a monthly basis to identify learners with reading difficulties; they can increase the level of reading practice by using reading cards. They should ensure that learners read every day by involving parents, peers, older children, retired teachers in the community and neighbours by at least listening to learners when they read at home. They should listen to the learners when they read at least twice a week, and provide

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word recognition skills to the learners. They could involve the parents or caregivers to help learners with sight words, and be sensitive to the struggling learners and encourage them since they are of value in the reading classroom. Contact sessions with struggling learners should be arranged and positive feedback provided. The Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase language teachers could also involve Foundation Phase teachers to assist them with identifying sight words to help struggling learners.

4.5.1.6. Theme 6: Resource availability

Teachers improvised with reading resources such as *old textbooks, old newspapers and magazines* for learners to read in the classroom due to the shortage of textbooks in their schools (Teacher 2). A teacher made submission *to the nearby primary schools to request the surplus* of textbooks in their schools (Teacher 4). The SGB provided teachers with *extra copies of books* by using money *from the National Norms and Standards funding* allocated to schools (Teacher 6). The local *NGOs and Department of Health* provided schools with reading resources such as reading charts, flip charts and *information pamphlets on healthy life styles* to cultivate a culture of reading in the school (Teacher 5).

The Department of Education (2008a:17) advises that a good learning and text-rich environment could encourage learners to perform well in reading and teachers should collect sufficient reading resources to teach reading effectively. Magazines and other relevant materials could enrich the reading experience of learners in the school.

4.5.1.7. Theme 7: Learner motivation to read

Teachers encouraged learners to enter for reading *competitions such as the Foundation for Learning Campaign* (FFLC) (Teacher 1). Reading competitions encourage learners to improve reading skills. Teachers selected best readers to *represent their school* in reading competitions (Teacher 4). Teachers motivated learners to be good readers by offering monetary rewards such as *R5 and R10* in the classroom (Teacher 4). The rewards motivated learners to improve their reading skills. *Community Based Organisations (CBOs)* and the Department of Education organised reading competitions (Teacher 5).

Wigfield and Guthrie (1997:422) argue that extrinsic motivation and performance goals are the aspects that guide the teacher in reading competitions. The teacher should stimulate the desire for learners to outperform others.

Wigfield and Guthrie (1997:422) explain that recognition of reading should be provided by teachers. Best performing learners in reading should receive tangible forms of recognition for their reading success. Learners should be evaluated and compared to stimulate motivation. The Department of Basic Education (2011:94) agrees that teachers should set specific assessment type of activities to motivate learners to learn.

4.6. Interview questions and themes: Librarians

Research interview questions and themes for librarians are reflected in the table below:

Table 4.8. Interviews questions and themes: Librarians

Interview questions for librarians	Themes
1. What do you understand by a culture of reading?	Understanding a reading culture
2. How do you develop and nurture learners' reading skills in general?	Development and nurturing reading skills
3. What reading practices do you apply in promoting and developing a reading culture?	Application of reading practices
4. What challenges do you experience in promoting and developing a reading culture?	Challenges in promoting and developing a reading culture
5. What strategies do you use to help struggling readers in the library?	Strategies for helping struggling readers
6. Does your library have reading resources? If not, why not? If yes, how	Acquisition of reading resources

were they acquired?	
7. Do you encourage your learners to enter for reading competitions?	Entries for reading competitions

4.6.1. Findings and discussions based on themes: Librarians

The following discussion is based on the themes that emerged from the librarians' interview questions. The librarians have been labelled Librarian 1; Librarian 2; Librarian 3.

4.6.1.1. Theme 1: Understanding a reading culture

Librarians understand a reading culture as the *way or manner in which reading is done* at school (Librarian 2). Learners could read *for pleasure and information* by reading various *magazines, newspapers, road signs and advertisement* (Librarian 3). Bipath (2008:67) describes a school culture as the way in which things are done in the school.

4.6.1.2. Theme 2: Development and nurturing of reading skills

Teachers used phonic reading to encourage learners *to master the letters of alphabet* so that it could be easier *to use sounds* to construct *words* (Librarian 1). Teachers used picture viewing so that learners could *understand the meanings of the text* and *develop a love of and interest in reading* (Librarian 1). Teachers involved learners in reading aloud so that they could *listen* and correct learners' pronunciation (Librarian 1). Learners were *provided* with reading *books* to do independent reading (Librarian 2). A teacher librarian as well as learners *read stories to together* to do shared reading (Librarian 2).

Kachala (2007:5-6) states that the library is a source of information to the learners that promotes a reading culture. A library should provide information to the learners with the aim of improving low educational standards. The teacher librarian provides learners with relevant information that can assist them in improving their low reading ability.

4.6.1.3. Theme 3: Application of reading practices

Teachers used *reading cards* to instil a love of reading in the learners (Librarian 1). Learners *read newspapers and reading books* during Friday reading sessions to stimulate learners' interest in reading (Librarian 2). A teacher librarian provides learners with *toys in the library* (Librarian 3) to stimulate the love of reading.

Machet and Tiemensma (2009:63-64) point out that teacher librarians can play a vital role in enhancing learners' interest in reading for pleasure. The teacher librarian could play an essential role in developing a reading culture and should provide encouragement to the learners to read for pleasure as one of the ways to encourage reading in the school.

