CHAPTER THREE
IMPLEMENATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND RECORDING OF RAW DATA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher will conduct an empirical research using qualitative methods. Qualitative research is a systematic process that organizes the data into units, which combine and synthesize ideas, develop and construct themes and theories and illuminate the important discoveries of the research (Anderson, 1998:134). The researcher will collect data in a face-to-face situation by interacting with the respondents (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:35). Through this approach the respondents are interviewed in their natural settings and in a more philosophical mode, which is appropriate for their social actions, beliefs, and thoughts and perceptions (Hummevoll, 1998:405).

3.2 REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 The qualitative research design

In this study the qualitative research design will be used. The meaning of qualitative research design was explained in chapter one, paragraph one of the sub-heading research design on page four.

The research methodology is an umbrella for designation of all forms of social inquiry, which relies on qualitative data in a form of words including naturalistic, ethnomethodology and narrative inquiry. Qualitative research aims at understanding human actions. It may involve both explicit and implicit comparisons and structured open-ended interviews. Qualitative means quality, which is inherent of the phenomena of something, may be an object or experience (Schwandt, 2001:213).
3.2.1.1 Phenomenological approach

The Phenomenological approach is one of the research approaches used by the researcher to understand a social situation to develop a hypothesis. It is concerned with assumptions that are taken for granted in everyday life. The researcher seeks to understand the meaning of events and interactions of ordinary people in a particular situation and their behavior. The aim of this approach is to abandon researcher’s prejudices and preconceptions for the phenomena, to identify and describe the subjective experiences of people (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003:23; Cohen and Manion, 1995:31; Hitchcock and Hughes, 1993:100; Hopkins, 1993:43 and Schwandt, 2001:191-192).

3.2.1.2 Exploratory research

In exploratory investigation the researcher explores the unknown to uncover the generalizations and develop a hypothesis that can be studied and tested in future through data collection techniques. The researcher will investigate the problems so as to reach an informed decision (Cohen and Manion, 1995:259 and De Vos, 2000:124).

3.2.2 Constructivism in qualitative research

Human beings construct and discover knowledge by inventing concepts, models and schemes to create a sense of experience. They continually test and modify those constructions and link them with the new experience. These constructs are not interpreted in isolation but against the backdrop of shared understandings, practices, language and values (Schwandt, 2001:30).

The researcher’s role will be to explain carefully and interpret what the interviewees reveal to her verbally and non-verbally in order to construct new meaning out of what they say.

3.2.3 Sample

A sample in the context of this study is a subset of a larger population, who are a fair representation, whom information is gathered from and selected for research purposes.
The researcher selected principals randomly from four secondary schools for the purpose of this study. The principals will be interviewed. The focus of this study is to develop the awareness that if the human resource in schools is effectively managed, a culture of teaching and learning will be improved. This can be achieved by:

- suggesting ways and means of effectively managing the human resource in a school.
- suggesting models of improving the culture of teaching and learning.

Structured and unstructured questions are used as an instrument for the interview of the researcher to interview the four principals to collect data.

3.2.4 Research methods

The research methods which will be used in this study will be interview, observation and documents check (school policies).

3.2.4.1 The interview as data collection in qualitative research

The interview is the means of collecting data by the interviewer in which respondents are asked questions and their responses are recorded (Vockell, 1983:353). The researcher may also use other techniques for recording data through note taking, filming and audiotaping (De Vos, 2000:286).

In order to apply the above principle the interview guide should be tested before implementing it with the potential respondents (De Vos, 2000:319). When the topics are more than one, the interviewer may probe the interviewee during the interview to get more information by asking open-ended questions. An interview question guide has a series of questions, which allow the interviewer to explore and probe the respondent.
These questions should not lead the responses of the respondents (Maykut and Morehouse, 1995:83).

3.2.4.1.1 Forms of interviewing

There are different types of interviewing such as structured and unstructured. It depends on the researcher and his/her study whether to implement all these types concurrently or not.

