CHAPTER FIVE

SYNTHESIS, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter four the researcher dealt with the analysis of data, interpretation and recording of findings. In this chapter the researcher will summarize the whole research study about the findings established during the interviews and those of literature study. The researcher will compare what other researchers found about the culture of teaching and learning in Soweto Secondary Schools, the role of the principals in changing the negative attitude towards education to a positive and constructive culture of teaching and learning.

The researcher discovered that the effective human resource management could improve the education of those schools, which were affected by the political riots, whereby the negative political culture reigned. South Africa is experiencing a new democratic dispensation of democratic government. Therefore there is no reason for the negative attitude.

Chapter one is an introductory chapter, which gives a brief summary about what other chapters (two, three, four, and five) will deal with. The problem statement of the research study is presented in this chapter. Finally the answer to the problem statement will be provided.

Chapter two focuses on the literature that concerns the research study and about other researchers’ findings and solutions toward the problems. It also deals with the theoretical educational models that could be implemented by the school management in administering their schools. There are strategies, which are suitable to bring about the positive culture of teaching and learning at school and the theories of educational model and multi-models of teacher effectiveness.
Chapter three is concerned with the research methodology that has been utilized to conduct the study. The researcher implemented the qualitative method to collect data by interviewing the respondents.

Chapter four delineates the concepts that are implemented to collect raw data through a qualitative method by interviewing the school principals of four Soweto Secondary Schools in face-to-face interaction whereby the interviewer was able to observe the interviewees non verbal expressions and interpreted them. The raw data was interpreted according to the informants’ common and different answers.

In this chapter the researcher discusses findings from the literature survey and the findings from the conducted study and critiquing. Recommendations and concluding remarks are also made.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The culture of teaching and learning in Soweto Secondary Schools has greatly improved. During the course of the study the researcher found that the principals of the schools where the study was conducted have changed the negative attitude of learners to a positive one.

The environment of the schools is conducive to education of learners. The teacher and learner low morale, absenteeism and late coming have been reduced. The teacher-learner relationship and the authority of the principals are good. The culture and climate within the schools has been reinvented.

The leadership style of the principals has changed to that of a collegial leader who allows his/her subordinates to participate in decision-making and also have authority in implementing their decisions. The principal share his/her duties with other stakeholders thus empowering them with managerial skills.
The Grade 12 results at different schools have gradually improved. One of the schools where the study was conducted produced the highest results in 2003 and was the best school in South Africa. The school libraries and laboratories at three schools are well equipped and functioning properly, learners use them productively. At the school where there is no laboratory and a library, effective teaching and learning occurs through those hardships. Although all four schools still lack material and human resources, they produce quality education.

Discipline, safety and security of learners are available. The schools’ gates are locked during school hours and there is a security personnel who is in charge and controls all the visitors who come into the schools’ premises. Learners do not loiter in township streets during school hours; Educators and learners honor class periods alike.

The Learner Representative Council (LRC) is considered a legal body that represents and liaises between educators and learners. Learners’ and parents voices are heard. Educators work as a team and facilitate each other’s teaching problems and HODs are very involved in assisting educators with problems that concern subject teaching and classroom discipline especially the newly appointed educators.

The principals at these schools are very committed to changing the culture of teaching and learning to be as effective as possible. They organize workshops and training for both educators and learners. When disciplinary measures are taken against individual defaulters, the South African School’s Act (SASA) and the Education Employment Act of South Africa are followed.

Discipline is not applied punitively but to develop the individual morally and through proper procedures. The educators’ contribution towards good results of learners is appreciated and acknowledged. The school principals manage and lead schools effectively. They have good relationship with all the stakeholders, community and the business. They listen to other people’s opinions and suggestions for the effective success of the school.
5.2.1 Findings from document analysis

All the schools stated that they have policies for all the activities that take place at the school, which guide all the stakeholders. Every individual is expected respect them. The SGB is involved in the drawing of the schools policy and the learners’ “code of conduct.” At other schools, the SGB is positively involved in the schools’ activities. One of the schools involves the LRC in administering the period registers in each classroom for both learners and educators. This is practiced to ensure that educators are not absent from school or only come to the classroom and not do effective teaching. The period register is very important, the SMT also use it to monitor the educators’ class period teaching attendance.

5.2.2 Findings from literature survey and critiquing

There are different educational theoretical models, which can be adopted by school principals and used as a guide to run their schools. The Formal model and the Models of effective teaching focus on the organizational goals and are obtained by using rational means. There are different structures that are interdependent and interact freely and frequently. Each body plans and sets itself goals in accordance with the goals of the organization and ensures that those goals are reached.