4.6.1.4. Theme 4: Challenges in promoting and developing a reading culture

Some of the challenges experienced, such as insufficient reading resources, a lack of library buildings and a lack of parental support are similar to what others outlined in Section 4.5.1.4 as challenges experienced by language teachers. However, the teacher librarians mentioned that there is a shortage of library reading books such as *textbooks, magazine and newspapers* (Librarian 3). School A allocated one classroom that was used as library due to a shortage of a proper library facility and received *textbook donations from a certain NGO* (Librarian 1) while school B *stored the old textbooks in a cupboard* due to the unavailability of a library facility (Librarian 2); school C used one classroom that was utilised as *a staffroom and library* (Librarian 3). The library classroom had a shortage of reading *tables and chairs* (Librarian 3). Pretorius and Machet (2004:48) agree that inadequate physical resources such as library buildings contribute negatively to the performance of learners in schools.

4.6.1.5. Theme 5: Strategies for helping struggling readers

Teacher librarians did remedial work with struggling readers in the library after school hours. Struggling readers were *grouped according to their reading ability* so that it could be easier to assist them in improving their reading skills (Librarian 1). In school B struggling readers were diagnosed regarding their *reading difficulties* so that they could be assisted by means of *remedial work* at least twice a week (Librarian 2). Struggling readers were encouraged *to tell their own stories* and after presenting their own stories they were encouraged *to write* them

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and *read* their own stories (Librarian 3). Librarians involved learners in *pre-reading skills* by encouraging learners to view photographs and titles (Librarian 2). Struggling readers were encouraged *to read at assembly* and were also provided *with short story books to read at home* (Librarian 3). The librarians involved parents of struggling readers by *calling* them to visit the school so that they could discuss the reading progress.

Doiron and Asselin (2011:109) explain that *it takes a village to raise a reader,* like the African proverb that states that *it takes a village to raise a child*. The school community should play a significant role in the development of learners' reading skills. These authors (2011:110) express the notion that teacher librarians should scaffold learning activities by getting stories from parents at home. Learners should relate their stories in the school library. The teacher librarian should encourage the school to have large signs to promote reading. This means that schools should have billboards that contain the vision and mission statement to promote reading in the school so that learners can read them. The teacher librarian should be an innovator to scaffold learning tasks to propagate a love of reading and to cultivate lifelong readers in the school.

Doiron and Asselin (2011:111) state that the school community should scaffold learning activities for learners to practise their reading and promote values and to improve their attitude to reading. The teacher librarian plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes towards and practices of reading in the school; he or she should facilitate the following: gaining access to relevant reading material; using the internet and computers to do research for school tasks provided by teachers. In this way learners could develop an interest in reading; he or she should also assist learners to find information and become independent learners.

Teacher librarians should help learners become independent readers and researchers and should organise remedial classes. They should encourage learners to draw, write and colour parents' invitations with a view to promoting reading (Doiron & Asselin, 2011:112).

4.6.1.6. Theme 6: Acquisition of reading resources

School A *does not have reading material in the library*; there are certain NGOs who have donated textbooks to the school (Librarian 1). School B *does not have reading resources* in the library because the old textbooks are kept in the cupboard (Librarian 2). In school C the classroom library had prescribed textbooks and story books. The library did not have reading

material such as *magazines and newspapers* (Librarian 3). The *government failed to deliver textbooks* on *time*; therefore the school managed to *purchase* library *books* by using National *Norms and Standard* funding that had been deposited into the school bank account (Librarian 3).

Apeji (2000:28) states that a teacher librarian should be an administrator who is proficient in the management of resources. The teacher librarian should function both as a competent librarian and teacher. This implies that teacher librarians should be qualified both as a librarian and a teacher to inculcate reading and information skills in the learners in the school.

4.6.1.7. Theme 7: Entries for reading competitions

Librarians encouraged learners to enter for reading competitions. Learners participated in activities such as storytelling and *parents and teachers* were involved in preparing learners for reading competitions (Librarian 3).

Doiron and Asselin (2011:114) explain that teacher librarians should encourage learners to love reading by making it meaningful through reading promotion; for instance, by stimulating learners to talk about their favourite stories. Apeji (2000:27) says that teacher librarians should encourage learners to cultivate both individual and collective habits of reading in the school.

4.7. Findings and discussion based on document analysis

4.7.1. Reading policy

Documents perused have revealed that not one of the three schools had a reading policy. An HOD in School A pointed out that they were planning to develop the reading policy. The Department of Education (2008a:09) acknowledges the unavailability of language policies:

We are developing a policy, showing we are going to take reading seriously. So now teachers know that reading is a priority (HOD 2).

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4.7.2. Timetable

The researcher perused documents such as the school timetable, class timetables and teachers' personal timetables and found that reading periods were not indicated in these documents. The schools' general timetable, class timetable and teachers' personal timetable indicated only the number of periods for Sepedi and English as subjects.

Archer, Scherman, Coe and Howie (2010:77) posit that monitoring of reading achievement should be vital in school to assist the SMTs in making informed decisions to improve a reading culture. Therefore the researcher's finding is that SMTs do not monitor reading progress efficiently.

4.7.3. Language policy

Documents such as the language policies of the three schools were analysed by the researcher and all three schools had language policies that were approved by the chairpersons and principals. All three language policies were silent on establishing a reading culture. The Department of Education (2008a:09) has noted the inadequacy of language policies that do not address the learning needs in the school.

4.8. Findings and discussion based on observation

4.8.1. Reading corners

The researcher observed that all three schools in the Foundation Phase had reading corners while in the Senior and Intermediate Phase there were no reading corners. The SMT in School B pointed out that old books were used in the reading corners so that learners could read in classroom:

I cannot say it is a problem because we use those old books we didn't throw away; they are there, we have reading corners in the classes. Learners know where to find these books (Principal 2).

Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase classrooms should have reading corners with story books (Department of Education, 2008a:17). The reading corners should have story books for

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learners and reference material for teachers and learners. Schools should allocate funds to ensure that teachers can create reading corners in their classrooms. Gambrell (1996:21) posits that high-quality classroom reading corners should be prioritised by the school. The number of books available to the learners in the classroom could have a positive impact on the quality of literary experiences in the classroom. Reading corners could encourage learners to develop the love of reading that they could share with family members at home. Learners should have access to high-quality books and relevant reading material to support them in becoming motivated readers.

4.8.2. Challenges observed

4.8.2.1. A lack of reading corners and clubs

Observations have revealed the absence of reading corners and clubs, especially in the Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase. Classrooms are not print-rich. Many teachers do not display any reading charts, reading cards or posters on the classroom walls. An SMT member in School A said that they were planning to introduce reading corners since the Intermediate and Senior Phases did not have them. The Department of Education (2008a:09) has found that only 25% of schools have classroom collections:

We are going to introduce reading corners in each and every classroom; we are going to put books in every classroom. During leisure time learners will go and pick books and start to read (HOD 2).

An SMT member in School A was motivated to introduce reading clubs in the school following the interview. Edwards (2008:27) states that reading clubs can empower learners through literacy development:

So we are going to have reading schedules in each and every grade; these learners will be grouped as a way of enhancing the reading culture (HOD 2).

4.9. CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher outlines the data that was collected through semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis. The themes of the study are discussed in

detail. The researcher has quoted participants verbatim to illustrate their points of view in support of the study themes. This chapter highlights the challenges experienced by principals, HODs, teachers and librarians in their journey to enhance a reading culture. In the next chapter the researcher describes the findings, makes recommendations and draws a conclusion.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study is to investigate how primary schools promote and manage a reading culture. In the previous chapter the researcher discussed the findings resulting from the interviews, observation and document analysis on how SMTs, language teachers and library personnel manage a reading culture. In this chapter the researcher summmarises the findings, presents conclusions and makes some recommedations.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS: PRINCIPALS

The study outlines the role played by principals in managing a reading culture in the school. The current research describes an environment that promotes a reading culture. The challenges experienced by principals in cultivating a reading culture are indicated in this study. The summary of the research findings is based on the results emanating from the data collected from interviews.

5.2.1. Understanding a reading culture

The findings of the research have revealed that principals understand a reading culture as some of form of encouragement for learners to read perfectly and acquire reading skills that is determined by teachers' dedication and competence and the availability of reading resources in the school.

5.2.2. Teacher motivation in promoting a reading culture

The current research has found that principals motivate teachers by words of appreciation and encouragement during staff meetings. The best performing reading teachers are recognised and acknowledged through words of encouragement by principals.

5.2.3. Incentives as rewards for school

It has been found that schools award best performing learners with reading awards such a certificates, medals, trophies and schools bags. Incentives that are awarded to best performing learners motivate them to improve their reading skills.

5.2.4. Teachers support for the promotion of a reading culture

5.2.4.1. Training of teachers

This research has revealed that principals support teachers in the form of internal training workshops organised by the schools and training provided by the Department of Education and Non-Governmental Organisations. Teachers were provided with an opportunity to share best practices on reading during internal school-based training.

5.2.4.2. Mentoring

This research has found that principals delegate the role of mentorship of new language teachers to the senior teachers in the school. Senior teachers model best reading practices to the new language teachers by sharing how reading lessons could be presented in the classrooms.

5.2.4.3. Teamwork

The findings of the research study indicate that principals scaffold reading instruction by getting teachers to work as a team in the school in promoting reading. SMTs organise meetings for language teachers to share their experiences, practices and challenges during reading promotion.

5.2.5. School intervention strategies for the development of a reading culture

5.2.5.1. Monitoring the reading progress

Principals monitor reading progress by using class visits. The SMTs use Managing By Wandering Around leadership to evaluate reading progress in the respective classrooms.

They use class visits as a monitoring strategy to support and encourage language teachers in promoting reading in the school.

HODs use class visits as internal strategy to develop teachers to promote a reading culture by checking reading activities in the classrooms.

5.2.5.2. School reading improvement programme

The findings of the study have revealed that principals introduced morning study, reading at assembly and taking part in debates to improve learners' reading skills in the schools. They also established debate committees to evaluate the performance of the learners in reading and debating.

HODs introduced reading competitions, debates and reading during assembly to improve learners' reading ability. Learners were provided with opportunities to showcase their skills in debate sessions and reading competitions.

5.2.5.3. Plans for reading exercises

Principals plan reading exercises by developing school year plans. Principals develop reading year targets in the schools.

5.2.5.4. Learner identification for reading programmes

Principals assisted teachers by identifying learners with reading barriers. Such learners were provided with additional support.

2.5.5.5. Parental involvement

Principals involved parents by inviting them to the school to be informed about the reading progress of their children. Parental involvement was used as an intervention strategy to assist learners with reading activities at home.

5.2.6. Challenges in cultivating reading culture

5.2.6.1. Lack of reading resources

Principals say schools lack reading resources such as textbooks. This poses a serious challenge in cultivating a reading culture. A lack of reading resources such as textbooks jeopardises establishing a strong reading culture in schools. A lack of reading resources delays learners' reading progress.

HODs provided teachers with reading resources such as books, newspapers, dictionaries, magazines, pamphlets, alphabets, and vowel and consonants charts to promote a reading culture.

