SYNOPSIS

The aim of this study is to investigate the extent to which effective human resource management serves as a powerful strategy for improving schools’ productivity.

Since the riots of June 1976 in Soweto the culture of teaching and learning has deteriorated. Learners and educators were demotivated. The abrupt introduction of Outcomes-Based-Education in 1997 caused most qualified and experienced educators to resign from the teaching profession. It has also become difficult for the educators to discipline learners since the abolition of corporal punishment. The learners now have more rights and the South African Schools Act protects them.

In this study, qualitative descriptive research design approaches were utilized. The researcher bracketed her own views of life and ideologies to avoid being subjective. She had to be objective in order to be able to know more about the philosophy which the school principals follow to improve the culture of teaching and learning. The researcher selected the sample randomly. Raw data was collected by observation, document check as well as interviewing the principals as managers, leaders and overseers of the Soweto Secondary Schools. Interviews which involved face-to-face interaction were conducted at natural setting that is at schools where the principals serve as managers and leaders.

In this study an inductive process for data analysis was applied. The researcher used a highly heuristic qualitative approach which is characterized by the following five phrases:

- The researcher read the transcript and filled them.
- The responses of each topic were reviewed and the reaction of various respondents was compared with each other.
- The transcripts were coded and reread (to eliminate preconceived ideas). This was done to gain a holistic perspective of the collected data. Important words and phrases were marked and underlined in order to identify information that is relevant for the study.
- Categories were formulated through compilation of analytic memos. These categories were then clustered together to identify themes.
- Finally creative synthesis, which enabled the researcher to bring together the interviewees’ stories as a whole was done.

The main purpose was to describe, explore and analyze the experiences of the individual participant’s life. This was done through the condensation of extensive and varied data into a brief summary and through the establishment of a clearly defined relationship between the research problem, aims and other findings derived from raw data and literature survey.

Findings from this study and from literature review suggest that if human resource is effectively managed, then, teaching and learning outcomes will also be discernibly maximized. The researcher found that at schools the principals are the initiators of a positive culture and climate. Their effectiveness improved the culture of teaching and learning through their collegiality, educative and transformative leadership. There is complete educative teaching and learning. The principals are collaborative leaders who
involve educators and other stakeholders to participate in decision-making. They attended School Management Team Skills workshops. They are empowered to manage and make constructive decisions for their schools. Teams are built and encouraged to support one another, share knowledge and skills and also to avoid individuals from isolating themselves. Educators attend workshops and have also established school subject teaching clusters with the surrounding schools where they can share their problems and come up with solutions. The negative attitudes, which prevailed, have absolutely disappeared.

The researcher recommended that principals’ leadership style should be transformed to that of a democratic, participatory and collegial approach. Leaders should also facilitate change in the schools. She also highlighted that communities around the schools and parental involvement play significant roles in the smooth running of schools.