The researcher supports the above mentioned models because at schools the principal sets goals that he/she expects all the stakeholders to achieve within the set frame of time. Educators also set goals for themselves to attain them according to their plan within the set time frame. The principal sets these goals and objectives in collaboration with the subordinates. Thus HODs and educators are empowered. The Department of Education has vested him/her with the authority to run the school and all the stakeholders respect his/her authority.

The bureaucratic model encourages division of labor. The principal cannot do all the work alone, his/her role is to share and delegate the tasks to his/her subordinates.
Although hierarchy prevails, giving his/her responsibilities to HODs there are policies, rules and regulations in place to be followed. These policies, rules regulation and code of conduct are available to guide the functioning of the school. The principal has authority as stated in Formal model; that vested authority is to ensure that there is discipline and goals of the school are achieved as planned and to manage and lead the school more effectively and efficiently for the success of the school. The principals of the schools where the researcher conducted her study have improved the culture of teaching and learning and there is quality education.

According to Nxumalo’s research study in Lethoko, et al. (2001:311-312) he discovered that in South Africa the black schools were characterized by poor Grade 12 result. The researcher in her current study discovered that the Grade 12 results at selected Soweto Secondary Schools have improved gradually. The poor results are a thing of the past because the principals of these schools are effective human resource managers.

The educator and learner morale has improved unlike as stated by Hartshorn in Lethoko, et al. (2001:311) in chapter one of this study where it is stated that teacher and learner morale had dismally deteriorated due to frequent disruptions by students. Learners do not disrupt the functioning of the school they are rarely absent from school or classes or coming late to schools. The principals have implemented strong measures against such a behavior. The LRC is involved in administering the attendance register of class periods for both educators and learners and they are respected as a legal body that operates according to the policies of the school and the South African Schools Act.

The Formal model states that the principal is the deciding authority and is accountable for all decisions that are taken at schools. Although this is a fact, the principals of the research study involve their subordinates in decision-making and allow them the authority to implement and be accountable for them. The principals balance both performance and person-oriented strategies, to ensure that the job is done. They act as a facilitator and disseminator for the changes and involve the HODs to take part in these activities. In formal and hierarchical models the authority and accountability are impersonal and performance oriented rather than person oriented.
Members of the staff participate in decision-making and also involved in designing the schools’ policy unlike with formal, bureaucratic and hierarchical models whereby authority is graded vertically. Only those who are holding senior position are involved in decision-making. If all the stakeholders are involved when making decisions they will all be held accountable should anything go wrong, no one would exculpate. Principals are transformative leaders who have mutual relationship and engage themselves in schools’ activities for the benefit of the child. They have changed from leader follower relationship and have empowered the HODs with authority to make decisions and support their subordinates. They are concerned about moral values and value-laden activities.

They empower their subordinates by sharing authority to improve self-efficacy and schools’ performance is improved. The culture of the organizations is promoted. Professionalism is strengthened and developed by organizing workshops and training for both educators and learners in skills that they lack. They usually acknowledge educator learner performance. They respect their subordinates and treat them equally as professionals.

At the schools where the study was conducted the positive attitude of principals, values and beliefs influence the culture of their subordinates. As a result there is effective teaching and learning and there is quality education. All the stakeholders are responsible to the effective culture of teaching and learning; now that the riots are over and South Africa is in the new democratic dispensation. All the stakeholders are responsible and play a role in maintaining the effective education in Soweto Secondary Schools. The Department of Education is always ready to assist schools in problems that they encounter which affect the progress of the schools. Respect and dignity of the authority is restored.

The principals have been successful in changing the negative culture of teaching and learning through their influence and setting goals. They have moved towards achieving the schools’ goals in collaboration with other stakeholders and also consider their satisfaction. Principals as educative leaders are concerned about what is important in
education and consider as morally right. They have tried to be as democratic as possible and allowed their subordinates to participate in decision-making. They developed their professional values and allowed them to contribute towards quality education and has involved them in the process of changing the culture of teaching and learning.

These principals are competent leaders who make strategic decisions to achieve and their subjects come together and assist each other through benchmarking and teamwork. They develop formal structures by equipping learners and educators with necessary skills for the benefit of the learners. They created policies to change the culture of teaching and learning and involve all structures within the school and ensure that they are implemented. Each school has its own vision and mission statement.

The regular late coming, absenteeism and lack of motivation of the principal, teachers and learners is no longer experienced at Soweto Secondary Schools. The schools’ buildings have been renovated and learners are well disciplined. Teachers and learners morale have greatly improved.