Schools were provided with resources such as textbooks and workbooks by the Department of Education; however, the resources were insufficient to provide for all learners. NGOs supplemented the resources by donating reading books. The SGBs and teachers provided schools with newspapers to promote a reading culture. In some schools SGBs improvised by utilising allocated financial resources from the government. The Department of Basic Education provided schools with workbooks to develop learners'reading skills.

Language teachers experienced a lack of reading resources such as textbooks. A shortage of textbooks makes it difficult for teachers to promote and develop a reading culture in schools. A lack of textbooks creates an environment that is not conducive to promoting and developinga reading culture.

Teachers improvised by collecting reading resources in the form of old textbooks and magazines to assist learners to improve reading skills. Teachers contacted other primary schools that had surpluses of textbooks with the aim of borrowing. Schools were provided with reading charts, flip charts and pamphlets that could cultivate a culture of reading by local NGOs and the Department of Health.

5.2.6.2. Lack of appropriate physical facilities

Inadequate physical facilities such as library buildings pose serious challenges to cultivating a reading culture in schools. The shortage of library buildings forces schools to utilise classrooms for the storage of books.

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5.2.6.3. Overcrowded classrooms

Classroom overcrowding is an impediment to learners' reading progress. Teachers are unable to engage learners individually during reading lessons. Overcrowded classrooms are not conducive to an environment that develops learners'reading skills in the schools. When classrooms are overcrowded, learner progress in developing reading skills is seriously slowed down. School need much support in this regard.

5.2.6.4. Lack of parental support

A lack of parental support at home prohibits establishing a strong reading culture at school. Learners find it difficult to perform reading tasks at home because sometimes there are no adult figures to guide, support or monitor their reading activities. A lack of parental involvement is aggravated by a lack of parent commitment to assist learners with reading activities.

5.2.6.5. Child-headed families

Child-headed families pose a serious challenge to cultivating a reading culture. Child-headed families are not fully supported at home due to the unavailability of parents . There are no adults to suppport learners with reading tasks. Such learners struggle on their own, and this creates uncertainty regarding the quality of their effort.

5.2.6.6. Vulnerable children

Both principals and teachers are of the opinion that vulnerable children are faced with serious challenges regarding reading competency. Vulnerable children struggle to read and write their names. They do not have parental support at home to assist them in performing reading tasks; therefore language teachers have to be supportive.

5.2.6.7. Inadequate training of teachers

Inadequate training of teachers is a serious challenge in promoting a reading culture. Language teachers lack the knowledge and skills to promote one. The training provided to teachers is inadequate.

HODs support language teachers in the form of school-based internal workshop training to assist in dealing with challenges experienced in promoting a reading culture.

5.3. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS: HODs

This study outlines the role played by HODs in managing a reading culture in schools. This research delineates the ideal environment to promote a reading culture. The challenges experienced by HODs in cultivating a reading culture are indicated in this study. The summary of the research findings is based on the results emanating from the data collected from interviews.

5.3.1. Understanding a reading culture

This study indicates that understanding a reading culture as a continous process that makes use of different strategies for learner development to improve reading and language skills.

5.3.2. Language teacher motivation in promoting a reading culture

HODs motivate language teachers by using words of encouragement and appreciation by informing fellow staff members during staff meetings. Words of encouragement by HODs motivate language teachers to work as a team to promote a reading culture.

5.3.3. Rewards as incentives to promote a school reading culture

HODs awarded best performing learners with reading incentives such as school bags, pens, dictionaries, books, calculators, trophies, gold, silver and bronze medals, money and certificates. Incentives are motivators for learners to improve their reading skills.

5.3.4. Language teacher support in promoting a reading culture

5.3.4.1. Mentoring

HODs support language teachers by demonstrating how reading lessons should be presented in classrooms. In my opinion HODs mentored language teachers by sharing their experiences on how reading lessons should be taught.

5.3.5. Internal intervention strategies for teacher development

5.3.5.1. Moderation of lessons plans

This study has revealed that HODs moderate teachers' reading lesson plans by ensuring that reading activities are present in the school.

5.3.6. Challenges in cultivating a reading culture

5.3.6.1. Teacher demotivation and impatience

Teachers are not sufficiently motivated, and this is one of the major challenges in promoting a reading culture in the schools. They lack knowledge of how best they can promote a reading culture in their schools.

Most teachers are not patient when assisting learners in need of reading support. They find it difficult to do remedial work to support learners with reading difficulties due to the inadequate training provided to them.

5.4. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS: TEACHERS

The study outlines the role played by language teachers in promoting a reading culture in the school; it explains an environment that is conducive to promoting a reading culture. The challenges experienced by language teachers in promoting and developing a reading culture are indicated. The summary of the research findings is based on the results emanating from the data collected from interviews.

5.4.1. Understanding a reading culture

Language teachers understand a reading culture as the creation of an environment that is conducive to developing the love of reading and that becomes a daily reading practice to be engaged in voluntarily.

5.4.2. Development and nurturing of reading skills

Teachers' methods of reading instruction play a crucial role in improving learners' reading skills. Language teachers should teach reading in various ways, such as independent reading, shared reading, guided group reading, reading aloud, picture viewing and phonic reading to improve learner performance. Phonic reading can be better utilised in the Foundation Phase in assisting struggling readers. This is one form of reading that assists teachers with scaffolding. A step by step pronunciation of phonics is one way of ensuring that correct repetition of letters or words is achieved.

5.4.3. Application of classroom reading practices

Teachers apply reading practices by ensuring learners read during morning study, morning devotions (assembly) and during lesson presentations. HODs support struggling readers by remaining with them after school to improve their reading ability. Remedial work is provided to assist learners with reading challenges after school hours. Classroom reading competitions are introduced to motivate learners to develop their reading skills. Teachers improvise by collecting newspapers and magazines to encourage learners to read.