According to this study these forms are inseparable they cannot be used in isolation. Therefore, the researcher in her study will use the structured and unstructured types of interviewing.

(a) The structured interview

The procedures are carefully prearranged. Processes and the wording of questions are voluntarily planned. The questions do not allow the respondents to say more.

(b) Unstructured interview

This type of interview consists of open-ended type of questions; the interviewee is allowed to be free to say more in his/her responses. Nevertheless it needs careful planning. Open-ended questions allow the interviewer to elaborate on the content of each interview while relying on the skills of the interviewer. During the interview the respondent automatically discloses more information because the questions asked do not limit him/her (Maykut and Morehouse, 1995:82).

The researcher plays a pivotal role in this type of interview. He/she can probe or use verbal hints. As stated above that the researcher will utilize all these forms inseparably in order to bring trustworthiness; consistency; dependability; consistency; dependability; transferability and conformability as they offer grounding for demonstrating; trustworthiness (De Vos, 2000:240 and Krefting, 1991:215).
3.2.4.1.2 Advantages and disadvantages of interviewing

(a) Advantages of interviewing

It allows for greater depth than the case of other methods of collection. The researcher interacts with the respondents face-to-face and can observe the non-verbal expressions, which would not be observed in other techniques (Cohen and Manion, 1995:272). These are the advantages:

- The interviewer has the opportunity to probe and pause in order to get more information from the interviewee.
- The interviewer is more exposed to the respondents’ environment. As a result he/she can observe the facial expression thus permits him/her to probe.
- The researcher receives responses immediately and can sense if the question is sensitive. Therefore he/she can try to explain the question.

(b) Disadvantages of interviewing

It is prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer. The interviewer may be inclined to lead the respondent to the expected answers (Cohen and Manion, 1995:272). In order to overcome the above limitations the interviewer should bracket his/her philosophy of life and probe or pause to give the interviewee time to think and respond.

3.2.4.1.3 Interview questions used in this study

The questions to be asked are designed to allow the researcher to be able to ask the principals the same questions and accommodate principals to air their views by designing structured and unstructured questions. The interview questions will be found in Appendix A (section B) and the responses will be found in Appendix B.
3.2.4.2 Observation

During the session of interview the researcher will observe the interviewee and take field notes regarding interview interactions (verbal and non-verbal communication) between the researcher and the interviewee.

3.2.4.3 Document analysis

Document analysis will be done to confirm the extend to which the sample apply or does not apply to their school policy. The researcher will request the school principal to ask the teachers to share their confidential documents in order to determine the extent to which the respondents interact with policy document and the extent to which policy influences skills development plans in the selected schools. It is envisaged that findings from this exercise would assist to indicate whether there is any relationship between human or person development plans and school’s outcomes.

3.3 PROVISION FOR TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Lincoln and Egon in (Schwandt, 2001:258) trustworthiness refers to the quality or goodness of an investigation that makes it noteworthy to audiences. There are four criteria that were established to serve as the naturalistic equivalents to conventional criteria such as credibility, validity, reliability and transferability, consistency and conformability.

3.3.1 Credibility

This is concerned about the investigator providing assurance of trust between her and respondents’ views of their philosophy of life and the investigators’ reconstructions (Holloway and Wheeler, 1996:162).

The researcher will build trust between her and the interviewee and explain that the interview is for the purpose of her study. She is not going to interrogate or intimidate him/her. She only needs information just as it is known to the respondents. The
interviewer will also bracket her philosophy of life to allow the interviewee to be as free as possible when replying the questions.

3.3.2 Validity and reliability

Validity is the extent to which any researcher’s tool measures what is supposed to measure and reliability is the extent to which the instrument when used more than once will produce the same results in the research (Holloway and Wheeler, 1996:162).

The researcher will use a well structured question schedule which will be used for all respondents to be interviewed. These questions would be such that, when used by other researchers anywhere at different times could give the same results.