The researcher agrees with Lethoko, Heystek and Maree 2001:312) that there has been no culture of teaching and during the past years but now the “pendulum is clicking clockwise.” The negative attitude of learners toward education has changed to a positive culture of teaching and learning. If there is any class disruption by educators’ labor union, it is short lived and no longer prolonged to the extent that it would affect the learners’ progress. Schools usually have school subject clusters whereby educators who teach the same subjects come together to discuss, solve their problems and share knowledge. Subordinates are involved through empowerment to participate in decision-making.

The principals of the schools have changed the negative culture of teaching and learning to the positive quality of teaching and learning, they set themselves goal and ensure that they are achieved within the frame time of reference as planned. They fulfill the organizations role as expected for the effective success of the school. The schools have policies that guide them for running of the school which have been drawn by all the stakeholders. They are competent leaders who manage the schools for the benefit of the
learners’ education. The principals administer and assess the educators’ effectiveness to satisfy all the stakeholders. Educators are accountable for learners’ poor performance. They are expected to satisfy the needs and expectations of all the schools’ constituency.

Educators and learners are empowered with knowledge, skills and attitudes through training and workshops to enable them to solve their problems, which they may encounter in education and in life. Most educators have enrolled with the universities to improve their education and to be able to adopt changes within the education environment. Principals encourage educators to further their education. All the schools where the researcher conducted her study are faced with the problem of the learners who use drugs. The learners are usually referred to specialist who can assist them to abstain from using drugs. Some are permanently cured while others are just cured for a temporary period and they start using drugs all over again.

5.2.3 Findings from this study and critiquing

Three respondents in this study were males and are North Sotho speakers. There was only one female who is a Tswana speaker. Three of these respondents are university graduates and one is only a college graduate nevertheless the management of their schools does not show any discrepancy in their authority. They are matured, organized, well disciplined and responsible.

They are not authoritative leaders they allow subordinates to participate in decision-making and have authority over those decisions. The principals delegate duties to educators according to their professional expertise and extra-mural activities are delegated according to their interests. They are concerned about the academic welfare of the educators as they encourage teamwork within the school environment in order to share knowledge, skills, expertise and attitudes. They allow educators to cluster with other educators from other schools in the same vicinity whereby educators assist each other concerning the problems they encountered.
They ensure that workshops and training are available for educators to develop them with skills that they lack. They are transformed leaders who have made a point that the poor culture of teaching and learning changes. The schools’ buildings have been renovated and the environment is conducive to the education of the learners. There is only one school that does not have a functional laboratory and library. Although there is a lack of these facilities the educators offer quality education to learners. Learners are also involved in maintaining discipline at schools through the LRC. The schools have policies that guide them in the functioning of the schools. The SGB is involved in the writing of the schools’ policies and code of conduct for all the stakeholders.

Learners and educators are each given a copy of the document of the code of conduct and the South African School Act. Information is disclosed to educators when needed. At one school they struggle to get sponsors while other schools have no problem in obtaining donors. They have good relationships with the business and other external bodies. All the stakeholders have a major role to play in maintaining discipline and the culture of teaching and learning and the smooth running of the school. Parents are not actively involved in schools’ activities. It seems parents do not know their rights and responsibilities toward the education of their children.

There is more commitment to education by both educators and the learners. The authority of the principal is respected. The school principals acknowledge the efforts of both learners and educators for their exceptional performance.

5.2.4 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that the school principal as the head of the school should always bear in mind that effective teaching and learning can only take place if the principals’ democratic and collegial leadership style is the order of the day. Team-building, empowerment and benchmarking can play an important role in maintaining the quality of education at Soweto Secondary Schools. The school should encourage the parents to volunteer to render services at schools and commit themselves to activities that could benefit a learner and raise funds by making arrangements with the financial
institutions (banks) to allow them to collect coins and deposit them into their schools’ banking account. They should also request for book donations from “Read” and “Zifundele.” The culture of teaching and learning should be kept positive for the quality education and success of the school.

The community around the schools should be involved in schools activities. They should be watchdogs against vandalism, theft and burglary. They should be made to feel that schools in their vicinity belong to them. They must be allowed to discipline learners when they misbehave and report the matter to school officials.

5.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The effective human resource management as a powerful strategy in schools and colleges could improve the culture of teaching and learning. This entails that all stakeholders should be actively involved in the education of all the learners. The principal must collaborate with the staff, parents, learners and external bodies.

A school’s interdependence and interrelationship should be reciprocal. Values, norms and standards should be shared. All stakeholders should observe authority and practise professionalism. The schools’ personnel should respect the SGB as a legal body. In order to change the negative situation within the schools the principal should first be transformed and be an educative, democratic and participative leader. He/she must be a leader and manager who is knowledgeable and informative to be able to disseminate and facilitate changes. In order to balance his/her authority he/she can adopt all the models, which are mentioned in chapter two and three. There are occasions where he/she must apply pressure in order that everyone respects the deadlines.