5.4.4. Challenges in promoting and developing reading culture

5.4.4.1. Lack of parental suppport

Parents do not support learners' reading efforts at home. Most parents are reluctant to sign learner reading activity books as proof that they assist their children at home.

5.4.4.2. Lack of learner commitment

Learners are not enthusiastic in performing reading tasks and this poses a serious challenge in promoting a reading culture. A lack of parental support at home exacerbates this problem because vulnerable learners do not have role models to assist them with reading tasks.

Learners are uncooperative, and this is a serious challenge in promoting a reading culture. A lack of learner commitmitment creates difficulties in the promotion of a reading culture. Learners are uncooperative when performing reading tasks provided by their teachers. Some learners are not disciplined. Learners have to listen to their teachers in order to improve their reading skills. There are some learners that are not confident. Such learners refuse to perform reading tasks in front of large crowd in the schools.

5.4.4.3. Unavailability of library buildings

A shortage of library buildings makes it difficult for teachers to provide learners the space to complete their work. A library facility is necessary to enable establish a reading culture. Inadequate physical facilities like library buildings do not encourage quality instruction and learning in the schools.

5.4.5. Strategies for helping struggling readers

Teachers group struggling readers according to reading difficulties to assit learners that cannot read well. Struggling readers' performance is recorded in reading registers to monitor reading progress. Teachers involve parents by inviting them to the school to be informed about the reading progress of their children.

5.4.6. Learner motivation in reading

Learners are encouraged to enter for reading competitions to improve reading skills. Best performing learners in reading are selected by teachers to enter for reading competitions such as the Foundation For Learning Campaign (FFLC) organised by the Department of Basic Education and Community Based Organisation (CBO). Monetary awards are offered to the best readers in the classroom. Rewards motivate learners to improve their reading ability in the classroom.

5.5. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS: LIBRARIANS

This study outlines the role played by teacher librarians in promoting a reading culture in the school. The challenges experienced by teacher librarians in promoting and developing a reading culture are indicated in this study. The summary of the research findings is based on the results emanating from the data collected from interviews.

5.5.1. Understanding a reading culture

Librarians understand a reading culture as the way or manner in which reading is done at school by reading magazines, newspapers, advertisement, and road signs for pleasure and to gain information.

5.5.2. Development and nurturing of reading skills

Teacher librarians develop and nurture reading skills by ensuring that learners master letters of the alphabet to use sounds for word and sentence construction. They should use a variety of reading methods, such as phonic reading, reading aloud, shared reading, independent reading and picture viewing to improve learner performance.

5.5.3. Application of reading practices

Teacher librarians use reading cards, newspapers, reading books and toys to stimulate learners' interest in reading.

5.5.4. Challenges in promoting and developing a reading culture

Physical facilities such as library buildings are inadequate, therefore there are serious challenges in developing and promoting a reading culture in schools. The shortage of proper library facilities obliges schools to utilise classrooms and cupboards for the storage of books. Schools experience a shortage of reading resources in classroom libraries. Library classrooms also face the challenge of a shortage of furniture. Schools have no full time teacher librarians to assist the learners.

5.5.5. Strategies for helping struggling readers

Teacher librarians help struggling readers by doing remedial work after school hours. Librarians group struggling readers according to their reading ability to improve reading skills. Struggling readers are encouraged to formulate their own stories in the classroom library. Teacher librarians support struggling readers by engaging them in pre-reading activities, such as viewing the book cover, photographs and titles. Struggling readers are encouraged to read during assembly. Teacher librarians encourage learners to read books at home, thereby involving parents. Parents are invited to the school to discuss learner reading progress.

5.5.6. Aquisition of reading resources

Schools have a shortage of library books such as textbooks, magazines and newspapers. Some reading resources are donated by NGOs to promote a reading culture. The SGBs supplement reading resources by using financial resources allocated to schools.

5.5.7. Entries for reading competitions

Teacher librarians encourage learners to enter for reading competitions. Teachers and parents prepare learners for reading competitions to improve their reading skills.

5.6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: DOCUMENTS

The following summary is based on the results emanating from the analysis of data collected from document analysis such as timetables, policy documents, reading and language policies.

5.6.1. Reading and language policies

Schools do not have a reading policy. This is a serious challenge to promoting a reading culture. It means schools do not follow any guidelines relating to a reading culture. It also implies there is a lack of planning for this important school activity. The same applies to inadequately prepared language policies that do not include any plans on a reading culture.

5.6.2. Timetable

Most teachers do not specify reading periods on the timetable. This makes it difficult for SMTs to monitor learners' reading in classrooms. Therefore SMTs are not informed in advance to monitor reading effectively due to incomplete information. Monitoring of reading therefore suffers a great deal.

5.7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: OBSERVATIONS

The summary of the research findings is based on the results emanating from the analysis of the data collected from observations.

5.7.1. Reading corners

Classroom reading corners are available in the Foundation Phase. Learners in this phase can pick books and start enjoying reading in their classroom. This study has revealed that Intermediate and Senior Phase classrooms do not have reading corners. Most of the learners struggling with reading are found in the Intermediate and Senior phases.

5.7.2. Reading clubs

Reading clubs have the potential of stimulating a love of reading. Learners could share stories or information from books they have read.

5.8. CONCLUSIONS

Learning to read has lifelong benefits for all learners. All learners must be enabled to read to the best of their ability. Reading is a skill that has to be practised by every person to survive in today's global economy. People should be able to read to survive and to be competent in a world of technology. It is important to "catch them young", for the future belongs to them.