3.3.3 Transferability

Since there are issues concerning validity and reliability that differ in qualitative research and quantitative research, there are different criteria and concepts introduced such as:

- Truth value: transferability
  It is concerned with the external validity that deals with the issue of generalization in a case-to-case study (Holloway and Wheeler, 1998:163).

- Applicability: transferability
  This is the extent to which the research findings can be applied to other situations within the group. This may include the ability to generalize from the research findings to a larger population (Poggenpoel, 1993:349). Nevertheless it is impossible to generalize in qualitative studies. The research situation consists of a particular researcher in a particular interaction with particular individuals/respondents. (Ely, Anzul, and Friedman, 1997:12). Campbell and Stanley in (Carre, 1994:688) state that transferability would be an appropriate overview as a principle against which applicability of data is assessed. The findings may not necessarily be transferred to another setting. The researcher may present the data in a completely descriptive way for other researchers to make a comparison of the situation. The advantage of qualitative research is that it is conducted in a natural setting suitable for a particular unique respondent. In this research study the
researcher will not take things for granted to generalize the information but will present it according to the research findings.

3.3.4 Consistency: dependability

Dependency has a strategy in which it utilizes the following criteria: “audible” and “code-recode procedure.”

Audible: when the researcher can clearly follow the decision trial used by the original investigator in a particular study (Krefting, 1991:225) and follow the code-recode procedure.

The researcher will code and recode the collected data about the culture of teaching and learning and the quality of education that exists in a particular school investigated.

3.3.5 Conformability

This ensures that there is freedom from bias in the research procedures that data and interpretation of the study are a true reflection of what has been investigated (Poggenpoel, 1993:350). The extent to which the research findings can be confirmed by another researcher depends on conformability of neutrality achieved when trust-value and applicability of data is created (Krefting, 1991:200 and 217).

The researcher should ensure that during the interview he/she does not interfere while the interviewee is responding. He/she should try to be objective and avoid being subjective. Also not judge or generalize the information given to her by the interviewee in order that when used by other researchers same results could be produced.

3.4 RECORDING OF RAW DATA

Recording of data concerns the editing of the interview schedule, which eliminate errors. For editing there are sub-categories such as completeness, accuracy, uniformity response and response effect (Cohen and Manion, 1995:101). The raw data collected through
interviewing the principals, by observation and document checks will be recorded. The researcher will ensure that the following have been accomplished:

- **Completeness:** The researcher checks the data that has been collected to find out of there is an answer to every question and to uncover problems of questionnaire administration by interviewers as well as logical question-design errors which were not found earlier (Cohen and Manion, 1995:101 and Czaja and Blair, 1996:206).

- **Accuracy:**
  The researcher should check if all the questions are accurately answered. An inaccuracy may be made by both the researcher and the respondent to deliberately mislead the readers (Cohen and Manion, 1995:101).

- **Uniformity:**
  The questions should be interpreted uniformly because uniformity assists in eradicating the source of errors (Cohen and Manion, 1995:101).

- **Response effects:**
  Response effects are errors caused by faulty memory, the respondent’s misunderstandings, the question or method of data collection (Czaja and Blair, 1996:146).

During the interview the researcher will clarify the questions if the respondents do not understand the question and make sure that all questions have been answered accurately and interpreted uniformly.

### 3.5 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

The biases value and judgments of the researcher may be obvious in his/her research report because qualitative research is an interpretive research. There are two elements of the role of the researcher such as gaining entry and ethical issues (Creswell, 1994:147). These include statements about the past experiences of the researcher that provide familiarity of the topic, setting and informants. Therefore his/her interpretation may have an influence on the report.
3.5.1 Ethical consideration

The interviewer asks the respondent a number of questions. In this case the informant answers that specific question asked (Oppenheim, 1983:184). These questions should be designed to seem reasonable for informant to interpret in an imaginative way.