5.8.1. PRINCIPALS

The principals have a critical role to play in managing a reading culture in schools. Principals should manage and promote a reading culture in the school by using class visits as an

intervention strategy to monitor reading progress in schools, organising internal school-based workshops to train teachers to be effective in promoting a reading culture, motivating staff members that are promoting a culture of reading in the form of words of appreciation and encouragement, scaffolding reading tasks to utilise varying levels of learner performance and uplift learners, encouraging teachers to work as a team to promote a reading culture, delegating mentorship of new teachers to senior teachers and utilising parental involvement in supervising reading tasks at home.

5.8.2. HODs

The HODs as middle management have a vital role of helping principals in managing a reading culture in the schools. They should manage and promote reading by motivating language teachers that promote a reading culture in the form of words of appeciation and acknowledging their performance, organising school based workshop training for language teachers, using class visits to support and demonstrate how reading lessons can be presented in the clasrooms, monitoring learners' reading progress in the Language Department, ensuring that language teachers are supplied with the necessary reading resources to promote a reading culture, moderating teachers' lesson plans to ensure that reading activities are performed effectively in the schools, developing reading year plans and ensuring that important reading days such as National Reading Day and World Reading Day are celebrated in the schools on an annual basis to promote a reading culture.

5.8.3. TEACHERS

Language teachers are regarded as custodians of teaching reading in the schools. They have a responsibility for language teaching, managing and promotinga reading culture in the schools by monitoring reading progress in the morning and supervising learners during reading activities, scaffolding learning tasks to improve reading skills, organising reading competitions to improve reading skills, motivating learners by awarding them with small tokens, inviting parents to schools, assessing learners to track progress and applying different reading methods to accomodate even struggling readers in the classrooms.

5.8.4. LIBRARIANS

The library personnel, acting as stock controllers or asset managers, can manage and support a reading culture by providing learners with books to read at school and home, encouraging learners in reading activities, supporting teachers with relevant reading materials to improve learners skills, facilitating parental involvement in supervising reading tasks at home, developing reading plans and encouraging learners to celebrate National Library Week on an annual basis to promote a reading culture and doing remedial work to support struggling readers.

5.9. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.9.1. Schools

- Schools should specify reading periods for instructional purposes on the general school timetable. These will give an indication of when HODs can pay attention to giving support to teachers. Such support will assist teachers in scaffolding learners' reading tasks.
- Schools should consider establishing reading clubs to enhance a reading culture. When reading is done for fun, learning is enhanced. It may take time for participants to reap benefits from such instructional strategies.
- Schools should consider establishing reading corners in all phases of schooling. All learners require the opportunity to grab a book and read on a daily basis.
- Schools should consider awarding committed learners with incentives such as books as gifts.

5.9.2. Government/Department of Basic Education

- Government should consider training teachers on how to support vulnerable children and those from child-headed families who need reading resources to improve their literacy levels.
- Government should appoint librarians in schools. The creation of posts for librarians should alleviate the burden experienced by language teachers so that they can focus on teaching the learners reading while librarians should focus on helping learners in the library to promote a culture of reading.

- Government should provide schools with guidelines on how to draft reading policies. Reading policies will help guide schools on how to manage a reading culture.
- Government should add infrastructure that includes classrooms and library facilities so that it will be easier for learners to gain access to reading resources in the school.

5.9.3. SGBs

- SGBs should allocate sufficient funds in their budgets for reading resources. Such resources are meant to help schools improve their reading culture.

5.10. RECOMMEDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- Future researchers should consider conducting studies on the role played by different stakeholders in supporting a reading culture.

5.11. DELIMITATION

This research was limited to three primary schools in Limpopo Province in Mopani District, Sekgosese East Circuit. Eighteen (18) participants, namely two principals, one deputy principal, six HODs, three Sepedi language teachers, three English language teachers and three library personnel acting as stock controllers or asset managers were selected to participate in this research. The data gathered excluded the views of learners, other stakeholders in education such as parents, the Department of Education, community members, Non-Governmental Organisations and Community Based Organisations (CBO). The views of other primary schools outside Soetfontein village in Sekgosese Circuit are not reflected in this study. Language was a barrier to exploring some of the research questions asked. Participants who could speak only Sepedi as home language had difficulty understanding some concepts. The researcher had to translate the recordings from Sepedi home language into English.

5.12. LIMITATATIONS OF THE STUDY

These research findings are based on the views of SMTs, language teachers and library personnel on how primary schools manage and support a reading culture. The purpose of this study is not to generalise its findings. Although only three schools and 18 participants were

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involved, effort was taken to interview them during breaks and after school, in order not to disrupt normal teaching in the selected schools. Only a small rural community could benefit from this research study. It was limited to a qualitative research approach based on an interpretive paradigm. The findings are based on the interviews with participants, classroom environment observation and document analysis.

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ANNEXURE A: PERMISSION LETTER TO AND FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Department of Education

Limpopo Department of Education

Private Bag X 9489

POLOKWANE

0700

Dear Sir/ Madam

Application for Conducting Research in Limpopo Province

I, Molapo Diakanya Cecel, MEd student in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria hereby request your permission to conduct research in Mopani District at Sekgosese East Circuit. My Research Topic is: **How primary schools promote and manage a reading culture**. This research is aimed at encouraging schools to create a reading culture. I am requesting permission to conduct interviews with the Principal/ Deputy Principal, Heads of Department and teachers.

I will observe the classroom environment to determine whether it promotes a reading culture. For the purposes of this study it will not be necessary for the researcher to attend reading activities as the artefacts will provide an idea of the reading culture prevailing in the classroom. I will also peruse documents such as the English Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), Sepedi Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), School language policy, the reading policy and the timetable.

I will be grateful if my request can be taken into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Molapo, Diakanya Cecel **Contact: 0826725477 Email: molapocdc@webmail.co.za**

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LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Enquiries: Dr. Makola MC, Tel No: 015 290 9448. E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

PO BOX 64

PAULUSWEG

0814

MOLAPO DC

<u>RE: Request for permission to Conduct Research</u>

1. The above bears reference.

2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct a research has been approved- <u>TITLE: HOW PRIMARY SCHOOL PROMOTE AND MANAGE READING CULTURE</u>

3. The following conditions should be considered

   3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

   3.2 Arrangements should be made with both the Circuit Offices and the schools concerned.

   3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.

   3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the forth term.

   3.5   During the study, the research ethics should be practiced, in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

   3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

4. Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

Page 1 of 2

The heartland of southern Africa – development is about people!

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5. The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.

[signature]

07/02/2014

Dederen K.O

Date

Acting Head of Department

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

Circuit Manager

Department of Education

Sekgosese East Circuit

House no 483

SENWAMOKGOPE

0815

Dear Sir/ Madam

Application for Conducting Research in Sekgosese East Circuit

I, Molapo Diakanya Cecel, MEd student in Education Management, Law and Policy at the University of Pretoria hereby request your permission to conduct research in Mopani District at Sekgosese East Circuit. My Research Topic is: **How primary schools promote and manage a reading culture**. This research is aimed at encouraging schools to create a reading culture. I am requesting permission to conduct interviews with the Principal / Deputy Principal, Heads of Department and teachers.

I will also observe the classroom environment to determine whether it promotes a reading culture. For the purposes of this study it will not be necessary for the researcher to attend reading activities as the artefacts will provide an idea of the reading culture prevailing in the classroom. I will also peruse documents such as the English Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), Sepedi Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), the school language policy, the reading policy and the timetable.

I will be grateful if my request can be taken into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Molapo, Diakanya Cecel **Contact: 0826725477 Email: molapocdc@webmail.co.za**

LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNNEMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enq: MashimbyeTS
Tel: 0716793339

12 February 2014

TO WHON IT MAY CONCERN

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY/ RESEARCH: MOLAPO DC

This is to certify that the above mentioned educator has been given permission to conduct study/research among the principals, Deputy Principals HODs and educators within the circuit...

The circuit wishes to request the schools to give him permission to interact with the relevant stakeholders at schools without compromising learning and teaching.

The circuit wishes the researcher good luck in his endeavor to complete his research.

Yours faithfully

CIRCUIT MANAGER

SEKGOSESE EAST CIRCUIT
P.O.BOX 136 MOOKETSI Tel: 015 8740032/ FAX: 0158742121
"Working together we can do more in providing quality education"
Education is a Pre-condition for development

The heartland of Southern Africa – development is about people

ANNEXURE B: CONSENT LETTER Principal, HODs, Teacher and librarian

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

Dear Principal/ Deputy Principal

I am enrolled for a master's degree at the University of Pretoria and conducting research on **How primary schools promote and manage a reading culture.** This research is aimed at encouraging schools to create a reading culture**.** I would like to interview you at the school for approximately 45 minutes to one hour.

I propose that the HOD responsible for languages and English / Sepedi teachers be interviewed. The interview will be audio taped.

I also propose that the classroom environment be observed to determine whether it is conducive to instruction and learning with regard to the promotion and creating a reading culture. For the purposes of this study it will not be necessary for the researcher to attend reading activities as the artefacts will provide an idea of the reading culture prevailing in the classroom.

I also propose that documents such as the English Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), Sepedi Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), the school language policy, reading policy and timetable be perused by the researcher.

Information obtained in the interviews will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and will be used solely for the research purposes.

I would like to thank you for your participation, and inform you that you will be allowed to withdraw from the process if you do not wish to continue with the interview at any moment.

Yours sincerely

Molapo, DC (Researcher)   Mohlakwana MAU (Supervisor)

CONSENT

I,_____ (name and signature), agree / do not agree (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research. Date:

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Dear Head of Department / Teacher

I am enrolled for a master's degree at the University of Pretoria and conducting research on **How primary schools promote and manage a reading culture.** This research is aimed at encouraging schools to create a reading culture**.** I would like to interview you at the school for approximately 45 minutes to one hour. The interview will be audio taped.

You are informed that classroom environment will be observed to determine whether it is conducive to instruction and learning with regard to promoting and creating a reading culture. For the purpose of this study it will not be necessary for the researcher to attend reading activities as the artefacts will provide an idea of the reading culture prevailing in the classroom.

Documents such as the English Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), Sepedi Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), the school language policy, reading policy and timetable will be perused by the researcher.

Information obtained in the interviews will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and will be used solely for the research purposes.

I would like to thank you for your participation, and inform you that you will be allowed to withdraw if you do not wish to continue with the interview at any moment.

Yours sincerely

Molapo DC (Researcher)   Mohlakwana MAU (Supervisor)

CONSENT

I, _____ (name and signature), agree / do not agree (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research.

Date:

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

Dear Librarian

I am enrolled for a master's degree at the University of Pretoria and conducting research on **How primary schools promote and manage a reading culture.** This research is aimed at encouraging schools to create a reading culture**.** I would like to interview you at the school for approximately 45 minutes to one hour. The interview will be audio taped.