The researcher should avoid asking questions in such a way that, respondent might feel targeted for some other reasons. The interviewer must avoid asking personal questions that are very sensitive. In this study the researcher will be sensitive to the interviewee’s feelings.

3.5.2 Informed consent

The respondent is not compelled to be interviewed. He/she has the right to freedom and self-determination. It is his/her democratic right to allow or not to allow the interviewer to interview him/her or not. Even during the interview proceedings, the informant should not be restricted or limited to his/her freedom. His/her decision to discontinue, should be respected as his/her democratic right, should be justified and considered. Consent is the protection and respect of the self-determination (Cohen and Manion, 1995:350).

Cohen and Manion, (1995:350) state that informed consent is:

“…the procedure in which individuals choose whether to participate in an interview or investigation after being informed of the facts that would be likely to influence their decisions.”

The above statement involves four elements, which concern the respondent such as competence, volunteerism, full-information and comprehension (Cohen and Manion, 1995:350).

The researcher should avoid by all possible means to interview respondents who are not in a sane mental state of giving relevant information. As stated above the respondent has the right to refuse to be interviewed and this right should be respected. The respondent...
should volunteer, be free to give information and during the course of the interview if he/she decides to discontinue, that decision should be respected.

3.5.3 Harm to respondents

In social research the scientists have the responsibility not only to their profession to research for information and seek for trust but also to be concerned about the respondents’ dignity and not to impinge pain on them (Cohen and Manion, 1995:350).

3.5.4 Permission to do research at selected sites

Permission to do research means contact person or writing letters to Education Department Officials, the chairperson of the governors, along with the head teacher or the principal. If the study involves teachers and learners as participants there should be full negotiations as to how to undertake your investigation and dates be set (Cohen and Manion, 1995:354).

The researcher wrote a letter to the Education Department’s Divisional Manager of the concerned district and he will inform the principal where the study is going to be conducted for an investigation. Permission is requested to interview the relevant people according the researcher’s needs. The letter will be found in APPENDIX C. The response that allows the researcher to interview principals at schools was done telephonically. The principals were also informed that they should expect the researcher who will be coming to their schools to interview them. The letter requesting for permission to conduct interviews at selected Soweto schools will be found in Appendix C.

3.5.5 Debriefing

Debriefing is a two way process whereby the researcher has achieved knowledge about his/her investigations. The interviewer is now able to recommend to the interviewee after discussing the covering implications of his/her study. At this stage the sequence mistakes and misunderstandings can be rectified. In conclusion the researcher can now come-up with the findings that the interviewer has experienced while conducting the interviews at
different schools. The researcher can plan ahead with what he has learnt about the topic (Cohen and Manion, 1995:26).

Before the interview starts the researcher should introduce him/herself and explain the purpose of the study and that the information collected will remain confidential.

3.5.6 Violation of privacy

The researcher must safeguard the privacy of participants. The setting to be observed may differ from private to public. The private setting may be a home. Although the school is a public setting, the school community has its right to privacy. Thus if the interviewer intends to intrude into the private aspects of individual participants he/she should explicitly explain to the interviewee that if the information collected from him/her is to be published through media the informed consent will be taken into consideration (Cohen and Manion, 1995:366 and Creswell, 1994:148).

It is the responsibility of the researcher to avoid violating the respondent’s privacy. If the information collected is to be published the interviewer should explain to the interviewee that should it be a necessity to publish the information there is no way that it can be published without their consent.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Qualitative research design allows the researcher to be at the sites of investigation, which assists him/her to understand the problem. Observations consolidated the findings of the research and questionnaires that were used to collect data. The researcher used more analysis procedures and this enabled her to declare the accuracy of the report. According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994:64) trustworthiness is used to refer to the credibility of the researcher’s findings.

The procedures that the researcher followed in designing, carrying out and reporting his/her study will give the results credibility.

In chapter four data analysis, interpretation and recording of findings will be discussed.