You are informed that classroom environment will be observed to determine whether it is conducive to instruction and learning with regard to promoting and creating a reading culture. For the purposes of this study it will not be necessary for the researcher to attend reading activities as the artefacts will provide an idea of the reading culture prevailing in the classroom.

Documents such as the English Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), Sepedi Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS), the school language policy, reading policy and timetable will be perused by the researcher.

Information obtained in the interviews will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and will be used solely for the research purposes.

I would like to thank you for your participation, and inform you that you will be allowed to withdraw from the process if you do not wish to continue with the interview at any moment.

Yours sincerely

Molapo DC (Researcher)   Mohlakwana MAU (Supervisor)

CONSENT

I, _____ (name and signature), agree / do not agree (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research.

   Date:

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I HATE MISTEAKS

TK Language Service
Editing and Proofreading
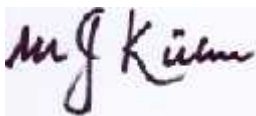Cell: 082 303 5415
Tel: 012 343 8412
Email: **tinus.kuhn@gmail.com**
Address:180 Smith Street, Muckleneuk, Pretoria, 0002

18 June 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the dissertation titled **An Investigation into the Management of a Reading Culture in Primary Schools** by **Diakanya Cecel Molapo** has been edited for grammar errors. It remains the responsibility of the candidate to effect the recommended changes.

Prof. Tinus Kühn

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ANNEXURE D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR PRINCIPALS, HODs, LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS

Principal interview protocol

Research topic: How School Management Teams promote and manage a reading culture in primary schools

Time of interview: _____Duration:_____

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____Pseudonym:_____

Male / Female: _____

A. Interview questions for principals

1. What do you understand by a culture of reading?
2. How do you motivate language teachers to promote a reading culture in the school?
3. What kinds of incentive does your school have to promote a reading culture?
4. How do you support teachers in promoting a reading culture?
5. What kinds of intervention strategies does your school have to promote and develop a reading culture?
6. What challenges are you faced with in cultivating a reading culture?
7. Does your school have reading resources? If not,why not? If yes, how were they acquired?
8. Any other comment on a reading culture?

B. Biographical information
1. How long have you worked as principal in this school?

Head of Department (HOD) interview protocol

Research topic: How School Management Teams promote and manage a reading culture in primary schools

Time of interview: _____Duration:_____

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____Pseudonym:_____

Male / Female: _____

A. Interview questions for Heads of Department (HODs)

1. What do you understand by a culture of reading?
2. How do you motivate language teachers to promote a reading culture in the school?
3. What kinds of incentive does your school have to promote a reading culture?
4. How do you support teachers in promoting a reading culture?
5. What kinds of intervention strategy does your department have to promote and develop a reading culture?
6. What challenges are you faced with in cultivating a reading culture?
7. Does your department have reading resources? If not, why not? If yes, how were they acquired?
8. Any other comment on a reading culture?

B. Biographical question
1. How long have you worked as HOD in this school?

The language teacher interviews protocol

Research topic: How primary schools promote and manage a reading culture

Time of interview: _____Duration:_____

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____Pseudonym:_____

Subject: _____

Male / Female: _____

A. Interview questions for language teachers

1. What do you understand by a culture of reading?
2. How do you develop and nurture learners' readings skills in general?
3. What reading practices do you apply in promoting and developing a reading culture?
4. What challenges do you experience in promoting and developing a reading culture?
5. What strategies do you use to help struggling readers in the classroom?
6. How do you get the resources to cultivate a reading culture at your school?
7. Do you encourage your learners to enter for reading competitions?
8. Any other comments on a reading culture?

B. Biographical question
1. How long have you worked as a language teacher in this school?

Librarian interview protocol

Research topic: How primary schools promote and manage a reading culture

Time of interview: _____Duration:_____

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____Pseudonym:_____

Subject: _____

Male / Female: _____

A. Interview questions for librarians

1. What do you understand by a culture of reading?
2. How do you develop and nurture learners' readings skills in general?
3. What reading practices do you apply in promoting and developing a reading culture?
4. What challenges do you experience in promoting and developing a reading culture?
5. What strategies do you use to help struggling readers in the library?
6. Does your library have reading resources? If not, why not? If yes, how were they acquired?
7. Do you encourage your learners to enter for reading competitions?
8. Any other comments on a reading culture?

B. Biographical question
1. How long have you worked as librarian in this school?

ANNEXURE E OBSERVATION PROTOCOL
Research Topic: How primary schools promote and manage reading culture

Classroom number: _____Pseudonym_____

Name of observer: _____

Role of observer: _____

Time of observation: _____

Length of observation: _____

Descriptive field notes	Reflective field notes
Classroom environment checklist • Corner reading place • Reading resources • Classroom wall with reading pictures • Classroom wall with reading charts Concluding comments or remarks	

ANNEXURE F: ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education
Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER :	EM 14/02/07

DEGREE AND PROJECT	MEd An investigation into the management of reading culture in primary schools
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Diakanya Cecel Molapo
DEPARTMENT	Education Management and Policy Studies
DATE PROTOCOL APPROVED	1 July 2014
DATE CLEARANCE ISSUED	31 May 2016

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE	Prof Liesel Ebersöhn
DATE	31 May 2016
CC	Bronwynne Swarts Liesel Ebersöhn Dr MAU Mohlakwana Dr JW van Rooyen

This ethics clearance certificate is issued subject to the condition that the approved protocol was implemented. The Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education does not accept any liability for research misconduct, of whatsoever nature, committed by the researcher(s) in the implementation of the approved protocol.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.

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